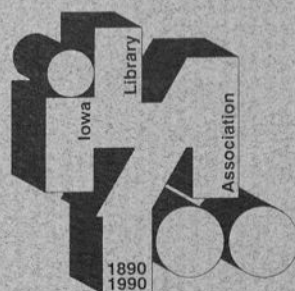


A CENTURY OF IOWA LIBRARIES IN ASSOCIATION

A History of the Iowa Library Association 1890-1990

William M. Cochran



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Des Moines, Iowa
Iowa Library Association
1990

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PREFACE

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In the summer of 1988, I was honored to be asked by the Centennial Committee of the Iowa Library Association to write a readable, popular history of the Association's first century. I wanted it to be a substantive work as well, one which would not merely be easy to read but also worth reading.

Three major themes seemed to emerge in the course of my research. The first is the Association's longstanding commitment to making library service available to all the people of Iowa. The drive to establish libraries in communities throughout the state, the campaigns to expand services to rural Iowans through county libraries, the development of cooperatives and the Iowa Regional Library System, and the recent Open Access program are all chapters in a proud history of promoting extension of library services to all Iowans.

Beginning with the establishment of federal grant programs for libraries during the late 1950s, these efforts have increasingly involved the cooperation of many libraries, a second important theme. The Open Access program is an example of a recent trend toward multitype cooperation, bringing public, school, academic, and special librarians together to more effectively and efficiently use their combined resources to meet the needs of their patrons.

A final theme is the evolution of professional attitudes toward censorship and intellectual freedom. Early disapproval of fiction and other 'bad' literature, and even censorship of pro-German works during World War I, gave way to the current emphasis on providing materials representing all points of view to all people so they can make up their own minds on controversial issues.

I hope others will more fully explore the rich tradition only hinted at in this survey of some of the important events and issues in the Association's history. The histories of the committees, sections, forums, and roundtables; a comprehensive survey of spring meetings; and biographical studies of nearly all of the leading figures remain to be written.

Many people have assisted with this project, more than can be mentioned here, and I am grateful to them all. I would like to thank Bob McCown and the staff of the Special Collections Department at the University of Iowa for guiding me through the Association's considerable archives. Kay Elliott, Dave Martin, Carl Orgren, George Scheetz, and Editorial Committee members Stella Papadakis, Marg Powell, and Katherine Von Wald all read the manuscript and provided valuable suggestions. Kay Elliott volunteered for the additional task of preparing the index, making the text much more accessible and useful. Photographic assistance was provided by Denny Rehder.

Colleagues at the State Library of Iowa have been extremely helpful. I would like to thank State Librarian Shirley George for her support and encouragement, Pam Reid for assistance with research and preparation of the manuscript, Gerry Rowland for his desktop publishing expertise, and Doris Collette for patiently word processing the many drafts of the manuscript.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Diane, for her support, which made it possible for me to spend the time I did in writing this history.

W.M.C.
Des Moines
August 1990

In the early autumn of 1890, an invitation went out to the librarians of Iowa:

A meeting in the interest of Iowa Libraries will be held at Des Moines, in the State Library, September 2, at 10 o'clock a.m. All librarians and others specially interested in libraries are invited to be present.

ADA NORTH, University Library.
MARY MILLER, State Librarian.
T. S. PARVIN, Iowa Masonic Library.
CLARA M. SMITH, Burlington Public Library.
CLARA C. DWIGHT, Dubuque Y.M. Library.

Included among the names on this invitation are some of the most prominent in the early history of Iowa libraries. Theodore S. Parvin, as Territorial Librarian, had organized the first library in Iowa at the capitol in Burlington a half century earlier before founding the State Historical Society Library in Iowa City and the Iowa Masonic Library in Cedar Rapids. Mary H. Miller had been appointed State Librarian by Governor William Larrabee in 1888.

Ada North, who is credited with initiating the 1890 meeting, was then Librarian of the State University of Iowa at Iowa City after earlier careers as both State Librarian and Librarian of the Public Library of Des Moines. Her drive to organize an association of Iowa librarians had no doubt been influenced by her experiences at the American Library Association (ALA) annual conferences at Milwaukee in 1886 and St. Louis in 1889.



