

period 1800-1920. Typewritten copies of these cards were filed in the library of this Department. The original cards were given to us. We completed the alphabeting, interfiled where the alphabetical arrangement ran only for a limited period of years, checked and edited the cards.

For several technical reasons we decided that it would not be possible to use the cards as they were. Therefore, we arranged them in groups of twelve and photostated the whole collection of 69,135 cards. The resulting photostat pages were bound into six volumes. This index has proved to have many uses: it is invaluable for private laws — changes of name, divorces, adoptions, relief; it is a great time saver in checking charters and amendments to charters during the period when the General Assembly handled such affairs; it gives easy access to local laws and to laws which were both passed and repealed between Codes. Since this index also includes Resolutions, it fills the gaps left by many indexers of the annual printed *Laws of Maryland*.

Among the microfilm records listed elsewhere in this report you will find an *Index to Wills of Allegany County*. Our collection now contains many microfilm copies of such county-made indexes.

CIRCULATION

The number of searchers who came to the Hall of Records during the year was not quite equal to that of the previous year but it was up to the high average which has been set over the last few years. The figures for three fiscal years are given here below:

Fiscal year 1951	1,050
Fiscal year 1952	1,183
Fiscal year 1953	1,133

Perhaps a truer estimate of the growing usefulness of our records is to be found in a comparison of the number of documents circulated. In this respect we far exceeded our work of last year, and last year was the busiest until then, in the history of the Hall of Records. The totals for the last three years are as follows:

Fiscal year 1951	6,961
Fiscal year 1952	7,600
Fiscal year 1953	8,225