

increasing influence over this patronage. By 1760 customs places were best obtained by applying directly to Newcastle.<sup>87</sup>

However, to avoid the delay of six months or a year, which would normally follow upon the death of an officer and application to London for a new appointee, the Surveyor General of Customs in the plantations might appoint some new incumbent at once.<sup>88</sup> To the same end each Governor, after 1727, could fill a vacancy for the time being should the Surveyor General be absent or dead.<sup>89</sup> But as any such deputation required later approval by the Surveyor General, the Customs Commissioners, and the Treasury, the Governor's appointee was liable to be removed by one or another of these.

Each officer, unless a royal patentee, held office at pleasure of the Customs Commissioners, who had wide powers to dismiss, to discipline, and to promote.<sup>40</sup> Once appointed, however, an incumbent usually retained his place until death or resignation, for promotions and dismissals were alike infrequent. Moreover these officers often engaged unlawfully in trade and, with or without special leave, acted by deputy in their home ports, taking a major share of the profit merely for signing their accounts. The ill paid deputies acted in a loose, haphazard way, to the loss of His Majesty's revenue and the general encouragement of smuggling.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 81. Cf. Horatio Sharpe to William Sharpe, July 8, 1760 (*Archives*, IX, 436).

<sup>88</sup> A list of the Surveyors General may be found in Andrews, *op. cit.*, IV, 198-202. The first such officer was appointed in 1683. Although the Surveyor General's authority to appoint customs officers was denied in Maryland by the President and Council, February, 1693/4 (*Archives*, XX, 41), he later made numerous appointments there.

<sup>89</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial*, 1726-27, art. 507; L. W. Labaree, *Royal Instructions to British Colonial Governors, 1670-1776* (2 v., New York, 1935), I, 384.

<sup>40</sup> Hoon, *op. cit.*, 64, 210.

<sup>41</sup> On July 13, 1697, Gov. Francis Nicholson recommended to the Board of Trade, "That ye Collectors and Naval Officers places be executed by two distinct persons, so yt they may be a check upon one another; & yt neither of ym be publick Traders (for more than is absolute necessity for support of their families) for their being great Traders, I think, is one great Reason of illegal Trade; they having the first Refusal of ye Masters or Merchants Cargos, & of their freight; first [—?—] of buying the Refuse Cargos, which illegal Traders dare not refuse ym; and I suppose at low prices; which advantage, I fear, doe too often [—?—] with these officers" (Public Record Office, Colonial Office, 5/714, part I, LC). Cf. John Williams to Customs Commissioners at Boston, May 26, 1770 (*Maryland Historical Magazine*, XXVII [1932], 234). In 1698 James Reilly, Deputy Collector of North Potomac, and Richard Savage, Deputy Surveyor and Searcher of Annapolis, were each getting half the principal's salary (Public Record Office, Audit Office, b. 773, r. 907, LC). In 1770 the Collector of Patuxent, whose