

of the opening of each session shows that this was the case. The Court was "to Keepe the peace in the Province of Maryland aforesaid, moreover to heare and Determine diverse fellonyes & transgressions and other misdemeano^{rs} in the said Province perpetrated" (*post*, pp. 1, 8, 11, 16, 22, 30, 33, 43, 58). It is true that these criminal sessions occupy the final forty-eight folios in Liber JJ of the Court records, but this is due to the Court itself; the clerk did no more than take advantage of a fact. In Liber MM there is but one mention of criminal cases (*post*, p. 91) and none of the recorded openings of the Court speaks of them. All the cases heard from then on were civil, and the greater part of them were some form of debt. Most of the cases were original: there are only seven cases coming up on appeal and three on writ of error. This is less than half the number recorded in the sessions immediately preceding (*Archives*, LVII, p. xxiii). No cases at all were appealed from Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Charles, Kent, Talbot and Worcester Counties.

The Court consisted of the Governor and Chief Justice and nine other justices, but the sessions were seldom, indeed, never, attended by all the members. On one occasion nine in all were present; at no other time were there more than six. To constitute a session, there must be at least four members present (*post*, p. 91), of whom one must be a member of the quorum. Of twenty sessions, the Governor and William Calvert were present at seventeen, and Baker Brooke at fourteen. Only Chancellor Philip Calvert was always in attendance. William Talbot, who returned to England in 1673 and did not come back, came to court only twice. Thomas Taylour, who appeared for the first time on April 10, 1673 (*post*, p. 91), came to only three more sessions. He was sheriff of Dorchester County; perhaps that explains his absence from Court sessions on the western shore. Thomas Truman, who attended seven sessions, did not come at all after February 1674/5, though he did not cease to be a member of the Court. Edward Fitzherbert, sworn in on December 15, 1670 (*Archives*, LVII, 576) was regular in his attendance until December 10, 1672, when he seems to have left the Court. Samuel Chew, of Anne Arundel, was intermittent and infrequent in his attendance though he did not cease to be a member of the Court until 1677. Dr. Jesse Wharton, who does not appear until December 10, 1672, attended regularly until the end of this period.

The clerk of the Court when the February 1670/1 session began was Robert Ridgely, who took the oath of office on January 19, 1670/1 (*Archives*, V, 82), succeeding Thomas Cabewood (or Cakewood), discharged for misdemeanor. The clerk was also register of the Court of Chancery, keeper of the lesser seal and chief clerk of the secretary's office (*ibid.*, pp. 88-90). He was an attorney of the Provincial Court, and he appeared before it in that capacity, both while he was clerk and after he left the clerkship.

On March 23, 1673/4, John Blomfeild took the oath of office to succeed Ridgely as clerk (*ibid.*, 124). He had been clerk earlier, from May 5, 1669 to July 21, 1670, and he had been removed because he was "unfit any Longer to be employed in that Office by Breach of the Peace and other misdemeanors" (*ibid.*, p. 66). Like the justices themselves the clerk of the Court was a man of many offices. He was "chief Clerk . . . of the Secretaries Office Provin-