Ada North, Founder



Mary H. Miller, President 1890-1892

The five organizers were joined by twelve other Iowa librarians at the State Library in the recently completed capitol building on September 2. For a meeting of only a single day's duration, it was to be remarkably productive. Although the morning was largely devoted to organizational activity, a paper on "Public Libraries and Their Relation to the Public Schools" was read and Governor Horace Boies spoke briefly before the meeting adjourned for dinner.

In the afternoon, a committee appointed earlier in the day recommended slight revisions to the bylaws which had been recently adopted by the New York Library Association, the first, and only other, state association, established just weeks earlier on July 11. The bylaws named the organization the Iowa Library Society, set a cap on dues of one dollar per year, and called for an annual meeting at the State Library during the week of the state fair.

Committees were appointed to consider amendments to Iowa library laws, to draw up a list of uniform statistics to be kept by all libraries in the state, and to prepare a list of reference books for high schools. After discussion, the Society resolved that an efficient board should include a city council member, a public school teacher, and three citizens, "two of whom should be women."

Before adjournment, a number of letters of interest were noted. Esther Crawford, of Iowa State College at Ames, was no doubt particularly interested in the one sent by Melvil Dewey, Director of the New York State Library. She had spoken with enthusiasm earlier in the day of the School of Library Economy which Dewey had established at Columbia College in 1887.

By the time the second annual meeting convened in the Capitol, Miller was able to present the first statistical report on Iowa libraries, compiled through the efforts of

the committee appointed the previous year. Clara Smith provoked a debate with her announcement that she "had found boys more readily interested than girls as a rule in good reading." Maria Davenport, of Council Bluffs, disagreed, holding that not only did the longer time that girls spent in school strengthen their interest in reading but "she had found them at the same time more ready to listen to suggestions."

The 1892 meeting featured a lively exchange of views on the subject of open stacks, the novel concept of allowing patrons direct access to the bookshelves. After reviewing experiments in Cleveland and Minneapolis, Ella M. McLoney, of the Public Library of Des Moines, expressed doubt as to the wisdom of extending such privileges. Among those joining the discussion as advocates for open stacks was Frederick M. Crunden, of the St. Louis Public School Library and former president of the American Library Association.

Witter H. Johnston, of Fort Dodge, noted that Iowa libraries were not yet able to afford to pay for trained staff but members desired more training opportunities. Crawford was authorized to continue her efforts to develop a training program for Iowa librarians. North, recently retired from the State University, proposed that the Society seek formal recognition by the State Teachers' Association to encourage a closer relationship between schools and public libraries. She was appointed to a committee to attend the Association's meeting and present the request.

Much of the 1893 meeting was taken up with unsuccessful efforts to communicate with the Teachers' Association, also meeting in Des Moines, and to achieve a working relationship. Crawford argued for meeting at the time of the state fair in early autumn, as the Society had done in every previous year, rather than meeting with the teachers at the end of December. At the conclusion of "animated discussion" on the subject, it was decided to proceed with plans to meet at the same time and in the same building as the Association, but not to be part of it. George B. Meleney, of the Library Bureau's Chicago office, became the first exhibitor at an Iowa library conference, promoting the Library Bureau's printed catalog card service.

In his presidential address, Parvin recounted his experiences as one of six Iowans to attend the Congress of Librarians convened by the American Library Association at the World's Fair in Chicago in July. He quoted *Library Journal* on the library in the Iowa Building at the Fair. Although finding it quite pleasant, the correspondent noted that due to the open stacks policy, strict Dewey order was not maintained, wryly observing that "*The Destiny of the Wicked* stood calmly between a W.C.T.U [Women's Christian Temperance Union] book

and a state document."

The fifth annual meeting of the Iowa Library Society in 1894 was the first of three as a section of the Elementary and Graded Department of the State Teachers' Association. The communication problems between the two groups that had been apparent at the previous conference were not resolved by the merger. The minutes record efforts throughout both days of the conference to obtain clarification from the executive committee of the Teachers' Association on a variety of issues, including status of Society members in the Association.

Conduce H. Gatch, president of the Public Library of Des Moines and former state senator, read his paper "A Public Library a Necessity in Every Town and City of the State." Among the arguments he presented for public libraries was that they can be a positive influence on children. He asked his audience what impressions should be left on impressionable young minds:

Shall they be the tares sown by the young arab of the street, or by the gambler, the drunkard-maker, or the "strange woman" whose steps take hold on hell? Shall they be imprints of the "yellow back dime novel," or the no less sensational blood-curdling and pestilent literature of popular journalism, or even worse, if possible, the professedly obscene literature intended for the purlieus of vice and as a guide to them...?

