

A State Library Transformed: Pennsylvania, 1878–1921

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The Gilded Age and Progressive Era were pivotal times for those state libraries founded in the colonial era. Like many such institutions, the State Library of Pennsylvania (SLP) was initially established to archive and supply information pertinent to legislators and government officials. Into the 1860s staff found the notion of circulating collections “simply preposterous” and affirmed that the SLP’s mission was to “facilitate the business of government.” Yet after the Civil War, successive state librarians broadened the SLP’s concerns, activities, collections, and spheres of influence. Examination of librarians’ reports, news coverage, and other sources illustrates how their vision of the possibilities and responsibilities of state libraries expanded over time, embracing the concerns not only of government officials but also of citizens, fellow practitioners, and posterity.

In 2009, reflecting the realities of the economic situation of the country and the state, the appropriation for the State Library of Pennsylvania (SLP) was slashed in half, resulting in layoffs for 40 percent of the staff and drastic reductions in hours and services.¹ By cutting the SLP in this way, Governor Edward Rendell claimed that he was able to afford a more “modest” 10 percent cut to county library systems. The governor defended his decision by asserting that the SLP was “more of a repository for government documents and not a place that children flock to in large numbers.”²

Given the economic recession, few could question his logic. However, his belief in the state library as mainly “a repository” of legal materials was more than a century and a half out of date. While it is true that the SLP was established to supply information to state officials, this article will show that librarians after the Civil War considerably broadened its concerns, collections, staffing, and spheres of influence. Unfolding over six decades, the story cannot be told comprehensively within a single article, so this piece will focus on state and local history collections initiated by Charles Ehrenfeld and William Egle in the 1870s and 1880s, the “new” library building secured by Egle in the mid-1890s, and public

library development efforts undertaken by George Reed and Thomas Lynch Montgomery in the early twentieth century. Annual reports, newspapers, and archival material illustrate how the SLP gradually embraced the concerns not only of government officials but also of fellow practitioners, citizens, and posterity.

Beginnings, 1745–1887

In 1918 Samuel W. Pennypacker reflected upon his years as governor of Pennsylvania and decided that, until his administration, most state librarians had been “politicians” or “incompetents.” He was proud of having appointed a “trained librarian” during his own term.³ As Pennypacker was an avid book collector and historian, it may seem bold to refute him. Examination of a variety of records complicates his assessment, however.

Before discussing the SLP during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, it is important to consider broader contexts. Despite the size and strength of its collections, the SLP was not Pennsylvania’s premier library. Unlike some western states where a territorial library within the capital city was the first institution to provide reading and reference material to its citizens, many of Pennsylvania’s oldest and largest libraries were in Philadelphia and surrounding counties.⁴ Importantly, these institutions began as social libraries, only open to dues-paying members. By 1876 the subscription model of library service had gradually spread to more than one hundred communities across the state.⁵ Thus the establishment of a public or state library open to all residents was a significant cultural, political, and social change for Pennsylvania.

Pennsylvania’s state library began as a kind of social library in the sense that its first “members” were the representatives and senators within the Pennsylvania General Assembly. The SLP traces its history to December 5, 1745, when the assembly ordered its clerk, Benjamin Franklin, to purchase a copy of *Statutes at Large* as well as some maps for reference purposes.⁶ By the mid-1750s the assembly had spent more than £1,000 on legal materials as well as history, geography, philosophy, and science. For decades, the Pennsylvania House and Senate obtained materials without consulting each other; then, a joint committee recommended consolidating the libraries, appointing a paid librarian, and providing an annual appropriation for books. On February 28, 1816, Governor Simon Snyder adopted the committee’s suggestions and signed the “Act to Provide for the Better Preservation and Increase of the Library of This Commonwealth” into law. After a new capitol was completed in Harrisburg in 1822, the library moved to the second

floor of the building. In 1854 the state librarian was made a gubernatorial rather than a legislative appointment, and in 1867 the SLP moved along with other executive offices to an addition built at the back of the capitol.⁷

