

Hall of Records

THE LAND OFFICE

The Land Office is one of the oldest offices in the State. From 1637 to 1680 the officer in charge of land grants was usually the Surveyor-General.

In 1680 the Land Office was created with a register on each Shore: John Llewellyn for the Western Shore and Vachel Downes, for the Eastern Shore. The constitution of 1851 ~~was~~ created the office of Commissioner of the Land Office which continues to the present time. The last Commissioner of the Land Office was George C. Peverley of St Marys County whose term was to expire in 1935, but who died last summer. His place has not been filled.

The Commissioner of the Land Office is appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate to hold office during the term of the Governor. (Constitution Article VII, Section 4).

The Land Office is the State Record Office pertaining to boundaries of land and is the means by which discovered vacant land is passed by the State to the individual, and covers the period from the earliest to the present day.

The duties of the Land Office in regard to his clerical force are to keep the indexing, answer the various questions that are daily brought to it by the mail, wait on the visiting public and record patents that are returned on the different kinds of warrants executed by the County Surveyors throughout the State.

Questions relating to military service during the War of the American Revolution.

Questions relating to wills, administration proceedings, inventories, accounts and balances from the earliest to 1777.

Questions relating to confiscated British property

Questions relating to Provincial Court, General Court, Court of Chancery, debt books, rent rolls, insolvent proceedings, and extract of deeds from the whole State.

Duplicate record of all deeds, mortgages and releases of mortgages throughout the State are filed here, and it is the duty of the Commissioner to have them properly bound and indexed.