

Mary's County. We received Will Books dated from 1658 to 1791, one of which also contains Accounts from 1674 to 1720. Unfortunately, many of the other probate records of the County have been lost, including all the early papers. Presumably they were burned in the fire of 1831 which destroyed all of the early records of the Clerk of Court. Without much question, this was the most serious loss of county records in Maryland, as St. Mary's is the county where the first settlement was made. The early volume records of the Caroline County Register of Wills, like the original papers which had been previously transferred, contain numerous entries dating much earlier than 1773, the date when the County was erected. The explanation for this is that the entries relate to inhabitants of Dorchester who resided in that part of the County which later became part of Caroline.

At the beginning of the year, our program of bringing in the county land records dating before 1788 and replacing them with photostat copies was complete, except for Caroline and Harford Counties. However, a beginning has been made in each county. Liber A of the Caroline County Land Records proved to be especially valuable, containing as it did Revolutionary Oaths of Fidelity and the Census of 1778 for three of the five Hundreds of the County. The volumes received from the Annapolis City Treasurer are important in that they help fill gaps in the records already here.

Just before Governor Lane left office, he decided, at the suggestion of the Archivist, to leave all his public papers and correspondence in the custody of the State, taking with him only items of purely personal interest. In doing so he followed the lead of his predecessor, Governor Herbert R. O'Connor. It is to be hoped that they have established a precedent for future governors. The records of the first biennium of Governor Lane's administration have already been transferred; the second biennium will follow when it is no longer needed by the present administration.

The most noteworthy of the materials received from private sources are the Booth Papers, deposited by Mrs. William Borden Cobb. The Reverend Bartholomew Booth conducted a school in Frederick County before and during the Revolution. One fascinating item in the collection is a letter written by Benedict Arnold on May 25, 1779, when he was actively engaged in traitorous correspondence with the British although his treachery was not detected until September 1780. It is evident that in