

## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

November 19, 1954

TO THE HONORABLE  
THE HALL OF RECORDS COMMISSION  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

*Gentlemen:*

Without a doubt the most noteworthy accomplishment of the Hall of Records in the fiscal year just over was the initiation of the Records Management Program, authorized by Chapter 436 of the Acts of 1953. A full account of the work of the first year will be found elsewhere in this report ("Records Management Division"). But here I want to bring to your special attention some of the difficulties which prevented this work from making as much progress as I had hoped it would.

Records Management is a new profession, and its practitioners have all had their training in the federal government or in big industry. Neither of these fields provides ideal preparation for records management in state and county government. But if these training fields were perfect for our purposes, we could not hope to profit by them so long as our salary scales are so much less than those paid by industry and the federal government. We were fortunate in having for part of the year an experienced governmental records specialist. Under his direction we were able to set up procedures, establish controls, and design forms. The work of actually preparing retention and disposal schedules had hardly begun, however, when the administrator of the program rejoined the federal government, to be followed shortly thereafter by his Secretary. This double loss toward the end of the year brought our records work almost to a standstill; and when replacements were found, several months were again required for orientation. Finally, records management does not work automatically, nor is it inexorably set in motion by a mandatory Act of the General Assembly: its success depends almost entirely on the confidence and cooperation of other governmental agencies. Confidence and cooperation are not acquired overnight, they must be earned by good deeds.

You will be interested, I am sure, in the first full year's work of our bindery. Again, the beginning has been difficult — where in these mechanical days does one find a trained hand binder of fine books? — but progress has been enough to continue the effort for one more year at least. I have