

ARCHIVAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE YEAR

Efforts were continued by the Archivist to return the records of the State of Maryland to their rightful custody. Emphasis was put on the Scharf Papers, now in the custody of the Maryland Historical Society, having been placed there by The Johns Hopkins University Library. They were given to the University by J. Thomas Scharf with the condition that they would be organized and added to until they formed a body of records rich enough for students of Southern History. The University neglected them sorely until finally it gave them to the Historical Society in the hope that there they would receive the attention they deserved. However, for many years this hope was unfulfilled until the last few years when the Society had made an effort to organize them in some sort of arrangement so that they would be usable.

At the last meeting of the Hall of Records Commission, which was attended by Mr. Hopkins, President of the Society, and Mr. Filby, Director, a compromise was struck: the Society would furnish xerox copies of the manuscript material in the collection for which the State would pay five thousand dollars. At the present time, about a fourth of the materials have been sent to us. I have examined all of them and come to the obvious conclusion that all of it comes from the files of the Land Office primarily from the nineteenth century with a small percentage from the second half of the eighteenth century. And like all compromises this one has proved to be unsatisfactory. All of the original material should be returned to the Land Office files where they would fall into their natural place and not require an artificial arrangement which would be immensely difficult and unnatural according to every recognized archival principle.

While no new county record series were acquired this year, we filled in some others, for example, from the Baltimore Superior Court we filmed over four hundred volumes of land records bringing this series from January 1947 to June 1948. There remains to be done the land records from June 1948 to December 1948 in order to fill the series from the first volume to the last volume. The Register of Wills records were likewise completed. Two surveyor's records from the late eighteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth were brought from the Frederick County Courthouse. Thirty-five volumes of Talbot County Assessment Books from the middle nineteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century were likewise accessioned. Two additional Protestant Episcopal Church Records were microfilmed, Christ Church in Anne Arundel County, and the six or seven parish records from the Cathedral Church of the Incarnation.

Our effort to complete records of the United Methodist churches in Maryland went on apace, for the most part, from the middle of the nineteenth century, were filmed and added to our collection. In addition we received the records of two churches of the United Brethren in Christ sects..