

Col. Cresap, the house jumped at the opportunity not only to discredit the Governor by thus questioning his good faith, but also to attack the status of Ridout as an accredited secretary authorized by law. The attack upon the Governor was based upon an alleged failure on his part, as disclosed by these accounts, to observe all the rigid limitations upon military expenditures laid down by an act of the Assembly, and at the same time to dispute the Governor's right to create any new office whatever without the specific approval of the Assembly in each case. The house took the stand that a Secretary to the Governor was not authorized either by the Charter or by legislation, and that Ridout therefore had no constitutional rights or immunities which the house need respect. Apart from the fact that in this instance the Governor was able to show that he had both precedent and prerogative on his side, the inexcusably bad manners shown by the Lower House in the whole affair wins our sympathy for him.

The Governor in his closing message of December 15, 1757, on the Ridout affair traces in an interesting and dispassionate way and in great detail the origin and development from the founding of the Province of the prerogatives and functions of the Lower House, of the Upper House, and of the Governor, and shows that former governors had in their official families individuals recognized by the Assembly as holding positions similar to that now occupied by Ridout (pp. 361-375). Of especial interest is his account of the unsuccessful attempt of Governor Fendall just a hundred years before to abolish by violence the Upper House (p. 369).

One feels that in "this unlucky affair of Mr. Ridout's" Sharpe had much the better of the dispute. He later summarizes the episode in a personal letter, dated December 26, 1757, to Cecilius Calvert, Lord Baltimore's Secretary in London, in which he also refers to the growing practice of the Lower House of calling before it persons for real or pretended offenses, and its unaccountable pretension that "the Upper House is no part of our Constitution" (*Arch. Md. ix*, 119-120). The Ridout affair is also further discussed by Governor Sharpe in a letter dated January 1, 1758, addressed to his brother William Sharpe, in which he points out that the Lower House now undertakes to assume all the powers of the House of Commons (*Arch. Md. ix*, 124-125). We will see later that neither the Proprietary nor the legal advisors of the British government were willing to admit this latter claim.

FORT CUMBERLAND

Fort Cumberland, located about seventy-five miles westward by road from Fort Frederick, was a bone of contention between the Lower House and Governor Sharpe. The house maintained that it was too far from the settlements to be an efficient protection to the Maryland frontier inhabitants, and that it should therefore be garrisoned and maintained by British troops, because it was only useful as a point of advance by a large British force against the French on the Ohio. The short-sighted attempts of the Lower House in its various Supply bills to prohibit by legislation the use of Maryland's Provincial