

# THE CLAMSHELL

A Quarterly Newsletter of the Maryland State Archives

Box 4, Folder 1

Winter 2023

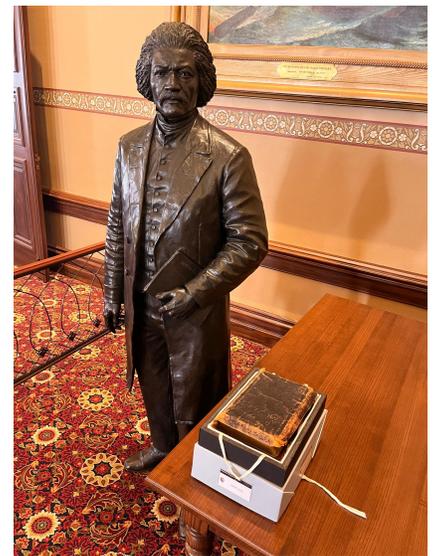
## Letter from the State Archivist

Transition is a regular occurrence in Annapolis as elections bring new faces to town to conduct the business of government. It's a cycle repeated for the past three centuries and January 2023 ushered in the next round. However, rarely have so many offices changed in one year within the executive and legislative branches, including the office of governor (and Lt. governor), comptroller, attorney general, and within only a couple years of new occupants in the office of the senate president, speaker of the house, and the treasurer.

There's been transition in the judicial branch too, with the name change of Maryland's highest court from the Courts of Appeal to the Maryland Supreme Court.

As offices change, permanent records are transferred to the Archives. Therefore, the past six months have been particularly busy as Appraisal and Information Technology staff review retention schedules, receive paper records and process the ever increasing volume of electronic records. Maryland Manual staff are kept busy updating and editing organizational charts and staff directories. And Special Collections and Artistic Property staff review and receive artwork and artifacts acquired over the previous administration, while supporting new office holders in selecting art and furnishings from the state's collections.

Transitions are also marked by special events, such as portrait unveilings and swearing-in ceremonies. Governor Moore chose to be sworn in with a Bible owned by Frederick Douglass, preserved in the collection of the National Park Service. This symbolic gesture by Maryland's first Black governor underscores the importance of preserving and making accessible the historical records of our past—something the Archives engages in every day.



The Frederick Douglass Bible photographed in the Old House of Delegates Chamber, January 18, 2023.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ERB'.

Elaine Rice Bachmann, State Archivist

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## Records Management - A Definition

Records management is maintaining a standardized administrative control of records to safeguard their existence and use. If the value of a record created by a government agency in the state of Maryland never ceases, the record is transferred to the Archives. If the value of a record ultimately ends, the record is destroyed, with approval of the State Archivist. Not all records need to be kept forever, but public officials must follow established procedures for destroying or transferring records. For more information about the Maryland State Archives' role in records management in partnership with the Maryland Department of General Services and Maryland government agencies, please see our [website](#).

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## Staff Updates

### Retirement of Tim Brooks

Tim Brooks worked with databases and programming for the State in a number of different positions over the years before his retirement. He helped build the very first versions of MDLandRec and lent his vast knowledge and experience to the staff to help solve many problems that faced us. In his retirement, he will enjoy the company of his family as well as spending time with his beloved guitars and music.

### Outreach

Staff members have been very busy giving and organizing outreach presentations, many of which you can find recorded and accessible for viewing on our [Presentation Library](#). For example, Owen Lourie shared research on “Maryland’s Jews and Military Service” during our January Lunch and Learn series. Maria Day shared “How Yesterday’s Stories Become Part of the Archives” at Historic Londontown’s Winter Lecture.

Chris Haley moderated the panel discussion and Corey Lewis served as a panelist for the film screening and discussion of *The Educational Divide: The Story of East Side High*. This event was sponsored by The Annapolis Film Society and The Links Inc, Annapolis Chapter. Chris Haley

presented “It's More Than History Lecture Series: There Was Slavery in Maryland?!” for Baltimore National Heritage Area. Corey Lewis gave remarks regarding Records Preservation at the 2023 City of Annapolis Black History Month Celebration.

