

*Maryland Manual* in 1947, and that has now become a duty assigned us by law. We were made a depository for current State documents, and by now our collection of Maryland documents, both old and current, is perhaps second to none. At one moment we agreed to organize a Department of Information, but we agreed only with the condition that we be required to keep it for no longer than one year. After that time a new agency was created to take over.

In 1953, we undertook to establish a Records Management Division. Archivists everywhere saw that they could no longer ignore the proliferation of governmental records which began in the 1930's. They recognized too that they could not forever leave the responsibility for the care of modern records to file clerks. It was at once obvious to archivists that no longer could all records be kept except at awesome cost to the taxpayer. Therefore, in order to be able to maintain significant records permanently it became necessary to dispose summarily of those of little or no worth. And after the accumulation had been dealt with, some order had to be put in the making of records—to prepare them for their period of current usefulness as well as for their final destination in the archives, in the record center, or in the incinerator. This is the proper work of records management and it properly falls within the interest and concern of the Archivist. In this new field we are moving cautiously—as we should—but gratifying progress has been made.

For whatever has been accomplished the Archivist is grateful first of all to the State of Maryland which has, through its several branches of government, supported our work; and this lent it the prestige and authority which it needed. In many cases there were objections from custodians to the transfer of records, especially those of the earliest period. These objections were for the most part motivated by patriotism and local pride. It demanded the finest quality of local patriotism to send away to Annapolis historical county records so that they could be better cared for and more easily consulted. Especially helpful in the work of collecting county records were the members of the Bench and Bar, the Clerks of Court, the Registers of Wills and the County Commissioners.

Thanks are due to the members of the Hall of Records Commission, especially the successive chairmen (invariably the Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals), who have established the policies of the Hall of Records and who have supported the Archivist in carrying them out.