

odd , but true

Guernsey County was once part of the province of Quebec! For that matter, so was the whole state of Ohio, as well as Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin and part of Minnesota.

It came about as the result of the French & Indian War. When the treaty of peace was signed in 1763, France gave up most of her North American possessions. This included their interest in the Ohio valley and the Mississippi. All of the territory north and west of the Ohio River now belonged to the British.

Several of the colonies along the seaboard believed that this territory, or at least some of it, now belonged to them all the way to the Mississippi. Virginia, Pennsylvania, and even Connecticut, as well as a few other states, claimed parts of the Ohio country, and their claims often overlapped. As a result of these conflicting claims, there was considerable dissension among the colonies, and in some cases, it almost came to open warfare.

Finally, in 1774, the British parliament passed the Quebec Act, which, among other things, made all of the territory north and west of the Ohio a part of the province of Quebec. By making this territory a part of Quebec, it was felt that the westward expansion of the colonies would be halted, the territory would remain relatively unsettled, and the Indians residing in the territory would be free of white encroachment. There would be peace on the frontier. The dissension between the colonies would also be quieted because none of them could claim the land. It now belonged to Quebec.

The practical effect of the Act, however, was one more gigantic grievance that the colonies felt against the crown, for they believed that the British government had no right to take this land from them and give it to Quebec. It was just one more case of the crown trampling on the rights of the colonies, and was one more step along the path that, two years later, led to our Declaration of Independence.