

Chancery affairs again occupied the attention of the Council at the May 14, 1695, meeting, and it was perhaps as a result of the instructions given by this body six months before to Attorney-General Plater that he now submitted the forms of oath to be taken respectively by the "Chancellor, Keeper or Commissioners" in Chancery, which after receiving the approval "of the attorneys and officers of the Co^t" were adopted. These oaths are printed in full in the Council Proceedings (*Arch. Md.* xx, 232-233). Immediately afterward Jowles, Cheseldyn and Dorsey "had administered unto them the Oathes appointed by Act of Parliam^t to be taken instead of the Oathes of Allegiance & Supremacy and Subscribed to the Test", and then took "The forme of the Oath proper for the Chancelour, Keeper of the Great Seal or Commission^{rs} appointed for the keeping of the Great Seal of the Province of Maryland" (*Arch. Md.* xx, 232). The commission, dated May 14, 1695, appointing them "Commissioners and Judges of our Court of Chancery", is recorded in the Chancery records (Chanc. Proc. P. C. 294-295).

On December 6, 1695, the misuse of the Broad Seal by John Freeman, recently appointed Register, apparently due to Jowles' absence from St. Mary's City, was investigated by Gov. Nicholson, and on February 27, 1695/6, brought forth an order from the Council that the Chancellor "make answer in writing what he had to say in defense of himself for taking away the Broad Seal of the Province out of Town with him contrary to an Ord^r of Councill * * * and how he came to leave a spare Broad Seal with Stephen Blatchford * * * the which s^d Seal his Ex^{ncy} now burnt". Jowles then delivered his seal to Major Edward Dorsey, one of the justices or commissioners in Chancery, to be kept by him, who was thereupon ordered to seal only "what is authentick & according to the Rules & practise of his Ma^t high Court of Chancery". A letter was read from Jowles setting forth as the cause of his absence, "his present indisposition of body" and asking that one of the "hono^{ble} Councill might be appointed to sit in Chancery Causes this court in his stead" (*Arch. Md.* xx, 361-362). It appears that on October 15, 1695, when the Council had ordered Jowles "for the future to lodge the Broad Seal with Maj^r Edward Dorsey one of the Commissioner in Chancery" to be kept by him and used to seal instruments in the absence of Jowles, the Keeper, he had failed to do so and had carried it away, and then intrusted it to Freeman, the Register (*Arch. Md.*, xx, 326-327). Jowles later, on February 15, 1695/6, complained to the Council of Dorsey, alleging that he had failed "to give him an account of the Chancery fees". In reply, the Council declared that Dorsey denied the charge against him, and that it was the opinion of the Council that half the fees should go to Dorsey for the period when the seal was in his custody (*Arch. Md.* xx, 391).

On May 14, 1695, John Freeman was sworn in again as Register of the Chancery Court. It is learned from the proceedings of the court that, October 1, 1694, Sir Thomas Lawrence, who had been authorized to "find a recorder", had selected Freeman, whose commission having been burned in a fire at the Chancellor's house, it was deemed necessary to recommission him. It was not long before Freeman was in hot water with Nicholson, who charged him before the Council on December 6, 1695, with unlawfully sealing with the Broad Seal