

Great Seal to sign temporary laws passed by the Assembly pending the Proprietary's action upon them (*Arch. Md.* xvii, 272).

Charles, the Lord Proprietary, returned to England in the summer of 1684, leaving under a commission, dated May 1, his notorious cousin, George Talbot, Deputy Governor, who with the Council was to act for the Proprietary's four year old son, Benedict Leonard Calvert, formally appointed Governor General. Colonel Henry Coursey was designated as Chief Judge, who together with the Council, was to form courts for holding all pleas and for determining matters of equity (*Arch. Md.*, xvii, 249-251).

Major Nicholas Sewell succeeded Talbot as Deputy Governor in 1685, and Colonel Henry Coursey was recommissioned August 12, 1685, as Chief Judge in law and equity; and September 9, 1685, Henry Darnall, under instructions from the Proprietary, was made sole Keeper of the Great Seal (*Arch. Md.*, xvii, 431-432, 436).

The Council proceedings for September 15, 1686, show that considerable confusion had been caused by the ambiguous wording of the orders issued by the Proprietary in regard to the Great Seal. In the commission of January, 1682/3, Darnall and Digges had been made joint keepers, and had been given power to sign jointly instruments passed under this seal, but in a later instruction dated September 9, 1685, Darnall had been made sole keeper. The question was now raised as to whether this last order gave Darnall authority to sign alone as well as to be the sole keeper. The matter came up before the Council, and it took the view that Darnall should sign alone and be sole keeper, Councillor Sewell, however, dissenting from this view (*Arch. Md.*, v, 504-505).

In the autumn of 1688, William Joseph arrived from England with a commission from the Proprietary appointing him President of the Council, and as such, Deputy Governor under Charles' infant son, Benedict Leonard Calvert; and he was authorized to preside in courts and councils. As such he was Chief Judge of the Provincial Court and of the Court of Chancery. Darnall, however, was not disturbed in his position of Chancellor until the Proprietary government was ousted August 1, 1689, as the result of the Protestant Revolution, when Joseph and the rest of the Proprietary Council were superseded by the Protestant revolutionary or Associators' Convention headed by John Coode (*Arch. Md.*, viii, 107-108).

The Council records for this disturbed period are too imperfect for us to be able to determine whether the courts functioned in an orderly way and a Keeper of the Great Seal was formally designated. The Associators' Council as a whole at first appears to have transacted the public business. In a letter written from "Longworth Point", September 17, 1690, Nehemiah Blakiston says that he has been appointed "President of the committee for the present Government of the Province" (*Arch. Md.*, viii, 206-207). Matters seem to have settled down on an orderly basis by the spring of 1691, when on April 16, the Council designated Nehemiah Blakiston Chief Judge of the Provincial Court, with other members of the Council as associates, the name of Henry Jowles immediately following that of Blakiston. It is probable that Blakiston also was made Keeper of the Great Seal in 1690 when he became President of the Council or "Committee" (*Arch. Md.* viii, 241-4).