

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To the Maryland Historical Society:

GENTLEMEN AND LADIES :

This volume of the proceedings of the Provincial Court of Maryland, 1670-1675, is Volume LXV of the *Archives of Maryland* and number 10 of the sub-series on the courts. The sixth volume of the Provincial Court records, it begins in February 17, 1670/1 where Volume LVII ended, and continues to November 16, 1675. The text printed here reproduces the manuscript as exactly as the resources of a modern press permit, for the Publications Committee still believe what the first editor, Dr. William Hand Browne said in the preface to Volume I: "The moment an editor allows himself to make any correction, however slight or obvious, the integrity of the text is gone, and in its stead is given a version", of uncertain accuracy (*Archives of Maryland*, Vol. I, p. lv.). It was set directly from photostats of the original Libers JJ and MM, now in the Land Office in Annapolis. A concession or two had to be made. The table printed here on page 538 in one column was written by the clerk in two columns, like a page from a double-entry ledger. But he could compress his handwriting and get them side by side. This the press could not do: type is not made of rubber.

The handwriting of the late seventeenth century was not that of the twentieth. At its best it is not easy for the twentieth century to read, and often these scribes did not do their best. Sometimes they seem to have known or cared little about the record they were keeping. A straight line over a letter is supposed to denote the omission of *m* or *n* after it: many times here the sign is used where the omitted letter belongs before the marked letter. In any case the contractions present a problem for the typesetter. There are, for instance, six different combinations used with the letter *p*, and each of them must have been cut separately every time it appears. It is true that a *p* with a stroke over it could have been set easily, but such a combination means only *pm* or *pn*, a combination for which we have had little or no use. Especially valuable would have been a character for *p* with a straight stroke through the stem, or a *p* with a stroke curved around the stem. The first of these means *per*, *par* or *por*, the latter means *pro*, and the two of them appear on every page. Accordingly, since it was substantially impossible to reproduce all the contraction marks, it was decided to reproduce none of them. People interested in seventeenth century records, to whom this volume is especially attractive, might have been confused or annoyed by an inaccurate contraction: they can, without too much difficulty, read *imparle* for *imple*, or *person* for *pson*.