If you want to learn more about upcoming presentations, please visit our [events](#) page online or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

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## 2023 Summer Internships Available!

The Maryland State Archives is currently accepting applications for the Summer 2023 student internship program. These are in person, full-time, paid positions in both traditional archival science and information technology. The application deadline for both these positions is Wednesday, March 15.



- Archival Internship Positions

<https://jobapscloud.com/MD/sup/bulpreview.asp?R1=23&R2=005302&R3=0001>

- Information Technology Internship Positions

<https://jobapscloud.com/MD/sup/bulpreview.asp?R1=23&R2=005302&R3=0004>

- Special Topic Internship Positions - Indigenous Archive Project for the Eastern Shore of Maryland

[https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/educ/html/indigenous\\_project\\_intern.html](https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/educ/html/indigenous_project_intern.html)

In addition to the listings above, we also have a student volunteer program for experience, academic or community service credit, for those that would prefer a part-time, more flexible schedule. These are also in person positions. You may apply for these volunteer openings here for the summer, or at any point during the year:

- On Site Volunteer Internships

<https://msa.maryland.gov/msa/educ/interns/html/allinterns.html>

Finally, we have a remote only volunteer program creating indexes for inventoried archival records using the [FromThePage](#) website. For more information or to join on this remote only student volunteer opportunity, please contact project director Liz Coelho directly at [liz.coelho@maryland.gov](mailto:liz.coelho@maryland.gov).

# Portrait Unveiling

The Archives is honored to play an important role in the commissioning, preservation and interpretation of portraits in the state-owned art collection. And the unveiling of these portraits is always exciting. Over the last few months, we assisted and attended the unveilings of three important new additions to the state owned art collection. Portrait commissions are typically funded by donations, and the sitter or group commissioning the painting chooses the artist. Once completed, the portraits are transferred to the custody and care of the Commission on Artistic Property.

On January 5, 2023 a portrait of Peter Franchot by [Carolyn Egeli](#) was unveiled at a luncheon celebrating his nearly four decades in public office. Later the same day, a new portrait of a young Thurgood Marshall was unveiled in the Judicial Proceedings Committee. An initiative of Senator Will Smith, artist [Ernest Shaw, Jr.](#) created a fresh and engaging portrait of Marshall shown around the time he represented [Donald Gaines Murray](#) in 1935.



Caption: Elaine Rice Bachmann served as Master of Ceremonies for the unveiling of Governor Hogan's portrait in the Governor's Reception Room on January 10.



Caption: Left to Right: Chris Haley, Elaine Rice Bachmann, Senator William C. Smith, Jr., Catherine Arthur, artist Ernest Shaw, Dr. Leslie King Hammond, Professor Larry Gibson, Chris Kintzel, Luke Pinton.

# Research Reflections

## Saying the Name: John Thomas Scharf

by James G. Bigwood, Assistant Editor, *Maryland Manual On-Line*

Readers of this newsletter are doubtlessly familiar with the collective works of the 19th-century historian, Col. John Thomas Scharf (1843–1898). One need not look any further than the Fall 2022 issue of [The Clamshell](#). Researchers and genealogists routinely cite Scharf’s publications to this day, but something that might surprise even the most well-read scholars of Marylandia, is that for as great an influence as Scharf had—however well known and respected he may have been—people rarely, if ever, say his name correctly. Certainly not on the first try.

