

ARCHIVAL AND MANUSCRIPT ACCESSIONS

The past year witnessed a continuation of the trend of recent years which finds a great predominance of microfilm among the materials added to our archival holdings. Practically all of this microfilm is produced in furtherance of our program of preparing security copies of county land records for the period 1851-1949.

The microfilming of the land records of Anne Arundel, Howard and Queen Anne's Counties was completed last year. These may now be included with Calvert and Caroline as counties in which the Land Record series is completely insured by microfilm copies. Baltimore and Prince George's Counties are nearing completion and should be finished by the time this report appears in print. We acquired microfilm copies of the land records of Cecil County for the years 1918-1949 by virtue of an agreement with The Cott Index Company of Columbus, Ohio, whereby we furnished positive microfilm copies of the land records for 1949-1957 in exchange. The Cott Company had contracted to prepare a general index to the land records beginning with 1918 and needed the copies in order to do the indexing in its home office.

In Baltimore City, the Block Books have been completed to 1953, which is as far as we shall go in this series at present. A beginning has been made in filming the approximately 12,000 volumes of City land records which remain to be done. Some idea of the magnitude of this task may be seen in the list below which shows that although 156 volumes have already been filmed, the project has advanced only seven years, 1850-1856.

This apparent preoccupation with microfilm is not to imply that we have altogether neglected to give any attention to the acquisition of original records. From the National Archives alone we transferred 333 volumes of customs house records relating primarily to the Port of Baltimore, but also to Annapolis and Havre de Grace. The essential information in these records is duplicated by materials which are being retained by the National Archives, but it was our thought that persons interested in Maryland shipping might find it more convenient to do their research in Annapolis. Searchers are cautioned that there are no immigration or passenger lists among these records.

A day spent in the attic of the Frederick County Courthouse by two members of our archival staff ended with the transfer of the records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court listed below. We were looking especially for marriage records that follow the single volume in our custody which dates from 1778 to 1798. We found six volumes covering the period 1814-1890 and portions of several indexes to these records. The record from 1799 to 1813 is still missing. The records in the attic were stacked on wooden shelves and on the floor without any attempt at arrangement. It is possible therefore that the missing volume may yet be found. We are hopeful also that a more thorough search of the attic will produce material which will fill at least some of the gaps in the Judgment Records, Court Minutes and other series.