

ARRANGEMENT

One of the major arrangement projects of the past year involved the Judgment Papers of the Court of Appeals dating from 1782 to 1903. These papers had already been placed in folders and boxed. The names of the appellants and appellees had been written on the folders. The docket numbers and the terms of court in which the cases were decided (this is the way the cases are identified) had also been written on the folders whenever they were given. However, the papers had always been difficult to use because they were imperfectly arranged and because the papers of the Western Shore General Court were mixed in with them.

Before beginning to arrange the Court of Appeals Judgments it was necessary to remove the General Court papers. They were arranged as well as possible in another alcove on the sixth deck, but given no other attention.

In dealing with the Court of Appeals Papers, we decided to perfect the original plan of arrangement rather than revise the whole system. This plan grouped the papers under letters of the alphabet system. This plan grouped the papers under letters of the alphabet according to the surname of the appellant. Within each letter group, the papers were roughly in chronological order. Thus the "A" group ran from 1790 to 1901, the "B" group from 1788 to 1901, and so forth. Since about three-fourths of the cases lacked either the docket number or the court term or both, the dockets were used to supply this information. In doing this a number of cases which had strayed from the proper letter group were detected and placed where they belonged. The papers were then arranged by court terms within the letter groups and by docket numbers within the court terms. They were reboxed, relabelled and shelved with a considerable saving in both boxes and shelf space. There are now available 418 boxes of Court of Appeals Judgments.

The Judgment Papers of the Eastern Shore Court of Appeals and the Eastern Shore General Court had also been combined into a single series. Since the periods in which the courts operated did not overlap, there was here not much danger of confusion; but in order to be absolutely safe and to conform with sound archival practice, the papers of the two courts were arranged in separate series.