

## SURVEY OF STATE RECORDS

Up to 1941 there was no general supervision over the records management practices employed by the various State and county agencies. The records of a few agencies were controlled by statute; opinions of the Attorney General governed others, but for the most part, records problems were left to the custodian to solve. The creation of the Hall of Records Commission (Ch. 18, Acts of 1935) and the construction of an Archives building were beneficial insofar as the older records were concerned but had little effect on the care of modern records.

A permissive law was enacted in 1941 (Ch. 825, Acts of 1941) which provided that records no longer necessary to the operations of an agency could be offered to the Hall of Records Commission for deposit. If the Commission decided that the records were of no archival value, they were refused for deposit and the agency could then apply to the Board of Public Works for permission to destroy them.

Legislation passed in 1945 (Ch. 248, Acts of 1945) required that all records created prior to April 28, 1788, be deposited in the Hall of Records. An act of 1949 (Ch. 518, Acts of 1949) required that microfilming done for the purpose of destroying the original records must meet standards established by the Hall of Records Commission. A law (Ch. 755, Acts of 1949) of the same year provided a means of establishing records disposal schedules, and it also defined certain categories as non-record in nature and, therefore, subject to disposal by the record custodian. Working under these laws, the Archivist succeeded in assisting many agencies toward a solution of their records problems. At the same time, however, it was realized that the problems of proper records control were increasing rather than diminishing.

At this point, as records problems were approaching an acute stage, it was proposed to Governor Lane that a survey be made of all state records. Although Governor Lane favored the proposal, he left it to his successor in office to make the final decision. It was, therefore, Governor McKeldin who requested the General Assembly to appropriate \$48,000 for the survey (Miscellaneous Appropriations No. 2, Item 45, 1953 Budget).

As noted in the *Seventeenth Annual Report* of the Archivist, the contract between the State, represented by the Board of Public Works, and