It hardly needs to be said that this is not what Gatch had in mind for the youth of Iowa. He suggested instead that the "antidote for all this moral and intellectual poison" was "a well-selected reference and circulation library of choice books."

The views Gatch expressed were widely held among nineteenth-century supporters of the public library movement. In recent years, historian Michael H. Harris has argued from evidence such as this that "the public library was founded by a group of authoritarian-elitists" who would use it "as a means of controlling and directing the behavior of their less fortunate fellows," presumably towards becoming law-abiding citizens and more productive workers. It is not necessary to accept this thesis to realize that Gatch's address reflects a very different attitude toward intellectual freedom than that held by librarians in later years. Censorship in the service of high ideals was not simply tolerated during this period, it was an important philosophical principle of librarianship.



Witter H. Johnston, President 1896-1900

After several years of effort, Johnston was successful in launching a monthly library column, which appeared in Des Moines's *Iowa Daily Capital* beginning in January 1895. Johnston was also able to report at the 1895 conference that he had mailed printed library statistics forms, provided by the Secretary of State, to libraries throughout Iowa. The form was printed on the back of a pre-paid postcard and had only thirteen blanks to fill in, including those for the date and the names of the library and the librarian.

Another major accomplishment announced at the meeting was that 191 Iowa librarians had enrolled for all or part of the Society's course of study during the year. In spite of the long-standing desire for such a program and its apparent success, the program was suspended for a year due to the costs of printing and distribution.

After considerable debate, a committee was appointed to present to the legislature a proposal to create an Iowa library commission "to promote the library interests of the state."

The relationship between the Society and the State Teachers' Association continued to worsen at this meeting. After the Association refused to pay the ten dollar bill for printing and distribution of the course of study brochure referred to above, dues were collected from among those present to pay it.

At the beginning of the last business session, President Joseph W. Rich, Librarian of the State University in Iowa City, reported that the Teachers' Association had "criticised the library section as being exclusive" and encouraged its members to be more active in other Association meetings. A lengthy debate concluded with the appointment of a committee to prepare a recommendation "upon the expediency and advisa-

bility of maintaining, as originally, an independent organization."

Although the 1896 meeting was again held as a part of the State Teachers' Association conference, its principal business was a vote of the membership to withdraw from the Association and reorganize as a corporate body. A committee was appointed to prepare articles of incorporation, which were filed with the Secretary of State, and a committee was appointed to plan the next annual meeting. This Executive Committee has continued to oversee operations of the organization, becoming known as the Executive Board about 1906.

The 1897 meeting, held at the Des Moines Women's Club, was the first of the newly incorporated Iowa Library Association and its program included adoption of new bylaws. Dues remained one dollar per year, the annual meeting date was set for the second Thursday and Friday of October, and standing committees were established for Enrollment, Resolutions, Finance and Nominations.

Former Society President Rich must have found his work on the bylaws committee somewhat easier than his recent workload as University Librarian in Iowa City. On June 16, a fire caused by lightning had destroyed 25,000 volumes, three-fourths of the library's collection. Fireman Lycurgus Leek was killed in the blaze, which left the largest academic library west of the Mississippi River in ruins.