During the mid- to late nineteenth century, state librarians were not all “incompetents,” as Pennypacker assumed; in fact, some were quite accomplished within their own callings. But judging from available biographical information, they did not relinquish previous positions while working for the state. In other words, they were only part-time librarians. Several were members of the clergy. For example, William Radcliffe DeWitt (served 1852–63) was pastor of Harrisburg’s Presbyterian Church from 1818 until his death in 1867.⁸ Lay appointees tended to be news editors or publishers or college professors. Wein Forney (served 1863–72) had learned the printing trade in the 1820s in the offices of the *Lancaster Intelligencer*, which was owned by his better-known cousin John W. Forney. After a stint working in the House of Representatives library in Washington, DC, he returned to Harrisburg as editor of the *Telegraph*. This “indefatigable” man apparently worked on several newspapers during his tenure as state librarian.⁹ Charles Joseph Little (served 1882–85) was minister, educator, and politician wrapped into one. After joining the Methodist Episcopal Conference in 1862 and serving as pastor of several churches in Philadelphia, he became a professor of literature, philosophy, metaphysics, and political economy at Dickinson College in Carlisle. This man with a “nervous temperament” and a “vivid imagination” was a one-time candidate for office in Cumberland County. He too maintained his teaching position while heading the state library.¹⁰ Given that there were no formal library training opportunities in Pennsylvania at the time, governors seemed to believe that ministers, news editors, and professors possessed the best qualifications.

Through the 1870s the state library focused primarily on obtaining materials pertinent to legislative business. For example, in the mid-1850s it participated in Alexandre Vattemare’s government documents exchange program, through which it received items from Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland.¹¹ State librarian DeWitt also worked with agents in England, Portugal, and Prussia to obtain materials.¹² Another important effort was accounting for the library’s purchases, primarily by compiling printed catalogs. In 1859 DeWitt produced a seven-hundred-page catalog of more than twelve thousand law and “miscellaneous” books, with copies distributed to each member of the assembly.¹³ Updated catalogs appeared in 1873 and 1878.¹⁴

During the mid-nineteenth century only the governor, members of the legislature, and heads of executive departments were allowed to

borrow materials. Although the public could use the library “on orders” of these officials, the SLP discouraged the practice. In the 1850s DeWitt complained several times that library privileges were being “abused by boys, some of whom can scarcely read,” who were using “the most valuable and costly works, which it is impossible they can appreciate, and returning them soiled and otherwise injured.”¹⁵ Similarly, Forney wrote: “It is altogether a mistaken idea that this is a *circulating* library for the benefit of the public at large. True, the people of the state *own* the books, for it was their money that purchased them; they also own the stationery and furniture in the government offices. . . . Yet the idea that the public at large have the *right* to appropriate these to their individual use is simply preposterous.”¹⁶

Both Pennypacker and former SLP employee Robert Pratt Bliss credit Charles Lewis Ehrenfeld (served 1878–82) with charting a new direction for the SLP. According to Bliss, Ehrenfeld was the “first Librarian who placed emphasis on the importance of newspapers and State history.”¹⁷

Although earlier state librarians had asked for the authority to collect such material, one could certainly identify Ehrenfeld as a particular champion.¹⁸ Like some of his predecessors, he was an ordained minister, yet available biographical information indicates that he had varied interests. As a student at Wittenberg College in the 1850s, he was an active member of the school’s debating and literary societies. During the presidential campaign of 1856 he stumped for the “Pathfinder,” Republican candidate John Charles Frémont. After serving as pastor to various churches, Ehrenfeld became head of Southwestern Pennsylvania State Normal School (now California University of Pennsylvania). During the 1870s he not only obtained state appropriations for the cash-strapped institution but also was an examiner of graduating students at other schools. Recognizing his abilities, Superintendent of Public Instruction James P. Wickersham arranged for Ehrenfeld to be appointed financial secretary of that institution, a post Ehrenfeld held until 1878, when Governor John F. Hartranft chose him to become state librarian.¹⁹

It is unknown why Ehrenfeld became a particular promoter of Pennsylvania history. The fact that he later published a detailed history of Southwestern Pennsylvania State Normal School may imply that he personally valued setting down facts for posterity. Perhaps he was also influenced by the 1876 Centennial International Exposition, a world’s fair held in Philadelphia that drummed up nostalgic and patriotic sentiments among thousands of attendees.²⁰ Regardless of his motivation, Ehrenfeld pursued back files and missing issues from newspaper companies and from the Historical Society of Pennsylvania while also accepting donations from the public. Within a few years the SLP offered

papers from around the state, including rural, center-state towns such as Lewisburg and Selingsgrove, northwestern counties such as Venango, and western cities such as Pittsburgh, as well as the long-established communities of the eastern half of the state.