Mass confusion is understandable, because the pronunciation of “Scharf” is counterintuitive: The first three letters of the name, ‘sch’, are voiced identically to the first three letters of the word “school,” thus sonically rendering Scharf as SKARF, and not SHARF. As F. Edward Wright, then-editor of the *Maryland Genealogical Society Bulletin*, succinctly noted in the introduction to his Summer 1990 editorial: “J. Thomas Scharf [pronounced as the clothing article, scarf] was the genealogist’s historian.” Indeed Wright was, well, for lack of a better word...right.<sup>1</sup>

How do we know that he pronounced his name “Skarf” and not “Sharf,” especially since there are no known recordings of Scharf’s voice...? Because the original records tell us so—even if they do it indirectly. Scharf is known as a Marylander, but he spent the end of his life in New York City, and the most straightforward piece of evidence comes from his 1897 application to join the New York State Society (styled the “Empire State Society”) of the Sons of the American Revolution. Scharf claimed descent from a Revolutionary War soldier named “William Scarff,” who was born in Baltimore (now Harford) County circa 1749 and served as a “First-Lieutenant in Col. Edward Cockey’s Upper Battalion” of Baltimore County Militia from 1776–1778.<sup>2</sup>

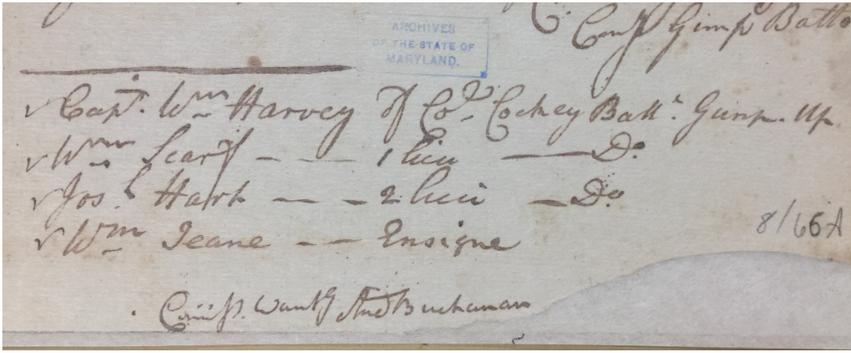
The actual service record of William Scarff (whose name appears variously as “Scarff”) is slightly more convoluted. Meeting minutes for the Baltimore County Committee of Observation confirm that as early as August 26, 1776, a “William Scarff” was serving as the ensign of Capt. Edward Cockey’s Company in the Baltimore County militia. A surge of promotions occurred during the autumn of 1776, and on October 12, the Convention at Annapolis elevated Cockey from company command to battalion command, appointing him to the colonelcy of the Gunpowder Upper Battalion. Two months later, on December 20, 1776, the Maryland Council of Safety issued new commissions to officers in the Gunpowder Upper Battalion, raising “W<sup>m</sup> Scarff” (still serving in the company formerly commanded by Cockey) to a second-lieutenancy.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “From the Editor,” *Maryland Genealogical Society Bulletin* Vol. 31, № 3 (Baltimore: Maryland Genealogical Society, Summer 1990), on an unnumbered page that appears two pages before p. 223.

<sup>2</sup> SAR Application of Col. John Thomas Scharf (LL.D.), images 411/502 to 413/502, *U.S., Sons of the American Revolution Membership Applications, 1889-1970* [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2011, citing *The Empire (New York) State Society of the Sons of the American Revolution*, 13 Jan. 1897, National № 9565, State № 1040. [<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/102267:2204>]

<sup>3</sup> Proceedings, Baltimore County Committee of Observation (1774–1776), Baltimore County, MdHR 18963 [MSA C401-1, 1/6/5/19], accessed via MSA Microfilm Reel SCM11723, image 339/498 (Scarff as Ensign); Proceedings of the Conventions of the Province of Maryland, 1774–1776, *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 78, [276](#) (Cockey as Colonel); Journal and Correspondence of the Maryland Council of Safety, July 7–December 31, 1776, *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 12, [541](#) (Scarff as 2nd Lieut.)



