

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

October 10, 1951

TO THE HONORABLE

THE HALL OF RECORDS COMMISSION

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

Gentlemen:

In the past this letter has contained a summary of our accomplishments for the fiscal year just ended and a statement of our hopes and expectations for the fiscal year current. This time I have given, in the introduction to each chapter, a comparison of the work done this year with that of the two previous years when that was feasible so that our progress, or lack of it, might be evident to you. I have done this because I feel it necessary to reserve this space to point out some of the problems which have only now arisen and which promise to become more difficult if not presently solved.

We have, first of all, failed to maintain the uniformity in record disposal procedures which we had achieved with great patience over the years. You will find in the section devoted to "Acts of Assembly and Opinions of the Attorney General" that the Disposal Act of 1949, which required all the records of a court of record to be kept permanently, was in fact amended to permit one Clerk of Court, under certain conditions, to dispose of his original Land Records. You will note in the same section that the general authority of the Hall of Records Commission and the Board of Public Works in the matter of records disposal has been seriously challenged in the case of Baltimore City records. You will find, too, in the discussion of "Scheduling and Disposal of Records" that the Hall of Records, having expended a good deal of study and time on the record problem of several agencies, finds itself unable to require that its recommendations be followed.

This is not to say that there has been no progress in records management and disposal—on the contrary there has been a great deal. What has happened is that the total number of solutions demanded has increased enormously, far beyond our ability to cope with them. In part this is due to the fact that since 1939 the Hall of Records has added only one full-time