

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

October 17, 1946

TO THE HONORABLE
HALL OF RECORDS COMMISSION,
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

Gentlemen:

The first three Annual Reports of the Archivist of the Hall of Records were prepared by Dr. James Alexander Robertson, the first Archivist, and copies in typescript were distributed only to the members of the Hall of Records Commission. The Fourth Annual Report was prepared by the writer who took office June 16, 1939 following the death of Dr. Robertson the preceding March 20. This report was modeled after the earlier ones and it also was in the nature of a confidential report to the members of the Commission and destined only for their use. The following year the Annual Report was printed and distributed to other agencies of the State Government as well as to archival and historical institutions throughout the country and abroad. This policy of printing the Annual Report has continued since that time, the Eleventh Annual Report for the fiscal year July 1, 1945 through September 30, 1946 having just appeared.

It has long been the thought of the writer that some account of the first years of the Hall of Records should be made available. Since the Hall of Records was built, many states have created archival establishments, some others are now being built or planned, and in the near future it must be anticipated that every state government will have to provide for the professional care of its records. This new interest in the care of official records has stimulated an ever increasing number of requests for information about the Hall of Records, its origin, its purpose, its equipment, its legal status and so forth. Some of the information for which there has been most demand has been inserted, howbeit out of place, in later reports of the Archivist. On many occasions it has been necessary to search through the early reports, the Minutes of the Hall of Records Commission