

River (*Archives* LI, pp. 479-480). His son and partner, James Browne, had come to the Province and had seated there. On November 12, 1675, James Browne shot himself in his bedroom at Farley, on Farloe Creek, Cecil County, and gave himself "One wound mortall being very large the One halfe of his Scull being Shott all to peices with his braines disperst and himselfe then and there voluntarily . . . and ffeloniously and as a ffellon of himselfe, himselfe Slew and murdered. . . ." (*Archives* LXVI, pp. 135-137). It was said in Salem that a negro later confessed that he had shot him, but the annalist gives no authority for this rumor, (Felt, Joseph B. *Annals of Salem*, p. 448), and there is nothing in the record in Maryland to lend strength to it. Of course, if that was true, it altered the situation completely. Three days after the death of Browne, Coroner Charles James of Cecil County held an inquest over his body, and summoned a jury. To their verdict that Browne was a felon of himself, the jurors added that he had died possessed of personal property, goods and chattels worth 134,656 pounds of tobacco. This property was made up of household goods, cattle, hogs and horses and bills due him. He also had due him 9088 pounds of tobacco by account, and there was on hand at his place a cargo of English and New England goods, and some tobacco still in hogs-heads or hanging in his barns. To this inquisition the Provincial Court judged, on February 10, 1675/6, that his goods and chattels were "escheated and forfeited unto his Lopp the Lord Proprietary by reason of the felony aforesaid, but his Lands are not forfeited." (*ibid.*, p. 137).

The land was considered later. James Browne had obtained his "Farley" from Capt. Thomas Howell, now also deceased. There was a belief that Howell's patent had been obtained surreptitiously and not according to the conditions of plantation, and the High Court of Chancery had to consider this belief. On January 11, 1675/6, a *scire facias* went from the Chancery Court to the sheriff of Cecil County to bring in the heirs of Howell and of James Browne for the determination of the validity of the patent. The hearing was to be held on February 8, 1675/6, but what happened on this *sci. fa.* is not in the record. On March 3, 1675/6, after the date for the Chancery hearing, another *sci. fa.* went from the Provincial Court to the same sheriff of Cecil to bring in the same heirs for the determination of the validity of the same patent in the Provincial Court, and this hearing was set for April 4, 1676. Sheriff James returned that he had warned the Howell heirs, but that he had found no heirs of James Browne in his bailiwick. At the hearing no defendant appeared, and, a week later on April 11, "the Court being informed and fully satisfied that the said grant is Surreptiously obtained contrary to the Conditions of plantations doe Order that the Chancellour doe vacate the pattend upon Record, and adjudge the said Land is and of right Ought to be Seized in his Lopp's Right" (*Archives* LXVI, p. 288).

Two years after the goods and chattels and land of James Browne were forfeited to the Proprietary, on April 9, 1678, John Browne of Salem, father and partner of James, petitioned the Governor and Council to give him satisfaction for the goods and chattels, as being but just and right. James's wife and children were in distress, his creditors, especially Mr. Samuel Shrimpton, were dis-