

out of Office, as they will find themselves Clear of debt to the Sheriff, they will then thank you for it; and I can assure you that the most popular Sheriffs we have had, have been such as have pursued this method, & been strict & made them punctual, in a Smiling good natured way.

Keep what Tobacco you can by you of your own till your time expires. . . . I must be understood to mean, that no Tobacco can be called your own, but what is over & above sufficient to satisfy all demands upon you as Sheriff; and in particular beware that you do not live upon the produce of the office, before you have compleated it; and so much the rather as the necessary demands upon the office will the first year take away a considerable part of the Stock you may have in hand; In so much that I have known some Sheriffs Who have thought themselves ruined by the first year, tho' they have at the Expiration of their time upon a strict & frugal management, found a considerable balance in their favor.

All pains and perils notwithstanding, the qualified incumbent might expect of his shrievalty £ 200 to £ 300 sterling a year, clear of all charges.⁴¹ Its brief tenure enabled the Governor to pass it around and to bestow it often on men who could not aspire to other places of profit. Yet, as it was the most sought after office in the province, there were always more applicants than places to be filled. Indeed, as Henry Callister could write in 1761, "There is not in Maryland a more trite question in most conversations than 'Who will be the next Sheriff?'"⁴²

4. CURRENCY COMMISSIONERS AND SUPPLY AGENTS.

Auxiliary to this provincial revenue establishment were the Paper Currency Office or Loan Office, set up in 1733, with its Commissioners and a clerk, and those Agents appointed to receive and pay out money under the Supply Acts of 1740, 1746, and 1756.

Maryland's first Currency Law, that of April, 1733, provided for an issue of £ 90,000. It was to circulate at twenty-five percent discount to sterling, under supervision of three Commissioners

⁴¹ An estimate of about 1745 rates the shrievalties at £ 200 sterling each and adds, "These are thriving offices, and in time of peace are worth more than £ 200 per ann. com. annis" (Massachusetts Historical Society, *Collections*, ser. I, vol. VII [1801], 202). Gov. Sharpe in 1757 valued the sheriff's place of Anne Arundel County at at least £ 200 sterling a year, and in 1768 he admitted some shrievalties might be worth £ 300 (Horatio Sharpe to Lord Baltimore, June 30, 1757; Sharpe to Hugh Hamersley, July 25, 1768, *Archives*, IX, 35; XIV, 518).

⁴² Henry Callister to John Ridout, March 29, 1761 (Callister Papers, II, 393, Md. Diocesan Library). Callister was a merchant at Oxford and Townside (the present Crumpton), on the Eastern Shore.