

Baltimore May 5th 1864
 To His Excellency Governor Bradford
 My dear Sir

When I was at Annapolis about three weeks ago, I had occasion to look at some of the Maryland State Papers, and found five or six of the Compartment of the Iron Safes, in the new fire proof building, filled with them. These papers had been shown to me a couple of years ago by the Rev. Dr. Allen (who removed them, to this office, during the term of Gov. Hicks) and, on both visits, it struck me that something ought to be promptly done to protect them and put them in order.

These papers are mostly still on the original files tied up in bundles, generally without any classification. I found the packages full of correspondence, and documents of historical interest and value, from leading men, State and national, of the revolution. They now lie indiscriminately, in dirty disordered piles in these safes.

Now let me say that with a desire that has long progressed and to aid in bringing the historical materials owned by the State into some order for use & preservation, it will give me real pleasure to open and arrange the papers for the government so that they may be easily classified bound in volumes, indexed, and placed in the Executive Department for reference and guardianship. If you permit me I will, without compensation present or future, undertake the task during the summer as an occupation of my leisure time, and I think, by autumn the completed volumes may be placed on your shelves.

I have conversed with Col. John H. Alexander, who has ^{been} engaged, as you are aware for several years in arranging Maryland Papers, and I may add that he approved the plan and will lend his assistance and advice. It will be necessary to send these papers to Baltimore and have them placed in a locked room in the Historical Society edifice, where the work can be securely performed; and if the project shall receive your approbation the Colonel and myself, or one of us, will come down to Annapolis and superintend their package and transportation.

I am dear Sir, truly yours
 Francis Pickens