Caption: Detail of Commissions issued in Capt. Harvey's Company, Commissions Issued to the Soldiers' Delight & Gunpowder Upper Battalions, 30 Aug. 1777, Maryland State Papers, Revolutionary Papers, MdHR 6636-8-66A

The following summer, Gov. Thomas Johnson and the Council of Maryland evacuated Annapolis (on account of the British Fleet sailing up the Bay) and relocated to Baltimore Town, where they issued another wave of commissions. “W<sup>m</sup> Scarff” was among those promoted, when on August 30, 1777, he ascended to a first-lieutenancy. 1st-Lieut. Scarff and his company (commanded by Capt. William Harvey) may have been among the Gunpowder Upper Battalion troops that marched on the “Fleet Alarm” to the Head of Elk for a northward push, resulting in the major battles of the Philadelphia Campaign. John Thomas Scharf said in his SAR application that his great-grandfather [William Scarff] “fought in the battles of...Germantown, Brandywine, &c.”. The Auditor General Journal for 1778–1781 provides corroborative evidence, noting a “Fleet Alarm” payment to “Capt William Harvey Ⓟ [per his Company’s] Pay Roll” of £185/11/6, suggesting that they did go into actual service at that time. Aside from the scant records relating to William Scarff’s military career, however, his life is not particularly well documented. The only non-military record that seems to have clear relevance is the February 28, 1778 Oath of Allegiance & Fidelity return of Edward Cockey, listing “William Scarff” among the oath takers. After that, Scarff disappears from view.<sup>4</sup>

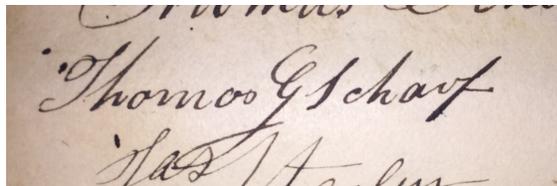
By modern genealogical standards, John Thomas Scharf did not really prove his descent from 1st-Lieut. William Scarff. Despite Scharf’s exhaustive usage of primary sources in his non-genealogical work, he cited no original records to validate each generational link in his SAR application (possibly because such a thing was not yet required, the SAR then operating more like an honor system), but he did give his line of descent from the Patriot as follows: William Scarff (1749–1778) > William Scarff [Jr.] > Thomas George Scharf (formerly spelled “Scarff”) > John Thomas Scharf (b. 1843). That Scharf specified only that his father’s surname was formerly spelled Scarff, and that he made no indication there was also a change in pronunciation, we might reasonably conclude that Scarff and Scharf are, and were, pronounced the same way.<sup>5</sup>

Records relating to subsequent generations of the Scharf family sufficiently bear out this consistency, that the pronunciation remained unchanged, even after the shift in orthography. Scharf said of his grandfather, William Scarff [Jr.], “my grandfather William Scarff was a private in Captain Jacob

<sup>4</sup> Journal and Correspondence of the Council of the State of Maryland, March 20–November 8, 1777, *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 16, [350](#) (also, for the physical document, see Commissions Issued to the Soldiers' Delight & Gunpowder Upper Battalions, 30 Aug. 1777, Maryland State Papers, Revolutionary Papers, MdHR 6636-8-66A [MSA S1004-8-1810, 1/7/3/28] for Scarff as 1st Lieut.); Journal and Correspondence of the Council of Maryland, April 1, 1778–October 26, 1779, *Archives of Maryland Online* Vol. 21, [227](#) (payment order to Harvey's Company); Maryland Journal B № 1 Auditor Journal (1778–1781), Auditor General, MdHR 18958 [MSA S150-4, 1/6/5/17], accessed via MSA Microfilm Reel SCM11722, image 52/643 (Fleet Alarm payment to Capt. Harvey, 29 Oct. 1778); Return of Edward Cockey, 28 Feb. 1778, Governor and Council, Oaths of Fidelity, MdHR 4647-3 [MSA S963-3, 1/1/4/31], accessed digitally at MSA, S963-3, images 1/3 to 3/3.