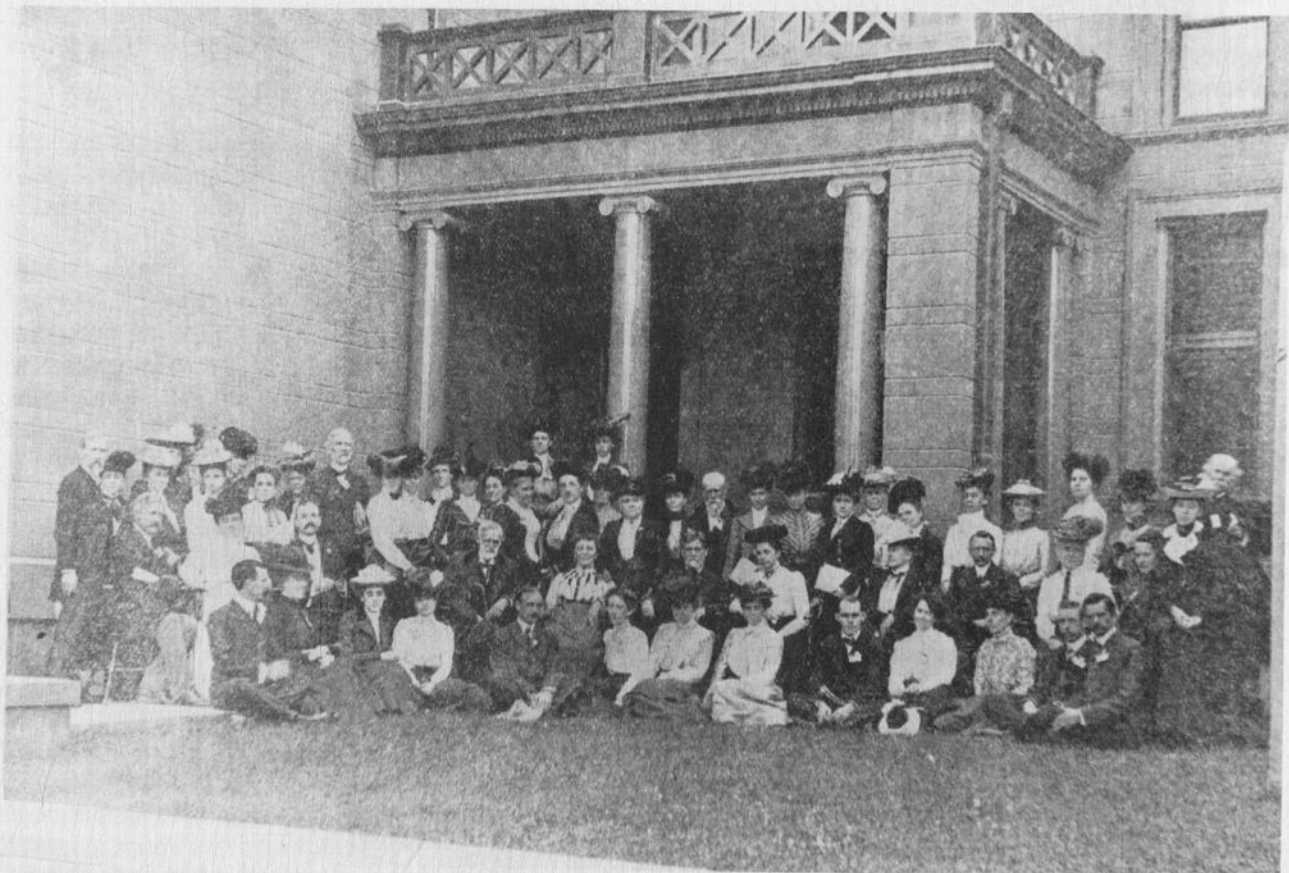
Johnson Brigham, editor of the literary journal *Midland Monthly*, would be appointed State Librarian the following year and was already well known in Iowa library circles. He presented an address to this meeting on "Danger Line in Literature," explaining how to "distinguish real literature from its counterfeit." State Librarian Lana Hixson Cope reported on the recent establishment of traveling libraries through an appropriation of the Twenty-sixth General Assembly. A committee was again appointed to seek legislation to establish a state library commission as well.

The Association participated in a Library Congress in Omaha on September 29, 30 and October 1, 1898, conducting its annual meeting as a brief business session on the afternoon of the second day only.

The 1899 meeting of the Association convened in the rooms of the Cedar Rapids Women's Club, where President Johnston acknowledged the efforts of the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs to extend public library services throughout the state. In her paper on "The School and the Library," a topic often discussed at Association meetings, Harriette L. McCrory, Librarian of the Cedar Rapids Public Library, argued that

public libraries should include children's rooms.

As the last meeting of its inaugural decade came to a close, the Association appointed a committee to prepare and deliver to every member of the General Assembly a proposal for a state library commission.



1901 Annual Meeting, Burlington Public Library

The new century began on a note of triumph. The 1900 annual meeting in Sioux City hosted the recently created Iowa State Library Commission, a product of five years of lobbying by the Iowa Library Association (ILA). Three members of the committee appointed the previous year to push for the Commission had been appointed to it: State Librarian Johnson Brigham, Witter H. Johnston, and Harriet C. Towner. Johnston was in his fifth term as ILA president and Brigham and Towner would both also serve as president in future years.

