

BULLETIN
of
THE MARITIME LIBRARY INSTITUTE

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Wolfville, Nova Scotia

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Fellow-members:

I am sure you were glad to welcome the first issue of our Maritime Library Institute Bulletin. If it accomplishes nothing more than keeping us in touch with one another between our Conferences, it will prove worthwhile, but we are sure it is going to be of great benefit to us all.

I wish more of our members had been able to attend our Annual Conference at Sackville. We missed many we had expected to have with us. Our sessions were most interesting and inspiring, but even more so were the fellowship gatherings, between and after meetings around the open fire in one of the cosy sitting-rooms of Mount Allison Girls' Residence, when many individual problems were discussed, tales humorous and otherwise related, and plans laid for future activities.

Begin to plan now to meet with us at Antigonish next year. We are hoping some will be able to represent us at Ottawa, at the Ontario Library Association Annual meeting. Of course, all the A. L. A. members will be in New York for its Annual Convention. Make your reservations early.

Now for the Bulletin itself. It depends on each member of the Institute for its success. It will be what you make it. Will you not, send to our able editor contributions, book reviews, short-cuts, anything of interest to librarians. Can we not, who are privileged in having larger collections of books, help solve knotty problems,-- the elusive quotation, the biographical reference, the out-of-print books, Loyalist genealogical data, and so forth.

Last, but not least, will we do everything in our power to educate our public to the realization of the value of Library Service, and help to bring "reading privileges within the reach of every boy and girl in our Maritime Provinces"?

Yours sincerely,

Estelle M. A. Vaughan,

President.

PUBLIC Archives of Nova S.
HALIFAX. N.S.

The Public Archives of Nova Scotia
in Relation to University and Public Libraries

By D. C. Harvey.

Prepared for the second conference of the Maritime Library Institute and read by Miss Marion Gilroy.

The primary function of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia is to preserve information on all phases of the history of the province from the earliest times to the present day; and its secondary functions are to make this information accessible to students or other inquirers and to disseminate it amongst all those who are interested.

From the point of view of preservation we accept and care for not only the official records that come to us automatically and are archives par excellence but also such personal or private papers, diaries, letters, portraits and pictures as are donated from time to time. In addition to these manuscripts and pictures an effort is being made to build up a comprehensive collection of newspapers and magazines as well as a research library, so that the Archives may become a storehouse of everything that can possibly throw light on our history.

The cleaning, repairing and preserving of this miscellaneous material are in themselves no small task apart from the important function of making it available for use. It is obvious that this material cannot be piled high and dry regardless of order and arrangement, since any item in the entire collection may be required for consultation at any moment; and this leads to the problem of sorting, arranging and cataloguing, an endless task that must be pursued continuously and on two distinct principles, one general, the other specific. In other words, while arranging and cataloguing various series of papers series by series, one has to have a general knowledge of the information that is in every series, so as to be able to direct the more detailed investigations that are regularly being carried on in regard to specific subjects, movements or localities: for the Archives is coming to be regarded more and more as an historical laboratory for university and college students and historians from all parts of Nova Scotia as well as Canada and the Eastern States. Moreover, the members of our staff are not content to await miscellaneous inquiries and do nothing to shape the course of events. From the first, by lectures and articles we have tried to call attention to useful sets of papers or significant incidents in our history that deserve special investigation. Thus by writing, lecturing, and assisting other investigators we are enabling the Archives both to quicken the interest of the reading public and to satisfy their legitimate interest in their historic past.

From this brief description of the functions of the Archives it is apparent that our library is secondary and supplementary to our collection of manuscripts, newspapers and pictures and will be restricted to fields related to or covered by these manuscripts. In other words, when a student attempts to investigate a certain phase of our history, he wants to know what has already been written directly or indirectly on the subject, and he may reasonably expect to find

such literature in our library. This is really a bigger problem than it appears at the first glance, because our history has its roots in both French and British colonial policies and has run parallel to that of New England and the other British North American colonies. Therefore, our library should contain as many volumes as possible on all these related fields in addition to the standard works of general history that are necessary for perspective. But as funds are limited and our library is young we have to fall back upon university and other research libraries already in existence to meet the needs of our students, although we are keeping the ideal in view and striving for self-sufficiency.

