

MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE HALL OF RECORDS COMMISSION

At a meeting of the Hall of Records Commission, held on Monday, October 30, 1944 in the Hall of Records, the following members were present:

The Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals,  
Honorable Ogle Marbury

The President of the Maryland Historical Society,  
Honorable George L. Radcliffe

The Comptroller of the Treasury,  
Honorable J. Millard Tawes

The President of the St. John's College,  
Mr. Stringfellow Barr

Governor Herbert R. O'Connor had informed the Secretary prior to the meeting that he would not be able to attend because of a previous engagement in Baltimore County; Dr. Isaiah Bowman informed the Secretary that he would be prevented from attending because of a meeting on the same day of the Advisory Board of the School of Medicine. Dr. J. Hall Pleasants, President of the Board of the Peabody Institute, was also unable to attend.

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 P.M. by the Chairman. The Minutes of the meeting of June 7, 1944 were read by the Secretary and approved.

The Chairman reported that he, Dr. Pleasants and the Archivist had attended a hearing of the Legislative Council in Baltimore on July 13th and that he had spoken in favor of a Bill designed to have transferred, to the Hall of Records, all records now in the County courthouses which had been made before 1787, the date of the adoption of the Federal Constitution. The Chairman also reported that he had prepared a tentative Bill to be discussed by the Legislative Council and that he had since that time received a Bill prepared by the Council which incorporated all of the important features of the Bill which he himself had prepared. He was of the opinion that the reception of the Legislative Council was generally favorable and that he had high hopes that the Bill would be passed at the next meeting of the General Assembly.

At this point, the suggestion was made by Senator Radcliffe and Mr. Tawes that Minutes of the meetings of the Hall of Records Commission be sent to the various members of the Commission. The Secretary informed the Commission that it had been his practice to send such copies only to those members who had been prevented from attending the meeting but that in the future each member would be sent a copy.

The Chairman then reported on his meeting with Dr. Pleasants to discuss a division of fields of publication between the Maryland Archives Commission and the Hall of Records Commission. He indicated that no definite conclusion had been reached as yet but that the matter was still under discussion. Senator Radcliffe made several suggestions indicating that he thought that there was sufficient material to keep both Commissions profitably occupied for many years to come but that he believed that more consideration should be given to the matter. The Archivist was especially requested by the Chairman to present a publication plan to the Commission in the near future.

The Archivist announced that Liber A, Prince George's County Court records will be published in cooperation with the Littleton-Griswold Fund Committee of the American Historical Association.

The discussion then turned to the matter of the use of the Hall of Records building. At a meeting of the Hall of Records Commission on February 15, 1937 "it was moved and carried that the use of the building be denied for all purposes other than those in the Act creating it." The Archivist proposed that should it meet with the approval of the Commission, the building be made available for other purposes, such as lectures, exhibits, et cetera, dealing with the history of the region. After some discussion, Mr. Barr moved that exhibits, lectures and meetings related to the major interest of the Hall of Records be held at the Hall of Records subject to the discretion of the Archivist. The motion was seconded by Mr. Tawes and passed.

During the early years of the Hall of Records, the Commission had discussed the matter of collecting biographical materials about living Marylanders so that at least the bare chronology of their lives might be preserved for posterity. The Archivist asked for further consideration of this matter. Various problems were discussed by the Commission, among them what Marylanders should properly fall into the category in which we would be interested; what type of information should be gathered; and in what form it should be kept. Mr. Barr then moved that the Archivist be empowered to accumulate biographical materials on the leading officials of the Maryland Government and their representatives in Congress. Mr. Tawes offered an amendment providing that the questionnaire to be formulated by the Archivist be submitted for approval to the Hall of Records Commission before being used. Mr. Barr accepted Mr. Tawes' amendment and the motion was passed as amended.

The next item on the agenda, a report by the Archivist on the activities of the Hall of Records since June 7, 1944, was omitted because of the lateness of the hour. The Archivist's suggestion that the report be sent to each of the members was accepted.

The last item on the agenda: "Do the members of the Hall of Records Commission wish that the Hall of Records take some part in the preservation of the records of this war" was then discussed. Fortunately, Senator Radcliffe, the Chairman of the Special Historical Commission appointed by Governor O'Connor to gather such material, was present, and he outlined to the Commission the steps which were being taken to preserve records of the various aspects of Maryland's participation in the activities of the war. The Commission thereupon offered to Senator Radcliffe the wholehearted cooperation of the Hall of Records.

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 5:30 P.M. subject to the call of the Chairman.

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Chairman

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Secretary