

than forty percent with a comparable growth in the Keepers' incomes.⁷⁰ However the greater part of this increment must have gone to the Keeper for the Western Shore.

7. COLLECTORS, RECEIVERS, AND FARMERS OF QUIT-RENTS.

Apparently no regular method of collecting quit-rents arose in the first proprietary period. Land grantees were bound by their patents to pay these charges directly to the Receiver General at St. Mary's twice yearly, each Lady Day and Michaelmas. By 1644, however, annual payments had become the rule, and these were now taken up sometimes by specially appointed collectors, sometimes by the sheriffs.⁷¹

From the inception of royal government until passage of the Equivalent Act in 1716 all quit-rents were taken by these collectors, probably at a commission. They were appointed by the Agent, except during the lease of 1699 to 1707, when Bennett and Heath appointed them.

On resumption of quit-rents in 1733 the rent roll was found to be in such confusion as to make collecting rather difficult. For this reason the former method, and the previously existing office of collector, were not revived. Instead, most counties were now farmed out on three year contracts at a discount of twenty-five percent on the estimated total, while the remaining counties, those which could not be farmed, were entrusted to receivers at a ten percent commission. Each farmer was responsible for the entire amount of quit-rents, minus his discount, and was bound to compile a county roll for the Rent Roll Keeper. A receiver, on the other hand, was responsible only for what he could collect and was not required to compile a rent roll.⁷² In October, 1755, all receivers were discharged.⁷³

Meanwhile the farmers' discount had been progressively reduced as the perfection of His Lordship's rent roll eased their collecting. Sharpe in 1753 found it at twenty percent and at once

⁷⁰ See tables in Barker, *op. cit.*, 380.

⁷¹ Kilty, *op. cit.*, 257; *Archives*, III, 147, 267-68; XV, 119-20.

⁷² See Lord Baltimore's instructions to Gov. Samuel Ogle, June 18, 1733; Baltimore's instructions to Agent Benjamin Tasker, March 18, 1735/6; Gov. Thomas Bladen's report to the Lower House, Sept. 10, 1745; Cecilius Calvert's plan for collecting the quit-rents, May 4, 1753 (*Ibid.*, XXVIII, 67; XXXIX, 513; XLIV, 151-52; Black Books, XI, 22, Hall of Records).

⁷³ This was incident to employing the sheriffs as farmers.