

8054-31-29

Correspondence re Site Selection & Staff

DR. JAMES BORDLEY, JR.
PROFESSIONAL BUILDING
330 NORTH CHARLES STREET
BALTIMORE, MD.

December 11, 1933.

Governor Albert C. Ritchie,
Annapolis, Md.

Dear Governor,

As a citizen of Maryland I am deeply appreciative of your efforts in behalf of the Hall of Records and that is the impelling reason for this letter. Before final action is taken on the estimates for the building I hope you will choose a different site. I have made sufficient investigations upon which to base the statement that the Hall will from time to time require expansion. I am convinced that any attempt to expand on the St. John's site will be resisted and reasonably so. I believe the resistance will be set up not only by the Board of the College but as well by others interested in the preservation of old Annapolis.

The ideal site is the vacant house and lot opposite the Post Office. The primary costs may be more but the end results will justify the expenditure.

There is another important factor in the preservation of the records and that is a properly trained custodian and a Board to oversee the work - in fact to select the custodian. While you are Governor the Board is not required but some day the responsibility may fall upon the shoulders of some man less interested and less intelligently informed. I have always felt that the most interested group from which to select such a Board is the Court of Appeals. But above all there should be a custodian fully cognizant of the value of the archives, fully abreast the modern methods of preserving old records, fully competent to make those records available to American historians and who has the editorial ability to present their contained facts to the general public. It goes without saying that this man can be found only after most mature consideration.

If these conditions are met the Hall of Records will be a monument to your administration, if not it will only be a fireproof dumping ground.

Personally I would have advised the Committee to first choose the custodian and then draw the plans. But this, of course, is too late.

Do not trouble to reply.

With kindest regards and highest esteem,

Sincerely yours,

James Bordley Jr

Harry Runkle

December 12, 1933

Dr. James Bordley, Jr.,
330 N. Charles Street,
Baltimore, Maryland.

Dear Dr. Bordley:-

I received your favor of December 11th. I am afraid it is too late to change the location of the Hall of Records. I know, of course, that some people feel that another site would be better, but not long ago I asked the St. John's Board, through Senator Melvin, to reopen the subject, if they wished to do so, but apparently they did not. We have no funds to purchase the lot next to the Post Office, and none could be made available unless the Legislature of 1935 should supply them. I realize, of course, the importance of a properly trained Custodian, and will do my best to secure one.

Sincerely yours,

Governor.

R-L