

To the Board of Directors of the Lawrence ^{Free} ~~Reif~~ Public Library.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have the honor to submit the twenty-fifth annual report for the year ending December 31, 1929.

It might interest you to know of some of the things that have been done these twenty-five years.

Our building was a gift from Andrew Carnegie. It was through the effort of Peter E. Emery, a member of the Board who was well acquainted with the conditions under which Mr. Carnegie was providing funds for libraries that our city was able to secure this splendid gift. Mr. Carnegie donated \$27,500, with the understanding that the city provide each year one tenth of that sum for maintenance. Mrs. Chas. P. Grovenor gave the lots upon which the building stands.

After an election held April 7, 1903 the city council proceeded to organize under the statutes of the state. This was under the administration of Mayor Selig. Twelve members were appointed on the first Board. In 1914 a change in the state law reduced the number to eight.

The following members were on this Board: J. R. Griggs, A. L. Cox, A. J. Dicker, C. S. Hall, P. E. Emery, Gurdon Grovenor, F. M. Bennett, Mrs. A. Henley, Dr. Edward Bumgartner, Harry Dick, Wm. Bromelsick. Mrs. Henley is the only one of these now serving.

The building was completed and formally opened December 26, 1904. There were two librarians, Mrs. Nellie Beatty, who is now Mrs. Palmer, was appointed librarian and Miss Virginia Edwards was made assistant. We now have four librarians on the staff. Our present janitor, Jack Porter, came in June, 1905.

The library opened with about 5,000 volumes that were in shape for service. We now have nearly 23,000 volumes. During the year 1905 there were issued 2421 borrowers cards, and the books circulated 50,903 times. To day one half of our population are library patrons and our books circulated 104,146 times last year.

The library operated at that time with a levy of .15 of a mill; today we use .55 of a mill.

The many friends of the library made it possible to maintain excellent service through their generosity in the way of gifts, both books and equipment.

2
The furniture was provided for, in the main, by the Carnegie gift and was made in Lawrence at the Lawrence Planing Mill. The clock that stands back of the charging desk was the gift of Mrs. Sara Robinson. Six rattan chairs were given by Emery-Bird-Thayer; we are still using three. The furniture in the Directors' room was given by the family of B.W. Woodward. A book case in the office was the gift of Gov. Robinson and the children of Amos A. Lawrence. Steel stacks have been added in more recent years by Mrs. L.H. Perkins, Mrs. Henley has always been a friend. She is constantly providing some little convenience for the librarians or the janitor. She planned the back-stairs as a step saver, provided rugs for the office, furnished the slip covers for the chairs in the Directors' room, gave books and pictures and when the walls were too dingy, well, she just had them redecorated. But best of all she remembered the children of Lawrence by providing the delightful room for their books.

We also had a very splendid gift from Mrs. Theo. Poehler, a collection of books for the children's department and a German collection of 374 volumes.

Many other friends gave books and pictures. Dr. Edward Bumgardner designed the book plate that is used in our gift books. In looking over the minutes of those early days when the directors were struggling with finances, I notice, in several instances, that Harry Dick had presented a bill for supplies which had been receipted.

The Watkins bank, through C. H. Tucker gave gifts of books for reference, pictures, a flag for the building. The Ladies of the G.A.R. gave the flag pole in 1923, and later a new flag.

Wm. Bromelsick was for 23 years the treasurer, giving much time and valuable service.

George Hackman, for many years chairman of the finance committee helped to budget the funds, making a small levy cover a large budget. Dr. C.J. Dunlap served long and faithfully on the library committee.

To Dr. Dunlap belongs much credit for our splendid book collection.

The library has within this time received three endowments. The first came through the bequest of L.H. Perkins. The sum of \$1000 was given the library and has been invested, the interest is being used for the purchase of books. A similar fund from Miss Virginia Edwards has been established and one of \$4000 from the estate of Mr. Gurdon Grovenor.

During this period the librarians have catalogued 29,557 volumes. The past year each book circulated, on an average of 4.5 times and 7 books per capita. Having a total circulation of 104,146 vol.

In looking over the first accessions I notice a number of authors whose works were read at that time are still writing and new titles finding places on the shelves to-day. Among them are Rider Haggard, J. C. Lincoln, Hamlin Garland, G. B. McCutcheon, Ellen Glasgow, R. W. Chambers, Henry Van Dyke, Edith Wharton. But where are the books by George Henty, Oliver Optic, Pansy, Annie Fellows Johnston, Horatio Alger, Amelia Barr or James Otis? However, Toby Tyler by Otis is a title that is good today. The Alcott books are quite popular, especially now that they are published in the beautiful Beacon Hill edition. While the Pansy books are not read, the author's son, Raymond MacDonald Alden is writing for us.

Perhaps some of us will see another twenty-five years of progress. We hope our twenty-five year old furnace will have had a successor. Perhaps another benefactor will provide us with a new building, or an addition to this one, for we ~~would~~ need space soon for our books. We will welcome more endowments for our book fund. In the mean time the Lawrence Free Public Library will try to give the citizens of Lawrence a little better service than in the past quarter of a century.

Lillian J. Custard