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Precincts

by Lindley S. Butler, 2006

Precincts exist in North Carolina as voting district subdivisions of both cities [2] and counties [3]. In the Proprietary province of Carolina, however, precincts were administrative and judicial districts of the counties or colonies [4]. Corresponding to the modern county, each Proprietary precinct-governed by a court of justices chaired by a steward-had a sheriff [5] as its chief law officer. The precincts also were used in determining representation in the Assembly [6] and organizing the militia [7]. Since the colonial Assembly first met in 1665, precincts may have been established at that time, but the earliest documentation is a 1668 commission that confirms that Pasquotank [8] Precinct was in existence. It is likely that Chowan [9], Currituck [10], and Perquimans [11] Precincts were created at the same time. These four governmental units are North Carolina's oldest extant counties.

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