

Receiver General ^[1]

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by Louis P. Towles, 2006

See also: [Land Grants](#) ^[2]; [Quitrents](#) ^[3]; [Rent Rolls](#) ^[4]; [Arrears](#) ^[5]

The Receiver General of colonial North Carolina was responsible until 1776 for the collection of land rents (called [quitrents](#) ^[3]), the sale of land, and the management of forfeitures. The office was not mentioned by name in either the [Concessions and Agreement](#) ^[6] of January 1665 or the [Fundamental Constitutions](#) ^[7] (1669-98), but the need for such a position was clearly understood by the [Lords Proprietors](#) ^[8] of Carolina, who laid down procedures for granting, selling, and renting land. Although the Proprietary board, as early as 1670, considered appointing precinct sheriffs to manage their property and rents and to construct towns, storehouses, prisons, churches, and a statehouse, the board accepted that one director-until 1711, the [governor](#) ^[9]-was the most logical repository of their trust. Accordingly, from 1670 until 1712 North Carolina's governors appointed "a person or persons to collect the quit rents of land due" who were generally permitted to expend these moneys for the benefit of the colony. Implicit in this arrangement was that each governor would furnish in time "a true and just account" of all funds that were amassed and disbursed and as accurate a [rent roll](#) ^[4] (the names of all landholders, the amount of individual acreage held, and the number of years an account might be in arrears) as was possible to collect.

From the revenues collected, the receiver general was responsible for covering the salaries of the colony's leadership. In 1715, for instance [Daniel Richardson](#) ^[10] paid the chief justice, the secretary, the attorney general, the governor, the president of the Provincial Council, and his own expenses for collecting quitrents in each precinct. Eleven years later, [William Little](#) ^[11] was obliged to find funds for these same positions as well as for a provost marshal, three deputy marshals, and six deputy receivers.

References:

Beverly W. Bond Jr., *The Quit-rent System in the American Colonies* (1965).

Robert J. Cain, ed., *Records of the Executive Council, 1664-1734* (1984).

Alan D. Watson, "The Quitrent System of Royal South Carolina" (M.A. thesis, University of South Carolina, 1971).

Additional Resources:

Commission to appoint John Hammerton as Receiver General of Carolina George II, King of Great Britain, 1683-1760 September 16, 1730 Volume 11, Pages 4-6, DocSouth, UNC Libraries: <https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/document/csr11-0002> ^[12]

[History of North Carolina: With Maps and Illustrations](#), By Francis Lister Hawks ^[10]; GoogleBooks

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[Encyclopedia of North Carolina](#), University of North Carolina Press, ^[18]

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