After Ehrenfeld accepted a professorship at his alma mater, the work he began could have been put in jeopardy. Rather than expanding historical resources, Ehrenfeld's successor, Charles Joseph Little (served 1882–85), concentrated his efforts on recataloging the SLP's existing "promiscuous collection" into a "well-classified library."²¹ However, in the fall of 1885, when Little left Pennsylvania in the middle of his term, Governor Robert Pattison appointed Edward Stuck, a fellow Democrat, who oversaw a building renovation, including freshly "kalsomimed" (whitewashed) walls, repainted woodwork, and new furniture. Like Ehrenfeld, Stuck was an advocate of historical collections. In his 1886 report he wrote:

It is especially important that we have on our shelves everything that relates to the history of our own and sister States as well as of the United States. . . . The State of Pennsylvania, prominent as it was connected with the rebellion, should have in its library every book relating to the civil war that money will buy. . . . The Librarian is sensible of the fact that . . . he is catering to the tastes of the people of the entire commonwealth; of men of all creeds and opinions, and, when such diversity of taste exists, it is the duty of the person entrusted with this work of the State, to give as large a range to his purchases as possible.²²

Despite his openness to public use of the collection, Stuck only enjoyed a brief opportunity to act upon his ideals. Although various observers were impressed with his service, the Republican senate rejected Stuck's continuation when it resumed session in early 1887.²³ Fortunately for the SLP, Governor James A. Beaver found a fellow Republican who was even more passionate about Pennsylvania history than Stuck had been. His name was Dr. William Henry Egle.

Documenting and Protecting Pennsylvania History, 1878–1899

Comparing William Henry Egle's profession to those of his SLP predecessors, one might wonder how he was qualified for library work. Not able to afford college right away, he was an assistant teacher in Harrisburg's north ward and then served as a mailing clerk in a post

office. He then entered medical school, graduating with an MD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1859. During the Civil War, Egle was surgeon or medical officer to various regiments. For more than twenty years afterward he served as both senior medical officer of the Pennsylvania National Guard and physician of Dauphin County's prison.²⁴ He had little taste for the political machine so prevalent in Pennsylvania at the time. One friend remembered that Egle "had no patience with what was untrue. . . . Honorable and clean to a degree . . . he scorned deceit and whatever bore the suspicion of disingenuousness. He had no concealment in his dealings with others, took no part in political trickery, and had no chosen policy to carry out in his actions."²⁵

Yet in addition to his medical accomplishments, Egle was a prolific, if amateur, historian. His voluminous scrapbooks—at least a dozen of which are extant at two different institutions—show he was an enthusiastic collector of biographical information and historical anecdotes.²⁶ In 1876 Egle published an eleven-hundred-page *Illustrated History of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* while assisting John Blair Linn in editing the second series of the Pennsylvania Archives, an ongoing monographic series that reprinted important state documents. He also authored *History of the Counties of Dauphin and Lebanon; Pennsylvania Genealogies: Scotch-Irish and German; Centenary Memorial of the Erection of the County of Dauphin*; and *Notes and Queries*, a weekly historical column in the *Harrisburg Telegraph*.²⁷ He was one of the founders and the first president of the Pennsylvania German Society, a vice president of the Pennsylvania Sons of the Revolution, a member of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and a member of the American Historical Association.²⁸ Prior to working for the state, Egle was a longtime librarian for the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society.²⁹ He had also served on the library committees of the Masonic Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania and the Dauphin County Historical Society.³⁰

An important difference between Egle and his predecessors was that he aspired to work at the SLP long before he was appointed. Apparently, he much preferred being a curator and researcher to being a doctor and running a pharmaceutical business. Writing about literary matters to a friend in 1874, he confided, "I propose making 'a push' for the position myself, which I am in hopes may result favorably. I can then release myself from all business cares and study hard for several years." He was also critical of the SLP's administration, noting that "we have a parson for a State Librarian and unfortunately ministerial gentlemen have never been 'a success' in this locality."³¹ Egle also treated the position as a full-time occupation, resigning from the prison when he was finally

appointed to the SLP in 1887. The *Patriot* newspaper, which reported state executives' daily attendance during the 1890s, shows that Egle appeared at work nearly every day.³²