It follows, then, that our relationship is much closer with the university libraries of the Maritime Provinces than with the public libraries, although we are anxious to co-operate with and assist such libraries in every way possible. It is true that most public libraries are largely stocked with fiction and general works of non-fiction that have little to do with history and especially Nova Scotian history. But there is no reason why every public library in the Maritime Provinces should not try to collect copies of local history and local literature along with its works of general interest. In fact, there is every reason why it should. Moreover, every library worthy of the name encourages reading and stimulates intellectual curiosity. From this emerges the enquiring mind and the desire to know something of one's own past individual or collective; and that in turn leads the enquirer to books on local history or ultimately to original sources such as the Archives contains for an answer to questions not raised in secondary material.

In a word, the Archives proper, the Archives Library, the University Libraries the Public Libraries are all links of a co-operative chain, or perhaps better, one surface of an intellectual pyramid, with the public libraries at the base, stimulating general intelligence and evoking intellectual curiosity, the university libraries in the centre providing for more intensive needs, the Archives library meeting still more restricted and specific inquiries, and last of all the Archives proper with its original sources on all problems of our history, important and unimportant, that, in the words of Lord Acton, "still entangle the feet and vex the hearts of men."

Notes, Queries, Personals

The fiscal year of the Maritime Library Institute closes the first day of June. Notices to those in arrears will be sent out during the next month, but time, postage, and feelings will be saved if those who read this will forward the amount due to the treasurer without delay.

Upon receiving the first issue of the Bulletin one of our members, already fully paid up, sent us one dollar to be applied towards the expenses of the little periodical. A week later a friend of the Institute, who wishes his name unreported, contributed twenty dollars for the same purpose. If interest such as this continues, we can soon

have a magazine ready to claim a place in the library literature of Canada. A financial endowment yielding one hundred dollars a year would enable us to print the Bulletin, and to give liberal space for contributions from members of our profession in the Maritime Provinces and elsewhere. The Editor would welcome suggestions as to ways and means of attaining this objective.

The Royal Society of Canada has completed arrangements to house its library with the National Research Council of Canada.

The Librarian of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia writes: "The Bulletin should be of great service in the exchange of books, and I am hoping to dispose of duplicate assembly journals, statutes, and journals of the legislative council, and acquire some missing volumes."

An address presented to the Maritime Library Institute, Saint John Branch, March 19, 1936, "The John Clarence Webster Collection", by A. G. Bailey, has been published in an attractive booklet of fifteen pages, illustrated, under the series title: New Brunswick Museum Collections, No.1.

"A Catalogue of Scientific Periodicals in Libraries of the Maritime Provinces", prepared by Ernest Hess, Ph.D., and published during the summer by the Nova Scotia Institute of Science, with the assistance of the National Council of Canada, is a most significant and important work, an outstanding achievement of Maritime scholarship.

In the story of library movements in the Maritime Provinces Miss Nora Bateson's Report, "The Carnegie Library Demonstration in Prince Edward Island, Canada, 1933-1936", will have unique value. It has 52 pages, a map of Prince Edward Island showing the branch libraries under Miss Bateson's supervision, one illustration of the Director's car standing in the snow with its contrivance for books at the back, another of the book exhibit at the Provincial Exhibition, 1935.

Miss Vera Daye, former Archivist of New Brunswick, has accepted a position in the Public Archives of Canada at Ottawa, but will retain her interest and membership in the Maritime Library Institute.

We are sorry to learn that Mrs. H. Colby Smith, an associate member of the Saint John Branch of the Institute is ill at her home.

Miss Jeannette Foshay of Wolfville, N. S., received the B.L.S. degree from McGill University in the spring.

Miss Mary S. Clark of Saint John, N. B., has received her diploma in Library Science from the University of Toronto.

On August 21 the Editor enjoyed a visit from that veteran librarian, scholar, and author, Dr. Ernest Cushing Richardson, now Consultant in Bibliography and Research in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

Can any reader locate for Saint John Free Public Library the author of the poem in which the following line occurs: "They need not our prayers, the noble dead"?

"Where is the Round Robin?"

We hope soon to publish a book review number of the Bulletin. Will members of the M. L. I. please send lists of recently published books that interest them most, with short reviews of one or two of them.