<sup>5</sup> SAR Application of Col. John Thomas Scharf (LL.D.) [<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/102267:2204>].

Deems<sup>[1]</sup>...company of the 51st regiment...who served at the Battle of North Point...in September 1814.” The muster roll for Deems’ Company does indeed include a Pvt. “William Scarf,” and Baltimore City Directories for [1810](#), [’12](#), [’14-’15](#), [’16](#), ’17-’18, & ’19 confirm that a “William Scarf” (spelled variously as “Scharf,” “Scharfe,” & “Scharff”) lived in the same general neighborhood on the westside of town (in the Western Precincts) where Capt. Deems enrolled many of his troops.<sup>6</sup>



Caption: Detail of Thomas G. Scharf’s Signature, Petition [to the Mayor and City Council] of 126 Citizens Praying for Retrenchment, 21 Feb. 1843, Baltimore City Archives (City Council [Papers]) 1842–1843, HRS 266.

Scharf’s father, Thomas George Scharf (1816–1886), appeared in City Directories on the westside of Baltimore, initially as “Thomas Scarf” ([1842](#), [’47-’48](#), & [’49-’50](#)), then as “Thomas Scharf” ([1851](#) & [’53-’54](#)), before ultimately settling on “Thomas G. Scharf” ([1855](#) through [’86](#)). Over the years, his occupation in the Directory transitioned from [huckster](#), to [grocer](#), to [lumber dealer](#). He may have assumed his middle name in adulthood. The earliest known example of his signature at the Baltimore City Archives, from 1843, clearly and unmistakably reads “Thomas G. Scharf.” When he died, his obituary in *The Sun* not only confirmed his parents, his prior residences, and occupations, but it also mentioned that “Col. J. Thomas Scharf, the historian,” was his son. Anyone who looks for Thomas G. Scharf’s death certificate, however, will find it filed under “Thomas G. Scarf.”<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps the most compelling evidence relating to the pronunciation of John Thomas Scharf’s name, though, is an anecdote from his Civil War service as a midshipman in the Confederate States Navy. During the summer of 1864 he was stationed aboard the *Water Witch* at White Bluff in Savannah, Georgia. While there, the 21-year-old became smitten with a young southern belle named Anna Wylly Habersham (who was only 15½), and he proposed marriage. The proposal did not work out as Scharf had hoped, but the young Miss Habersham was determined to make the midshipman a keepsake so that he could always remember her. What did she make? You may have guessed it ... She made him a scarf! Describing it in her diary, Habersham (who frequently referred to John Thomas Scharf simply as “Scharf”) wrote on September 14, 1864, “I have made a blue worsted scarf with black and white mottled border (it is beautiful) for Scharf.” When the weather became suitably cold for such things, she presented it to him, on October 11, 1864.<sup>8</sup>

Research inquiries often involve searching for the presence of something, but there are instances when the absence of something can be equally informative. It is rather telling that, with all the

<sup>6</sup> 1817-18 Directory, Avero Publications. Biography Database, 1680-1830. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England: Avero Publications, 1998 [<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1616015:3877>]; 1819 Directory, Avero Publications. *Biography Database*, 1680-1830. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England: Avero Publications, 1998 [<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/1624470:3877>]; SAR Application of Col. John Thomas Scharf (LL.D.) [<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/102267:2204>]; Nathaniel Hickman, ed., *The Citizen Soldiers at North Point and Fort McHenry, September 12 & 13, 1814* (Baltimore: James Young, n.d.) [64-65](#).

<sup>7</sup> Petition [to the Mayor and City Council] of 126 Citizens Praying for Retrenchment, 21 Feb. 1843, Baltimore City Archives (City Council [Papers]) 1842–1843, HRS 266 [MSA BRG16-1-72-14-4, 13/2/5]; “Death of Mr. Thos. G. Scharf, the Well-Known Baltimore Business Man.” *THE (Baltimore) SUN.*, Wed., 11 Aug. 1886, p. 4, col. 2; Death Certificate for Thomas G. Scarf, Baltimore City, *Health Department Bureau of Vital Statistics*, Death Record (1875–1972), citing *Health Department, City of Baltimore.*, Permit № 94056, 12 Aug. 1886, accessed via MSA Microfilm Reel CM1132-29, image 2394/3341.