At the Sioux City meeting, the Commission approved plans to publish a quarterly journal to be edited by Commission Secretary Alice S. Tyler. The publication which eventually became the *Iowa Library Quarterly* served as ILA's voice for nearly four decades beginning with its initial appearance the following year.

After confessing his own enjoyment of the "blood curdling" short stories of A. Conan Doyle, Dr. E. Benjamin Andrews, Chancellor of the University of Nebraska, said that:

For the rough boy from the street, I would rather he would read a dime novel than nothing at all. This will lead him to the habit of reading, and by judicious training he may be led to higher things.

Although librarians would continue for years to be admonished to reject "impure or otherwise unfit literature," as Gatch had suggested in 1894, an alternative view was emerging, which held that reading should be encouraged regardless of the moral qualities of the material.

In the opening address of the 1901 meeting in Burlington, State Librarian Brigham called on librarians to become more active in women's clubs. A librarian, he said:

should not only cooperate with clubs in ways already indicated, but become a working member of a working club; and if there is none she should organize one; and if her club is not federated, she should move to make it part of that splendidly organized and grandly helpful state organization of clubs, which is one of the most efficient promoters of the library movement in the state.

Brigham was quite familiar with women's clubs generally, and their support of libraries specifically. During much of his tenure as editor of the *Midland Monthly*, he had featured a regular column on women's club activities written by Harriet C. Towner, who now was serving with him on the new State Library Commission.

Her final column, in the January 1899 issue, proclaimed that:

There is no line of work in which women's clubs can exercise an influence for good to greater advantage than in work for libraries, and it is hoped there will be a growing interest not only in local library work but in the work of the State Library and the Iowa Library Association.

This hope was realized to such an extent that it can be argued that the work of women's clubs was the single most important factor in the extension of public library services during the early years of the Iowa Library Association's existence.

The liberal approach to reading proposed by Dr. Andrews at the Sioux City meeting the previous year was attacked on several fronts in Burlington. Emma Fordyce, of Cedar Rapids, argued that "love of yellow literature, the disregard of law and the villainy of the country" were the results of public schools teaching reading without giving "the guiding help of honest character and high ideals." No less than Herbert Putnam, the Librarian of Congress, complained, in his address on "The Book and the People," of "the waste of public money in fiction" that did not contribute to educational goals.

A trustees' section was organized at this meeting, with Towner as chair, and college librarians conducted a program directed at their interests. M. H. Douglass, of Iowa College at Grinnell, reminded his audience that "the college library is for the use of the student." He advocated longer hours and open stacks and described his one-hour presentations to freshmen and academy students on the use of the library. M. A. Carpenter, Librarian at Drake University, delivered a paper on "Co-operation Between the College Libraries of the State," suggesting that "loans between colleges might be possible" and calling for organization of an association of Iowa college librarians.

The Burlington meeting featured an unusually full schedule of social events, although there were similar

activities each year. The highlight was an elaborate reception honoring Librarian of Congress Putnam and ILA members at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Philip M. Crapo, benefactors of the public library in Burlington. Another major event was the river excursion on the *Ottumwa Belle* sponsored by the Library's board of trustees. The arrangements for these occasions were largely provided by the City Federation of Women's Clubs.

When President Frank F. Dawley addressed the 1902 meeting in Grinnell, he began by acknowledging the lack of universal support for public libraries. Noting that while few openly opposed establishment of a public library:

There is a great indifference to it and a strong feeling that it is an unnecessary expense, among a large number of business men and tax payers; and, if it had not been for the influence of women and women's clubs, who understand that there is something more in life than the mere earning of a living, many of our new libraries would not yet have commenced their existence.

Encouraging mutual support, Library Commissioner Jessie Waite Davidson, a former corresponding secretary of the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs, counselled that "the club woman ought to consider the library her best friend - the librarian ought to regard the club as one of the most important of her opportunities." She also pointed out to the audience of librarians that the direct benefits of public libraries to club members were the improved resources made available for researching the programs presented at club meetings.