Over the course of a decade, Egle broadened the SLP's collections in several ways. Like Ehrenfeld, Egle emphasized the state library's newspaper holdings. One of his administration's first efforts was compiling an accurate list of subscriptions. Appended to the library's 1888–89 report, it included at least one paper from every county and two or more titles for populous cities such as Allentown, Erie, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Reading, Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and York.³³ In addition, he and his staff assembled a twenty-four-page "Checklist of Pennsylvania County, Town, and Township Histories."³⁴

Egle was also instrumental in obtaining a larger space for the state library. During his terms in office, he frequently warned about cramped conditions, fire hazards, and the general security of the SLP's materials. Among other concerns, he emphasized the poor insulation of electrical wires and the instability of the floors due to the weight of books.³⁵ He also expressed concern about Pennsylvania's historical records, which were "being reduced to masses of crumbling parchment by mice and mildew," according to contemporary accounts.³⁶ By the late 1880s the library was being used for party caucuses and committee meetings when there was no other room available.³⁷

Egle had wanted a building entirely separate from other agencies, but when the opportunity arose to share new offices with the governor and other high officials, he grasped it. In 1889 a new act had established a board of trustees for the SLP, and this body included the governor as an ex officio member.³⁸ The closer relationship between the governor and library apparently paid off. In 1893 the assembly appropriated \$500,000 to erect new executive offices, which included space for the SLP.³⁹ During April 1893 Egle visited libraries in Philadelphia, New York, Albany, and Boston.⁴⁰ At the end of May, he, along with Auditor General David M. Gregg and State Treasurer John W. Morrison, also visited the Enoch Pratt Free Library, the Peabody Library, and the Mercantile Library in Baltimore.⁴¹ The resulting state library in Pennsylvania incorporated what were thought to be the best features of these various facilities.

The new executive building, designed by James H. Windrim of Philadelphia, was a two-story, fireproof structure, comprising offices of the governor, auditor general, state treasurer, and other departments in the front of the building. The state library was considered to be at the "back," but, unlike the SLP's previous locations, it had a street entrance that invited scholars to use its resources.⁴² The library section was 147 by 55 feet, or approximately 45 feet longer than the SLP's previous

quarters. Book alcoves, each lit by a window and furnished with tables and chairs, surrounded the perimeter. As initially built, the library offered space for more than 120,000 volumes, with additional capacity for more than 200,000 in the basement and on the third floor. All floors could be reached by elevators.⁴³ In December 1894 Egle personally presided over a team of more than forty men who moved more than 100,000 volumes onto new metallic bookshelves at the new state library.⁴⁴

Egle and his colleagues were clearly proud of the new building. The SLP's 1895 annual report contained more than a dozen photographs, sometimes with staff posing in the pictures. Viewing the images with twenty-first-century sensibilities, it is clear that custodianship was Egle's primary concern. All of the book alcoves included high gates that could be locked. Newspapers were stored in areas designed for economy of space and were inaccessible to the public. Yet, as it turned out, Egle's demands for a secure, fireproof library were prescient. On February 3, 1897, less than three years after the SLP moved to its new building, flames broke out while the assembly was in session, and the entire state capitol was destroyed.⁴⁵ Books, newspapers, and state records that had been transferred earlier to the new executive building were of course saved, but most other materials remaining in capitol offices were ruined.⁴⁶

Although it is clear that Egle enhanced the SLP's historical collections and helped to ensure their preservation, in matters of library management he was an amateur. Robert Pratt Bliss, who worked at the state library in the early 1900s, noted that "little attention had been paid to the keeping of records and other lines of good library administration." Egle never recorded accessions and did not publish a collection catalog, so there was no definitive count of the number of volumes the library contained. He had only begun to develop a card catalog when he retired in 1898.⁴⁷

Also, there is little indication that Egle actively promoted statewide library development. He was a proponent of an independent, nonsectarian public library for the city of Harrisburg and canvassed his neighbors to raise funds for it.⁴⁸ In his 1894 annual report, he also urged legislators to pass a "wise, judicious, and economic general library law" to assist local charities that were establishing libraries. Yet there is no evidence that Egle drafted a bill himself, nor did his reports articulate a specific plan. He asked for more staff, but his request was mainly for permanent catalogers, stenographers, and typewriters, not for an archivist, educator, law librarian, public library "inspector," or other of the professional assistants that were already being employed by the New York State Library.⁴⁹

