shows; and during the first two decades of Edward I's reign the pattern of circuits was never completely clear. The six circuits of 1273 gave way to four in 1274; thereafter, up to 1284, piecemeal alterations increased the circuits to eight or nine.

The creation of the Circuit Assize Commission did not dispense with the plaintiff's need to obtain a special Assize Commission. These, which from this point it will be convenient to refer to as particular Assize Commissions, continued to be entered, very briefly, on the dorsce of the Patent Rolls. Henry III's death caused the lapse of many recently obtained particular Assize Commissions and the abrupt ending of the eyre visitation. Because of this, there was a remarkable increase in the number of such Commissions in the Patent Roll of 1272-1273. After this the number returned to about the level of 1265-1272, though this was still high. Those for 1272-1290 were calendared lexicographically (by first place name of the lands, or in default of this, by first justice's name) in the Patent Roll calendar made by Frank Scott Haydon between 1861 and 1880. Haydon's calendar for 1272-1281 only was published, a regnal year at a time, in appendixes to the 42nd to 50th Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records. It was the formidable bulk of the particular Assize Commissions in this calendar which persuaded Maxwell-Lyte to omit them from the Calendar of the Patent Rolls from Henry III to Henry VII. The Circuit Assize Commissions (calendared by Haydon under the first justice's name) were never numerous and always of major importance: their omission was less easily defensible.

The Easter parliament of 1285 produced the great Statute of Westminster II, which, in addition to many provisions about possessory assizes, in c. 30 established rules for the justices' procedure. The Circuit Commissions issued under this statute, on 23 Aug. 1285, stand close to the eventually fixed form of phraseology. They continued the existing nine circuits, each staffed by two or three justices of the central courts or salaried commissioners. Some of this statute's procedural rules were unworkable in practice, including that which limited sessions to three periods in a year (14 Sept.-6 Oct.; 6 Jan.-2 Feb.; 8 July-1 Aug.) and that which limited the taking of assizes to the appointed circuit commissioners. A revising statute of 1293, 'De Justiciariis Assignatis' allowed greater flexibility, without specifically annulling the provisions of 1285, the more unworkable of which were quietly modified in practice. But the statute of 1293 made a major change in the circuits by reducing them to four, each staffed by permanent assize commissioners only. This system remained longer in force than any hitherto, up to the trailbaston circuits of 1305. The trailbaston visitation of 1305-1307, absorbing all the available judicial manpower outside the central courts and some of it in them, made it necessary for the assize circuits to conform to their very different pattern. Between 1305 and 1330 there were numerous modifications in the