

Many of the items received from private sources during the past year are of extraordinary value. Two interesting documents, one signed by Leonard Calvert in 1642 and the other by Giles Brent in 1643 (now the oldest in our collection), were found among a group of papers donated to the University of California Library. Through the courtesy of Mr. James V. Mink, Assistant University Archivist, arrangements were made to transfer them to the Hall of Records. They had escaped originally from the Maryland Court of Appeals and now, after at least two trips across the continent, they have returned — and they are most welcome!

Over two-thirds of the 349 items contained in the manuscript collection deposited by Mr. Claude W. Dorsey relate to the personal affairs of Joseph Dowson, a Maryland merchant, his wife, Elizabeth, and their son, Alfred. The remaining papers are mainly concerned with Nicholas and other members of the Dorsey family. Also of interest are a broadside, published in Baltimore in 1797, proclaiming that Joseph Cooke, "Goldsmith, Jeweller, &c." will be plying his trade in Baltimore; and a theatre bill dated 1798, announcing the showing of three plays entitled "Grecian Daughter," "Drunk-en Provençal" and "Who's the Dupe." There is also a letter of proposal of marriage, truly a *rara avis* among colonial family papers.

The Waring Collection, comprising 673 items, was deposited by Mr. and Mrs. James Waring and Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Waring of Chaptico in St. Mary's County. It contains a number of original deeds for St. Mary's County, which are unusually important because the Land Record volumes in which they were recorded were destroyed in the Courthouse fire of 1831. Many invoices, accounts and letters illustrating the relationship between Maryland tobacco planters and merchants in England are also included. There is also a plat of Bladensburgh which gives the names of many of the lot owners and crude sketches of several buildings. An unexpected prize is a letter, written January 5, 1818, by the aged John Adams to William Wirt, then United States Attorney General, commenting on the recently published *Life of Patrick Henry*.

A number of unique deeds of St. Mary's County are also found in the collection of manuscripts deposited by Mrs. Jessie W. Bennett. Similar deeds were likewise included among the papers photocopied through the courtesy of Mrs. Stephen Jones and Mr. Spencer Brookbank. The several collections of family papers mentioned above are too large to list in this report, but chronological lists have been made available for use in our Research Room.