<sup>8</sup> “The War Romance of John Thomas Scharf,” by Francis B. Culver, *Maryland Historical Magazine* Vol. XXI, № 3 (Baltimore: Maryland Historical Society, Spring 1926), [295-302](#) (in the PDF, pages 81-88).

iterations of the Scharf surname that appeared during the 18th and 19th centuries, in handwritten documents and printed materials alike (Scarf, Scarff, Scharfe, Scharff, etc.), there was one misspelling that never seems to have appeared anywhere. Its absence in the historical record is, well...conspicuous. That misspelling, of course, is “Sharf!” Since name misspellings are usually phonetic by nature (someone hears a name spoken out loud, and writes down whatever they thought it was that they heard), we can reasonably deduce that no one ever thought they heard another person say “Sharf.” Yet, the “Scarf” and “Scarff” misspellings are ubiquitous.

Thus, my analysis of a wide array of Scharf records in aggregate leaves us with an inescapable conclusion: John Thomas Scharf’s surname was never pronounced “Sharf”; rather, it was always pronounced “Skarf!” And much as that blue worsted scarf accentuated the young midshipman in his naval uniform, so too will our proper pronunciation of the name help to accentuate Scharf’s memory—the least we can do for a man who devoted his life to preserving the memory of others.

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## Collection Highlights

### John McGrain Collection

By Christine Alvey, Librarian & Megan Craynon, Director, Special Collections & Library Services

The [Fall 2022 issue](#) of The Clamshell featured an article about the acquisition, cataloging, and processing of the McGrain Library at the Maryland State Archives. Conservation Lab staff were recognized for their help with the McGrain Library through photographs of their work on the Collection.

An additional acknowledgment is needed, that of retired librarian Betty Gosnell for her assistance with cataloging. Her attention to detail and persistent research were invaluable in correctly cataloging the books and especially the many booklets and pamphlets in Mr. McGrain's Library. This material, what we librarians call ephemera, is often challenging to accurately describe. But Ms. Gosnell's tireless research more than met that challenge. Additionally she frequently provided detailed notes in the online Library catalog to highlight subjects of interest to the Maryland State Archives that were not captured in the Library's subject headings. And she was essential in verifying the accuracy of online catalog entries and keeping material properly organized. Thank you Betty!

This issue of the Clamshell will focus on the associated research collection, [MSA SC 4300: McGrain Collection](#). Over the course of his life, and ultimately upon his death, John McGrain donated materials related to his research to the Maryland State Archives. His goal was always to share the resources and knowledge that he had accumulated with fellow history professionals as well as enthusiasts. Mr. McGrain’s generosity of spirit is as much a part of his legacy as is the material he left behind.

The research collection is significant in both quantity and scope, much as is the material in his library. Included are his copious notes, original writings, and various collected original source material, primarily related to mills and industrial technology. The collection also includes his extensive

photography. Mr. McGrain was prolific in producing images of mills, landscapes, and industrial activities across the state and region. His photographs will prove an excellent source of visual information regarding the history of our state and the changing landscape.

Unlike the Library of Mr. McGrain, the research material donated when he passed away has not yet been fully described. All of the material needs to be placed in acid-free folders, or otherwise appropriately rehoused into preservation quality containers, and grouped according to intellectual characteristics in order to be described. Descriptions will be written to explain the contents of either individual folders or whole boxes, and added to the McGrain Special Collection (MSA SC 4300). A former colleague of Mr. McGrain assisted his family in preparing the material for delivery to the Archives. This significantly improved the initial organization and will aid Archives' staff in creating box or folder level descriptions. Even so, it will take a significant amount of time to make this material fully accessible, owing to the roughly two dozen boxes of content, and the small staff of Special Collections.

