

decision, but since space is now failing the decision must be made, for if it is decided that our responsibility is that of a true archival agency and covers all of the records of the State, then provision must be made for housing these records. Recently the Board of Public Works, finding the cost of housing records in Baltimore offices intolerably uneconomical, granted funds to the Director of Budget and Procurement for the rehabilitation of a tobacco warehouse in which non-current records might be kept. This is obviously a stop-gap measure and should not be continued too long, for unattended records will always disappear in the end. They should be destroyed to begin with, if they are not worth keeping, or special housing and attention should be provided for them. The Archivist recommends that such record storage space be provided either in the new office building which is contemplated for Baltimore, or in a separate specially constructed building. This record storage space should be controlled by the Hall of Records Commission or some other agency set up exclusively for this purpose by the Legislature.

Repair of Records

On many occasions the Archivist has been asked to provide repair facilities for those governmental records which will remain in the county seats or in the offices of State government. It has not been possible to do this because of the limited funds and personnel at the Hall of Records. Unfortunately, nowhere else in the State can this work be done; therefore, the county officer must either have the job done by amateurs—usually so badly that it would have been better to have done nothing at all—or he must resign himself to the thought of having the records disappear little by little. A compromise program, and one very often found in Maryland, is for the record to be withdrawn from circulation. While this device helps somewhat to preserve records, it makes them utterly useless, and besides it violates those salutary laws which require a record custodian to make records available to all legitimate researchers.

An ideal solution to this problem would be for the State to require such repair work to be done at the Hall of Records. The equipment and the technique already exist here. An additional worker and a small appropriation for materials would put this plan into operation immediately. An additional advantage in having the