

## PRIVATE ACTS

The General Assembly, which met during October and November of 1771, passed seven private acts which were for the benefit of particular persons. One of them provided for the naturalization of Charles Frederick Weisenthal (pp. 281-282). The other six laws related to land. One act confirmed title to land (pp. 247-249), four of the statutes authorized conveyances of land (pp. 283-287, 287-289, 293-295, 302-303), while another provided for the sale of land in payment of debts (pp. 257-258). Governor Eden refused to sign a bill for the sale of John Hawkins' land for the payment of his debts which had been passed by the Upper and Lower Houses (pp. 74, 236). In one of the statutes regarding the conveyance of land, which became a law, the name of George Washington appeared as one of the executors of Thomas Colvill, of Fairfax County, Virginia (pp. 12, 110, 132-133, 293-295).

Among the petitions which did not receive favorable consideration during the session of the Assembly in October and November of 1771 was one presented by Gilbert Barrow, of Talbot County, asking for a divorce. On November 12, after hearing the evidence in this case, the Lower House rejected the petition (pp. 20, 142, 166).

At the June-July session of the General Assembly in 1773 three private acts were passed all relating to land (pp. 400-401, 402-404, 405).

## ACTS FOR THE RELIEF OF PRISONERS FOR DEBT

At both the fall session of 1771 and the summer session of 1773 an act for the relief of prisoners for debt was passed. In all about one hundred and twenty persons in the different county jails were affected by the two laws (pp. 272-277, 406-410). The question of the relief of prisoners for debt has been discussed in previous volumes of the *Archives* (LXII, xlii-xliii). One Alexander Symmer, of Prince George's County, in order to avoid the chance of being put in prison for debt petitioned the Assembly that an act be passed securing his person and effects from arrests and lawsuits for ten years. Such an act would enable him, Symmer said, to support himself and five young children. Symmer's petition was rejected by the Lower House (pp. 190, 192).

## APPENDIX

I. *Order of His Majesty's Council for Robert Eden to qualify as Governor of Maryland, March 5, 1773.* The order was based upon a report received from the Lords of the Committee of Council for Plantation Affairs, dated March 2. In this report it was stated that Frederick Calvert, late Lord Proprietary of Maryland, had appointed Robert Eden Governor of Maryland; that Calvert had died during September, 1771, and by his will had left the province of Maryland to Henry Harford, a minor; that the Dean of Canterbury, and Hugh Hammersley and Peter Prevost had been appointed guardians of Henry Harford; that the guardians, with the approval of Henry Harford, again wanted Robert Eden appointed Governor of Maryland.