The donations Mr. McGrain made to the Maryland State Archives Special Collections prior to his passing, have largely been inventoried and are accessible to researchers upon request in the State Archives Search Room. The Special Collections and Library staff are ready to assist with access to needed items from the more recent donation. The Archives remains grateful to his family for ensuring that his remaining research was donated posthumously, and we look forward to making it accessible to researchers for generations to come.

If you have questions about the material in Mr. McGrain's Library or Special Collections, or are interested in using it for research, please email [msa.helpdesk@maryland.gov](mailto:msa.helpdesk@maryland.gov).

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## **Public Statement on Access**

**Prepared by the Maryland State Archives, February 2023**

At the Maryland State Archives, the most frequent question we hear from our stakeholders is, "Why can't I search and access these records from home?" Advances in technology have undoubtedly enabled historical organizations to take huge leaps forward in making many records available online, yet a vast amount of record material is still not available on the Internet. At the Maryland State Archives, we are very focused on making records both accessible and comprehensible within their historical and organizational context. Along with preserving the records, records access is a foundational reason for our existence.

The Maryland State Archives has long made online access to records a core mission. For example, our [Guide to Government Records](#) has 3,358,887 images (852 GB) of record material online. Our [MDLandRec](#) and [Plats](#) websites have a combined 275,167,990 images (62.7 TB) from our collections online. In total, we currently have 321 million files online (169 TB ).

However, image counts are only part of the story, because making records truly accessible involves more than just creating and uploading digital images. Archives' staff are dedicated to providing the information needed to make sense of the records as an authoritative source, as well as the tools needed to locate any specific record among hundreds of millions. The Archives' staff inventory records to provide detailed listings of documents within record series, and then create finding aids to assist in navigating the inventories. Web-based finding aids, topic guides, and video tutorials work in tandem to provide step by step directions on locating specific documents within our vast collections. For example, our [death records finding aid](#) walks users through both city and county death certificate indexes and certificate series, regardless of the agency that created them. This allows users to directly select specific years and locations of interest from the full vital records collections. The publication [Researching African American Families](#) provides a research guide to support and highlight important resources for the study of African American history. Our [Searching Historical Land Records](#) training video gives tips and guidance on how to use our online repository of digitized land records, [MDLandRec](#). Staff produce these types of educational tools to better explain the most efficient way to locate specific documents and to share their professional expertise on what information each collection can provide to a researcher.

The Archives also has the legal authority to certify the record copies that we provide. This certification process establishes the facsimile we provide as a true and accurate copy of the original record, making it suitable for legal purposes. Please be advised that other private companies or interest groups that elect to put copies of these record materials online cannot certify them. These organizations also may hold copies that do not reflect any corrections, updates, or expungements that have legally occurred, and therefore cannot present the true copy of the record.

In fulfilling our commitment to make records more accessible, we are mindful of the critical importance of preserving privacy when necessary. The Laws of Maryland are specific about what records are, or are not, open to public access. Although these laws define whether a record must be provided when requested, they are generally silent on whether records must be made generally available online. In making decisions on what records to provide online, we must consider the impact general access might have on those whose identities are associated with the records.

One example of this type of consideration is our approach to online access to criminal case files. If there are no laws restricting access to a criminal case file, we will provide access to the file to anyone who requests it. A person could come into the Archives to see the file or place an order for copies of the record. However, our agency policy prohibits the placement of digitized criminal case files under 100 years old on the Internet. A great deal of deliberation went into the creation of this policy. We considered that case files often have very personal information about those involved in the case, including parties, victims, and witnesses. We also took into account the potential that the case might be legally expunged. Expungement requires the Archives to remove the case from public access. While we could technically remove access by removing a case file from our website, we know that once it is online there is a high chance that copies will be duplicated, cached, crawled and therefore exist beyond our care.