Commission Secretary Tyler included women's clubs prominently in her report on the agencies extending library services in Iowa. Others she cited were the Commission, the support for education shown by the people of Iowa, the philanthropy of Andrew Carnegie and Iowa citizens, the recently established Iowa Summer Library School at the University in Iowa City, legislation coordinating the activities of the State Library Board and the Commission, the annual meetings of the Iowa Library Association, and the character of Iowa librarians themselves.

Architect Grant C. Miller, of the Chicago firm Patton & Miller, delivered a lengthy address on library buildings, directed at smaller libraries and based on open shelf access. The Patton & Miller firm was quite active in Iowa public library architecture at this time, designing during this decade the library buildings at Algona,

Chariton, Charles City, Clinton, Council Bluffs, Eldora, Marengo, Marshalltown, Mason City, Monticello, Mount Pleasant, Muscatine, Onawa, Red Oak, Shenandoah, Spencer, Vinton, Webster City, and West Liberty.

An Iowa Summer Library School had been conducted at the University of Iowa since 1901. At the 1903 annual meeting in Marshalltown, a gathering of its alumni organized the Society of the Iowa Library School, which continued to meet at each annual conference for many years. Mary Wheelock, Librarian of the Grinnell Public Library, noted that eighty-five students had been enrolled in the School during its first three years, including representatives of at least twenty-five Iowa libraries.

In her address on the "Relation of the Library To Study Clubs," Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs President Mrs. T. J. Fletcher noted that the first standing committee of the Federation was its Library Committee. She proudly reported:

The general interest that exists in public libraries throughout the state has been largely due to the women's clubs. Most of the library buildings now being built, even those given by Mr. Carnegie, are the results of the efforts of the federated clubs, the members having mothered the small subscription library, secured a tax in order to make it a free public library and have helped it to grow to such large proportions that it has needed a building, which has been secured for it by the wise forethought of the same members.



Anna B. Howe, President 1904



Iowa Building, Louisiana Purchase Exposition, St. Louis
Site of 1904 Annual Meeting

She concluded with the hope that the Federation, cooperating with the Commission and ILA, would "see the day when every man, woman and child in Iowa has access to a good public library."

The 1904 annual meeting, at the World's Fair in St. Louis, opened with a reception for the members of the American Library Association and Missouri Library Association at the Iowa State Building on the fairgrounds. Of the \$100 cost of the reception, \$50 was paid by the Iowa Commission to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, \$30 by the Iowa Library Association, and \$20 by Association President Anna B. Howe of Marshalltown herself.

Howe was also a member of the State Library Commission, a former president of the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs, and vice-chair of the Auxiliary Committee of Women appointed by Iowa's exposition commission to plan the activities of the Fair's Department of Women's Work. It is an indication of the extent to which libraries had come to be identified with women and women's clubs that all library activities were assigned to the Department of Women's Work. It is an indication of where women and their concerns were located in the larger scheme of things in 1904 that the Department of Women's Work was under the direction of Commissioner George M. Curtis of Clinton.

In addition to what must have been rather heavy administrative duties in support of libraries in several capacities, Howe also found time to write and publish in 1904 a history of ILA, a thirty-page booklet entitled simply *Iowa Library Association*, as well as a *List of Books by Iowa Authors*. ILA members were achieving national recognition, as Commission Secretary Alice S. Tyler was elected Secretary of the Library Commission League organized in St. Louis, while State Librarian Johnson Brigham continued to serve as president

of the National Association of State Librarians.

An editorial from the *New York Independent*, reprinted in the October 1905 issue of the *Quarterly of the Iowa Library Commission*, may have been the subject of discussion around the time of the 1905 annual meeting in Fort Dodge. Entitled "Libraries for Men," the piece explains the reasons few men used public libraries.

According to the writer:

The large predominance of women in library work and management has tended to increase the feminization of the public libraries. A woman can no more select books for a man than she can cigars or neckties.

Perhaps Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs President Mrs. J. J. Seerley shared her views on this subject after delivering "Fraternal Greetings" from the Federation, in which she commented on the close alliance of the organizations. The larger public libraries of the state organized a section at the Fort Dodge meeting, electing Ottumwa Librarian Mary E. Downey as president.

