

# ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY

## Records

Of all the records of Anne Arundel County preceding the State House fire of October 1704, only the current volume of the court proceedings, Liber G; the current volume of the land records, Liber W. T. No. 2; and the preceding volume, Liber W. T. No. 1, survived the flames. These three volumes may owe their rescue to the fact that they were kept in the courtroom on the ground floor rather than in the loft room in which the clerk normally kept his records. Another possibility is that the clerk had taken them to his home that evening to make current entries. In any case, no scrap of record for the first fifty years of the county has survived, except for one and a half pages of a court session of March 31, 1694/95, copied into the records of St. James' Parish.<sup>1</sup>

The land records listed below through 1778 remained in the custody of the Clerk of the Court until transferred to the Hall of Records January 29, 1937. Later records have followed from time to time, the last, those covering the period from 1789 to 1855, having come in February 1955.

The history of the early court records is more complex. For many years the early volumes were stored in the basement of the courthouse. Then the Daughters of the American Revolution and other interested parties were able to persuade the General Assembly to remove these records to the custody of the Land Office.<sup>2</sup> They were rebound by the Land Office, but in the process two volumes, November Term 1720 to August Term 1722, were overlooked. When the Land Office moved to the new Hall of Records building, these two volumes remained in the basement of the old Court of Appeals Building where the Land Office had been housed since 1906. They were found there and transferred to the custody of the Hall of Records Commission in August 1937 to be restored to their proper place in the series which, in the meanwhile (November 1935) had been transferred from the Land Office. The Minutes of the March Court of 1767 were subsequently found in the basement of the Anne Arundel County courthouse by workers of the Historical Records Survey of the WPA and from there, brought to the Hall of Records on April 18, 1940. Finally, some of the original minutes of the court which had found their way into the John Work Garrett Library of Baltimore, now a part of The Johns Hopkins University, were microfilmed for the Hall of Records in 1941.<sup>3</sup> The later court record series, in which there are many serious gaps, were transferred in 1955.<sup>4</sup>

## Note

In the first volume of this study (p. 13) there appears the following: "Before the State House . . . in Annapolis was completed, the General Assembly and the other agencies of the Colonial government met in private homes or inns and the County Court probably did the same, although there are no records extant to prove this." Subsequently Miss Constance

<sup>1</sup> Vestry Minutes, 1695-1793, p. 1, *Ms.* Hall of Records.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. 440, Acts of 1912.

<sup>3</sup> Courtesy of Elizabeth Baer, Librarian, Evergreen House Foundation.

<sup>4</sup> A list of the Colonial Records of Anne Arundel County then known was published in 1927 by the late Louis Dow Scisco (*Má.*

*Hist. Mag.*, Vol. 22, pp. 62-67); this list was used as a basis for the more comprehensive list which appeared in *Inventory of the County and Town Archives of Maryland No. 2, Anne Arundel County, Md.* Historical Records Survey, 1941, Baltimore. This volume also contains a list of Early Annapolis records at the Hall of Records compiled by Morris L. Radoff (*Md. Hist. Mag.*, Vol. 35 [1940], pp. 74-78).