

“now become my principal Amusement.” **PUBLIC CAREER.** PROVINCIAL OFFICES: governor, commissioned on March 17, 1753, sworn on August 10, 1753, dismissed July 20, 1768, left office upon arrival of *Robert Eden* (1741–1784); surveyor general of the Western Shore, August 10, 1753, to December 1768. A modern historian has noted that Sharpe “conducted his office (as governor) intelligently” through the French and Indian War and Stamp Act crises, “used the art of conciliation and compromise,” and was a “conscientious administrator, careful and well informed.” Sharpe himself wrote, “I have endeavoured to act in my Public Capacity like an honest Man and am under no apprehension lest anything should be laid to my charge that I may be ashamed of. . . .” Upon hearing the news of his dismissal, the judges of the Provincial Court and gentlemen of the bar addressed Sharpe in words which, he said, “I think reflect honour on my administration.” **MILITARY SERVICE:** captain, marines, by 1745; lt. colonel, foot, served in the West Indies; commander in chief of Maryland Militia, ex officio, 1753–1769; commander in chief of forces raised to resist the French, principally at Ft. Cumberland, 1754, supplanted by Maj. Gen. Edward Braddock, who was commissioned commander in chief of all British forces in America on September 1754, but arrived in America in the late winter 1755. Sharpe continued to exercise his command until Braddock’s arrival. During the winter of 1755, Sharpe toured defenses in western Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania and canoed ca. 250 miles down the Potomac River to Alexandria. He returned to the west after Braddock’s defeat to do what he could to restore order. **STANDS ON PUBLIC/PRIVATE ISSUES:** Sharpe’s letters to the proprietor, to the principal secretary of Maryland, and to his brothers provide a careful record of his thoughts and positions during his administration. In a letter to Cecilus Calvert in 1756, Sharpe wrote “the art of disposing of places (of profit) so as to avoid offense is one of the most difficult parts of Government.” He advised Calvert in 1760 that “the only way then in my opinion for His Lordship to obtain a solid and lasting influence (in Maryland) is to appear steady and resolute, to reward as far and as often as it is in his power those who behave themselves well, but never bribe any of those who endeavour to carry the point by violence to desist or forbear. . . .” To his brother Joshua Sharpe he wrote in 1763, “was I in England and in Business by which I could live comfortably I would not for the sake of getting something more make

my happiness dependent on the Caprice of others as is the Ease and happiness of every Governor in America.” **WEALTH DURING LIFETIME. PERSONAL PROPERTY:** sent £715.2.4 to his brother Philip to invest with other money of Sharpe’s in England, 1758; mentioned his stock in “the publick Funds” in England valued at £4,300.0.0 at 3% interest, 1767, and assumed the principal on this stock to be at least £5,000.0.0, 1771; sold all slaves, plate, liquors, household furnishings, plantation equipment, horses, and livestock, plus land and buildings at “Whitehall,” Anne Arundel County, for £7,000.0.0 current money, 1782. In 1783, *John Ridout* (1732–1797), who had purchased the property, was assessed for 31 slaves, 249 oz. plate, 18 horses, and other personal property with a total value of £2,050.15.0 current money. **ANNUAL INCOME:** Sharpe estimated his yearly income as governor at ca. £1,400.0.0, 1756, and £1,861.0.0 sterling, not counting housing allowance, 1767. From 1753 to 1760, Sharpe allowed the profits of his position as surveyor general of the Western Shore to *John Ridout* (1732–1797). In 1756, Sharpe complained to Lord Baltimore that his £80.0.0 per year housing allowance was inadequate since he was paying £100.0.0 per year to rent his mansion in Annapolis. He requested, but apparently did not receive, reimbursement for his expenses of £150.0.0 incurred during trips to Ft. Cumberland and New York after Gen. Braddock’s defeat. By 1767, Sharpe was paying ca. £450.0.0 sterling per year from his income as governor for the support of various friends, relatives, and employees of the proprietor. **LAND AT FIRST ELECTION:** none. **SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN LAND BETWEEN FIRST ELECTION AND DEATH:** purchased 149 acres in Frederick County by 1759, and 302 acres in Anne Arundel County by 1763; purchased 814 acres in Broadneck Hundred, Anne Arundel County, in 1763, and exchanged ca. 144 acres of this tract for 144 acres of “Whitehall,” Anne Arundel County, in 1764; purchased 1,000 acres in Frederick (later became Washington) County, 1768; patented and then sold 271 acres in Anne Arundel County, purchased 1,637 acres in Baltimore County, and sold 302 acres in Anne Arundel County, 1770; added a total of 41 acres to his Anne Arundel County plantation for a mill seat, 1771 and 1773. By special order in 1781, Sharpe’s property was not confiscated. The following year, however, he sold probably all his remaining Maryland land and received, as partial payment, a house in Saville Row, Westminster, England. **WEALTH AT**