University of Iowa President George E. MacLean, a Commission member, gave what was called an "inspiring" address on "The Public Library, the People's Palace":

The people's palace is the sign and seal of triumphant democracy. Education through the reading of good books and through the elevating process of clear thinking and right living will be the means of eradicating from society the mania for accumulation, and in its place there will spring up an ambition for the duties involved in the great brotherhood of mankind and service to one's country will become the dominant factor of our society.

MacLean was, somewhat ironically, alluding to Andrew Carnegie's 1886 book *Triumphant Democracy*, a celebration of America's material progress. Carnegie's biographer, Grinnell College professor Joseph Frazier Wall, cites a letter from Matthew Arnold to a friend in England, criticizing the book for confusing material progress with cultural greatness. Speaking of the book's description of life in America, Arnold asks "Do they think to prove that it has savour and depth by pointing to the number of public libraries, schools and places of worship?" Wall suggests that "the answer that Carnegie would give to Arnold's rhetorical question would be a ringing yes."

Miriam E. Carey, Librarian of State Institutions, addressed the 1906 annual meeting in Ottumwa on "A New Phase of Library Extension." Iowa had become the first state in the nation to undertake systematic development of library services for its institutionalized residents with Carey's appointment to the new position the previous year.

Among topics discussed by the College and Reference Librarians Round Table were "What Privileges Shall We Give to the Public in Our College Libraries?" and "The Growing Helpfulness of the State Library to the Public Libraries of the State."

Of much significance in the development of the Iowa Library Association was President M. H. Douglass's suggestion that it sponsor a series of district meetings around the state. Arguing that additional opportunities for exchange of ideas were needed, Douglass recommended a roundtable format at four meetings per year. The idea was enthusiastically received and the first District Meeting, of the North-East District, was held June 4-5, 1907, at the Mason City Public Library. Thirty-one librarians and trustees attended and participated in roundtable discussions addressing the concerns of each group. Mrs. C. H. McNider, trustee of the Mason City Public Library, conducted the trustee roundtable. Commission member and former ILA President Anna B. Howe lectured on her recent "Rambles in Florence," especially appreciated by members of a local women's club which had just completed a year's study of the city.

More than one hundred attended the Southeastern District Meeting on July 16-17 at Iowa City, the only other district meeting held during the year. Resolutions passed at both meetings called for improvements to make it more convenient for all to attend.

President Ella M. McLoney of Des Moines responded to those concerns in her opening address at the 1907 meeting in Council Bluffs, held in conjunction with the Nebraska Library Association meeting in Omaha. She recommended both that eight smaller districts be created and that all annual conferences be held in Des Moines. In January, the Executive Board increased the number of districts to six, but the annual meeting was held in Des Moines only once in the following twelve years.

Commission Secretary Alice S. Tyler noted the recent move of the Commission into the Historical Building on Grand Avenue in Des Moines. She also presented a resolution on behalf of the Southeastern District Meeting instructing the Legislative Committee to consider seeking an amendment that would remove a public library trustee from office after three consecutive unex-

cused absences.

At the 1908 meeting in Cedar Rapids, W. H. Brett of the Cleveland Public Library discussed the responsibility of public libraries to provide information on the questions of the day. A symposium on children's literature included presentations on "Girl's Books" by Miss Tapert, of the Davenport Public Library, and on "Books for Boys" by Miss Gregory, of the Waterloo Public Library.

Librarian Mrs. Eldridge, of Clarion, exemplified the very practical focus of district meetings in her remarks to the 1909 Northwest District Meeting at Algona on the need for improvements in janitor service. The Middle West and Southwest Districts meeting together at Atlantic the previous year had considered the topic "Disinfectants," an important subject in an era of dangerous epidemics.

As was fitting at the end of a decade of cooperative effort between Iowa's libraries and women's clubs, the 1909 meeting included a reception at Hoyt Sherman Place, the home of the Des Moines Women's Club.

At the 1909 Eighth Biennial Convention of the Iowa Federation of Women's Clubs in Davenport, Library Committee Chair Mrs. Warren Garst reported that the success of previous Federation efforts and the effectiveness of the Iowa State Library Commission had eliminated the need for continued statewide effort by women's clubs. With 110 free public libraries serving Iowa, she recommended that club women work with their local libraries and assist in improving access to materials for the blind. Thus closed an extraordinarily productive chapter of cooperation between the librarians and women's clubs of the state.