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(Dr. Baumgardner)

The Lawrence Free Public Library.

Lawrence has always been the Athens of Kansas. From the beginning she has had citizens who were glad to give their time and money to establish and support public educational institutions. This is well illustrated in the development of the excellent public library which is now maintained at an expense of \$4000.00 per year.

In the spring of 1865, a circulating library was started by J. S. Boughton in the Hartman building, which stood at 735 Massachusetts Street. Mr. Boughton had about \$150.00 worth of books and loaned them out at ten cents a week, or furnished an annual ticket for \$5.00. The movement was popular and many times the shelves were empty when the doors were closed in the evening. Soon the need of a reading room in connection with the collection of books was felt, and in December of the same year larger quarters were secured and the little library moved to rooms over the drug store of George Leis, at 740 Massachusetts Street.

Mr. Boughton was thoroughly in love with the library idea, but soon found that he was not able financially to maintain such an institution as he wanted the little city to have. Accordingly, on March 7, 1866, he had a meeting called at the library rooms for the purpose of organizing a library association. A preliminary organization was effected, a tentative constitution was adopted, and the following officers were elected:

President, Samuel A. Riggs.

Vice-President, L. J. Worden.

Secretary, J. S. Boughton.

Treasurer, W. H. H. Whitney.

A committee was appointed to secure members which were limited to fifty. This was done, and on March 20th, a meeting was held at which the constitution was revised and adopted, framing a permanent organization.

On March 26th, an election was held and the following officers were elected:

President, Rev. John S. Brown.

Vice-President, Samuel A. Riggs.

Recording Secretary, Dudley C. Haskell.

Corresponding Secretary, Rev. Richard Cordley.

Treasurer, William A. Simpson.

Board of Directors, Edmund G. Ross, B. W. Woodward, Lorenzo J. Worden, Rev. William C. Tenny, John H. Wilder and Ripley W. Sparr.

The new organization paid Mr. Boughton \$600 for his lease, fixtures and the books he had accumulated, and at once assumed charge of the library. Mr. Boughton was employed as librarian for a month. Following him, Miss Helen Ise^{Servyan}~~man~~ acted as librarian until May, 1867, when she was succeeded by Mrs. Helen M. Griswold.

In the summer of 1866, Bayard Taylor delivered a lecture on "Russia" under the auspices of the association, and the proceeds, amounting to "a considerable sum of money" were used in the purchase of books. The next year, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Theodore Tilton

were secured to lecture in Lawrence and the proceeds used in the same way. Still, as a library is always limited only by its available funds, the board of directors saw the need of more books than could be secured by these lectures and from membership fees, and appointed a committee to solicit donations. Among the contributions were thirtysix volumes by Mr. and Mrs. Kimmel, a large and valuable collection by Rev. E. Nute and a number of volumes by Governor and Mrs. Charles Robinson.

During the first ~~three~~ two years of the existence of the association, seventy-five volumes were purchased and one hundred and fifty donated. In February, 1871, there were 1500 volumes and forty papers and magazines.

In September, 1871, the City took over the library and a short time afterward it was moved into the Lawrence National Bank building at the corner of Massachusetts and Seventh Streets, where it occupied three rooms on the second floor. The librarian at that time was Mrs. Rhoda H. Trask, who had succeeded Mrs. Griswold when she was married to Mr. George A. Banks in September, 1870.

Mrs. Trask resigned in 1885 and Mrs. Mary F. Simpson took up the work. Mrs. Simpson was librarian for seventeen years. In 1902, she was succeeded by Mrs. Nellie G. Beatty, the present librarian, who is a daughter of Mrs. Griswold, the librarian of half a century ago.

During all of these years, the library had been gradually increasing in size and influence. It now possessed about 6000 volumes. Patrons paid one dollar per year for the use of books, and, though the library was nominally under the control of the city council, the income

of the librarian depended partly upon the amount she received from the sale of tickets.

Library science was developing rapidly, and while the Lawrence library had served its purpose well, the time had come for it to adopt modern methods and to enter a much larger field of influence and usefulness as a free public library. The man who was most active in promoting this change was Peter E. Emery. Being familiar with the conditions under which Andrew Carnegie was providing funds for the erection of library buildings in many cities over the country, Mr. Emery, with the co-operation of several citizens, succeeded in securing the promise of Mr. Carnegie to donate \$27,500 to Lawrence for a library building under the usual requirements. This necessitated the organization of a free public library under the state law, and a promise upon the part of the City government to provide at least \$2,750 each year for its maintenance. Mrs. Charles P. Grosvenor donated two lots at the corner of Vermont and Warren streets upon which to erect the building.

The question of establishing and maintaining a free public library and reading room was submitted to the voters of the City at the election held April 7, 1903, and was carried by a large majority. The city council accordingly voted to accept the donation of Mr. Carnegie, and proceeded to organize the library under the statutes of the state. This was under the administration of Mayor A. L. Selig. Mr. Selig was thoroughly in accord with the movement and was peculiarly fortunate in the selection of his board of directors for the new library. This board consisted of

J. R. Griggs, A. L. Cox, A. J. Dicker, Clarence S. Hall, P. E. Emery, Gurdon Grovenor, F. M. Bennett, J. D. Bowersock, Mrs. A. Henley, Edward Bumgardner, Harry Dick and William Bromelsick, with the Mayor as a member ex-officio. These, and the members who succeeded them, have always been devoted workers in making a library that is of real service to the people of the city.

The Carnegie building was completed in December, 1904, the books moved from the old location, and the new library was formally opened December 26, 1904.

In the meantime, Mrs. Beatty had been making a study of modern library science and had commenced cataloging the books. From that time to the present she has been a real librarian in every sense of the term. Her assistants have been competent and devoted, but to Mrs. Beatty more than to any other one person are the people of Lawrence indebted for the perfection to which the library has attained.

The first year of the new regime proved the popularity of the free library over the old subscription plan. At the old library, about 350 people purchased annual tickets. During the year 1905, the ticket holders numbered 2421, and the number of books circulated was 50903. At the close of this year, there were 5798 volumes in use. Since that time there has been a gradual but steady development of the library into a genuine educational institution. Situated as it is in the center of the city and contiguous to the three principal school buildings, the conditions have been favorable for the growth of the library into an ever

present help to the public schools. There has been a steady gain in the non-fiction circulation which shows the increased capacity of the library for help in study.

To scores of the citizens of Lawrence, the library is indebted for services and donations. The most valuable gifts have been the large collection of children's books and the German collection consisting of 374 volumes from Mrs. Theodore Poehler, and the L. H. Perkins Memorial Fund of \$1000, which produces \$60 each year for the purchase of books. Many other donations are worthy of mention if space would permit. The library now has 13,834 volumes, a registration of over 5000, and a circulation of more than ten volumes for each ticket holder. The books are classified, indexed and catalogued in accordance with the most modern rules. An appropriation of about \$250 per year provides the library with the most valuable current periodicals.

Lawrence has reason to be proud of its up to date library. With a large collection of the latest reference books, large and comfortable reading rooms and every facility demanded of such an institution in these days, the Lawrence Free Public Library performs a service and exerts an influence for good that cannot be over-estimated. ~~The present cost of maintenance is about \$4,000 per annum.~~