

from Canada, Great Britain and Hawaii. In reply we sent out more letters than ever before, and while we are glad that we can be of service to our correspondents, we are only moderately enthusiastic about the increase in their numbers during the past few years. The difficulty is that in time and money this is the most expensive service of all.

Number of letters written in fiscal year 1952	1,190
Number of letters written in fiscal year 1953	1,293
Number of letters written in fiscal year 1954	1,318

We are also frequently called on to furnish information over the telephone and to a certain number of individuals, mainly Annapolitans, who come in person.

PHOTOCOPYING

The members of the Hall of Records Commission will surely recall that in addition to the large microfilming program of the Records Management Division, the Hall of Records maintains a photographic laboratory with microfilm and photostat equipment designed to serve the traditional needs of an archival establishment: providing copies of records for searchers, adding to our own record collection by photographing records in the counties and elsewhere which are not available to us in the original, and adding to our library of books and documents where photography is cheaper than the printed item.

How varied are the uses of photography in modern archival practice may be illustrated by a few examples from the work of this year. Although we completed our program of photostating all the county land record volumes through 1788 some years ago, missed volumes turn up from time to time: this year we found three eighteenth-century volumes of Cecil County Land Commissions. The photostatic copies were sent to the County, the originals remained here. When we were working with the Dorchester County records, we did not photograph internal (self-contained or volume-) indexes, because a good general index was available in the Clerk's vault. However, because of the increase of business during the last ten years, genealogists and historians have found it progressively more difficult to gain access to these indexes; therefore we went back to the original volumes, and made and bound photostatic copies of their internal indexes, which are now used exclusively by researchers. Last year we photostated, after editing, half of a rough card index to the Laws of Maryland, 1800-1920; this year we completed the task, 1,264 pages of twelve cards each.