Making some records freely available online can also prove a threat to the safety of the public. For example, making modern marriage certificates and death certificates available online can open information, such as maiden names and Social Security numbers, to individuals who might exploit it

for commercial or criminal purposes. To restate, our agency policy prohibits us from placing vital records under 100 years old on our website in order to provide protection and security for this personal information.

In addition to concerns about privacy, the effort to put records online is slowed by the very nature of the records themselves. Collections that have not been indexed are difficult to search until inventories have been created. Records that were manually indexed are not computer searchable until the index has been digitized. Documents may require organization or conservation treatment before they can safely undergo the scanning process. There are also technical challenges to making records available online. For example, adding new records for public access must be carefully planned and scheduled so that the increased volume or activity will not overwhelm our servers and take down access completely. Therefore, we are always moving forward in a planned, thoughtful manner to properly maintain current offerings while adding new digital content. All of these challenges, and the finite nature of Archives' staffing, equipment, and budgetary resources, require that we prioritize and phase in our plans to add more records online to the many hundreds of millions of images already accessible.

As we phase in increased online resources, we continue to capitalize on all our other ways for making records accessible. We continually improve the process for ordering records from home. We have updated and simplified [order forms](#) for both online and mail in requests. We've also added options for ordering uncertified record copies for some document types, allowing researchers to purchase a digital reference image at a reduced rate. We provide research support via email and phone (410-260-6487) during business hours and we also have staff available to assist anyone in person in the Search Room, as well as new [appointment options](#) to make your visit as productive as possible. We will continue to post additional series through our catalogs as our resources and capacity permit. If you are interested please see our current [digitization priorities list](#), as highlighted in the [Spring 2021 Edition of The Clamshell](#). We welcome stakeholder feedback on collections to consider for future digitization priorities. Please send these via email or through our [feedback link](#). You can also materially support the Archives by [making a donation](#) to our 501(c)3 Friends group. We share our patrons' desire for preservation and open public access to unrestricted collections and it remains our highest priority every day.

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# Did You Know?



... that Maryland's recently inaugurated governor is an author? Governor Wes Moore's books are now in the MSA Library, on display in our Search Room.

Caption: Maryland State Archives Search Room display of Governor Wes Moore's books. Photo credit: Darby Nisbett, Reference Archivist



... that the Archives publishes the [Maryland Manual On-line: A Guide to Maryland and Its Government](#)? It is a wealth of information updated daily by our staff about Maryland federal, state, county and municipal government, as well as elected officials and agency staff. You can even find [previous copies](#) of Maryland Manual dating back to 1885 online as a volume of the Archives of Maryland. Within these previous years, you can view "slices in time" of the government structure and get a glimpse of those who served over the last one hundred and forty years. If you want to know about the new gubernatorial administration of Governor Moore, the state budget, the committee service assignments of your legislators, Maryland's state symbols, or any other details about our government the Maryland Manual On-line is an invaluable resource.

*Now you know!*



Published by the Maryland State Archives, the Maryland Manual On-Line is updated daily. For questions on State, county or municipal government, [Search the Manual](#), or e-mail us: [mdmanual@maryland.gov](mailto:mdmanual@maryland.gov)

- Governor Wes Moore
- Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)
- COVID-19 Vaccinations
- Food Resources, see [Individual Counties](#)
- Governmental Assistance & Services
- Health Insurance Exchange ([Maryland Health Connection](#))
- Maryland Business Expenses
- Maryland Workforce Expressway: [Workforce Exchange](#) [for job seekers & employers]

- [Protect Restore](#) [for new or expanding businesses]
- [Statewide Licenses & Permits](#)
- [Unemployment Insurance](#)

Maryland at a Glance

|                  |                    |                 |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| Executive Branch | Legislative Branch | Judicial Branch |
| Local Government | Federal Government |                 |



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