

become a function of the Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds.) Basically this staff does exactly what it did in 1935. We produce our records for searchers who come in person; we answer the inquiries of those who reach us by mail and by telephone. But there are many more records, as I have pointed out, and many more searchers. In some cases we can do more with less help than before: we have had for years a continuous process photostat camera whose rate of production is considerably greater than that of the old hand-operated machine; and now we can often substitute microfilm, the quickest and cheapest kind of photography, and a process which was hardly known in 1935. The thousands of volumes of county and church records which we now have on film could not possibly have been made by photostat. We have five microfilm cameras, designed for various purposes, and ten readers. In the repair room, the substitution of lamination for the silking process which we used until 1942 has made it possible for us to protect our most heavily circulated records against the wear and tear of constant handling. The speed of the process, however, is only one of its many advantages over silk. On the other hand, there is no automatic way to bind books, or to label shelves or to prepare accessions lists or catalogue cards.

Reference work has been made quicker and more certain by the preparation of thousands of index cards to our early records, especially those having to do with the settlement of estates, military service and vital statistics. Of the twelve publications of the Hall of Records Commission, ten (catalogues, calendars, indexes) were prepared to help the searcher use our records. In addition there have been mimeographed bulletins to list smaller collections and to describe our finding aids. From the county courthouses we have collected and rehabilitated discarded but useful land and probate indexes, and we have prepared photostatic or microfilm copies of current indexes in order to keep pace with our increased holdings of such records. Publication Number 13, now being prepared, will guide the user to the historical county records of Maryland, those in the Hall of Records as well as those in the courthouses and elsewhere. Two other publications deal respectively with the history of the buildings of the State of Maryland at Annapolis and of the County Courthouses.

From time to time, we have assumed other tasks not enumerated specifically in the Act establishing the Hall of Records but certainly within its general province. Governor Lane asked us to prepare the