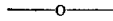


There is also a collection of English laws, as well as current legal periodicals and journals. The library also has a number of rare books including the four volumes of the Audubon subscription edition and the most complete file of the *Maryland Gazette* now in existence. All together there are approximately 112,000 volumes on the shelves of the library. The library is also a depository for publications of the State government, and all State officials and State agencies are required to place in the library one copy of all reports and publications. The library also acts as the distributing agency for the Journals of the General Assembly, the Laws of Maryland, the *Maryland Reports* and the Annotated Code (Code 1951, Art. 41, secs. 121, 132-147). The reading rooms are open to the public Monday through Friday.

Appropriations	1953	1954
General Fund	\$30,498	\$32,235
Staff: 4		



COMMISSIONER OF THE LAND OFFICE

Harry L. Harcum, Commissioner, 1955
 Malcolm W. Waring, Administrative Assistant

Hall of Records, Annapolis Telephone: Colonial 3-3451

The Commissioner of the Land Office is appointed by the Governor, with the consent of the Senate, to hold office during the term of the Governor (Const. 1867, Art. VII, sec. 14). The Land Office keeps records pertaining to boundaries of land, including records of all warrants, certificates and patents for land from the settlement of the Province of Maryland in 1634, or abstracts of deeds from 1786 to the present time, and abstracts of mortgages and releases from 1900 to June 1, 1949. Every clerk, after he records any deed, mortgage, release of mortgage or lease of real estate must make or have made a 35 mm. microfilm copy of every such record and transmit it to the Commissioner of the Land Office at the end of each year. The Commissioner hears and determines all disputes which may arise concerning the validity of surveys. The Land Office is now engaged in making, filing, and recording plats for current subdivisions of land; copies of such plats are sent to the Supervisors of Assessment upon request. All plats filed with the Clerks of Courts before June 1, 1945, are also being microfilmed by the Land Office. (Code 1951, Art. 17, secs. 69, 70, 73, 74; Art. 56, secs. 1-16, 18, 19, 25).

All land now included in the limits of the State of Maryland was granted to Cecil, Lord Baltimore, in 1632. In 1680, there was established a Land Office, and four years later "The Land Council". This body was authorized to hear and determine all matters relating to land. Four years later when Maryland became a crown colony, the Land Office was closed. In 1715, after a long contest with the Governor and Council, the Secretary and the Assembly, the Lord Proprietor emerged with his rights restored, and the Land Office was reopened. After the Revolution, the State assumed the control of the Land Office (Acts Feb. sess. 1777, ch. 15). From 1781 until 1841, there was a Land Office for the Western Shore and another for the Eastern Shore. The Constitution of 1851 created the office of the Commissioner of the Land Office.

Appropriations	1953	1954
General Fund	\$33,995	\$27,720
Staff: 7		