

## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

TO THE HONORABLE  
THE HALL OF RECORDS COMMISSION  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

*Gentlemen:*

Fiscal year 1966 proved to be a good one for the Hall of Records. This report will indicate to you, I am sure, that no single phase of our work was neglected and that at the same time we made progress in our effort to consolidate Maryland records in place under one roof and under one management. This was certainly the objective of the proponents of legislation to create the Hall of Records, of the legislators who passed the bills and of the various members of the Hall of Records Commission.

For some years we have had all the non-current records of State agencies under our control, either in the Hall of Records proper or in one of our Record Centers. We have also collected, over the years, the land records, probate records and the earliest court records of the counties (the records of Baltimore City except for those of the Register of Wills and the Clerk of the Superior Court are still in the city because Baltimore has its own archivist and archival setup). The earliest land records, patents, warrants, debt books, etc. have remained in the Land Office until now. The General Assembly of 1966 passed two acts, Ch. 488 and Ch. 489 which had as objective the abolition of the office of Commissioner of the Land Office subject to referendum of last November 8. Since the Commissioner of the Land Office was a constitutional officer, the referendum was necessary; it carried by a vote of more than two to one. Chapter 488 provided that the duties of the Land Office should be taken over by the Hall of Records if the referendum were successful. We are preparing now to unite the handsome collection of records of the land office with our own rich collection on January 25, 1967, the effective date of the consolidation.

After thirty years of effort on the part of the first two archivists of Maryland, the Hall of Records Commission, led by Governor Tawes, has taken over the task of trying to persuade the Librarian of Congress to return to the State of Maryland various archival fugitives which, in the course of time, have escaped from their proper custodians and