Egle's lack of leadership in library development is evident in the disparate bills passed by the legislature during his tenure. One aspect of

the complexity (both in Egle's time and today) is Pennsylvania's various types of municipal government (city, borough, and township), which are further divided into "classes" based upon population. Also potentially relevant are Pennsylvania's school districts, which provide public education, and county governments, which are responsible for regional planning and public welfare.⁵⁰ During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, library laws were typically drafted by promoters in a specific municipality and sponsored by those persons' representatives or senators; thus they often contained language that was confusing or inapplicable to others. Poorly designed legislation addressed the acceptance of gifts or the raising of library revenue through taxation but not both. By 1910 there were at least a half-dozen conflicting measures in place.⁵¹

Egle's lack of involvement is especially evident in relation to an 1895 law promoted by the fledgling Pennsylvania Library Club, a Philadelphia-based organization that aimed to instill cooperation and professionalism among the state's librarians. Like an earlier law from 1864, the 1895 legislation enabled public school boards to establish and receive contributions for public libraries, but the new law enabled the school districts to levy taxes to fund the libraries as well.⁵² Although the news reported that the club had corresponded with Egle and others who agreed to "concentrate on this particular measure," Egle noted in his annual report that he had not been consulted about the bill and did not want to "be considered responsible for any imperfections" in the law.⁵³ Only late in his tenure did he realize that public library development could "only be thoroughly and economically done by and through the action and control of state authorities."⁵⁴ Egle had expanded the SLP's historical collections and obtained a new, fireproof space for them, but the task of improving public library services remained for his successors.

Developing Pennsylvania Public Librarianship, 1899–1921

Appointed by Governor William Alexis Stone in 1899, George E. Reed (served 1899–1902) was an ambitious "fighting parson" much as Charles Little had been.⁵⁵ Although he had no prior experience in higher education, Reed became president of Dickinson College in Carlisle in 1889. During his administration the school tripled its enrollment, established a law school, and built an athletic field.⁵⁶ In the 1898 gubernatorial election Reed stumped for Stone and hoped to be chosen as state superintendent of public instruction.⁵⁷ He may have accepted a less prestigious position at SLP as an opportunity to prove his abilities.

Unlike Egle, Reed vowed he would “not allow the duties attendant upon the State librarianship to interfere with his duties at Dickinson,” and he remained the college’s president.⁵⁸ Still, he articulated bold plans to modernize the SLP. Believing that “the real value of a State Library . . . is determined not so much by the number, or rareness, of the volumes upon its shelves, as by the accessibility of its contents,” Reed resolved to assemble a catalog of the entire collection, a feat that had not been attempted since the 1870s.⁵⁹ After obtaining a special appropriation for the project, he hired dozens of temporary staff, who generated author and title cards for more than 100,000 volumes within a few months.⁶⁰ The SLP also published a 964-page *Catalogue of the Law Books of the Pennsylvania State Library*.⁶¹

Perhaps the most important effort of Reed’s administration was assisting in the establishment of a free library commission. In Pennsylvania during the mid-1890s it was not a foregone conclusion that the state government had a role to play in providing reading material to its citizens. In fact, the idea for traveling libraries (circulating cases of preselected books, which ultimately became an important component of the commission’s work) appears to have originated with the Free Library of Philadelphia (FLP). In 1896 it established a “travelling library organization” that would “meet the wants of the different localities within the city limits” and then “be extended . . . to cover the entire state.” The FLP proposed to deliver books from its collections through Western Union, other telegraph stations, and the Pennsylvania Railroad. Trustees Thomas Lynch Montgomery and John Thomson gathered advice at the American Library Association’s 1896 conference, and by the following year they had decided to approach the state legislature for funding.⁶² It is unknown precisely how or why plans changed over time. Possibly following the lead of Wisconsin and other states, Pennsylvania ultimately opted for a statewide commission appointed by the governor. Authorized by the legislature in 1899, the Pennsylvania Free Library Commission was charged with advising communities on library administration, book selection, cataloging, and related activities and developing a system of traveling libraries for areas that had no access to materials.⁶³

The commission’s accomplishments owed much to the SLP’s support, because the commission did not receive any appropriations during its first two years. Its membership typically consisted of busy professional men from cities in the extreme eastern and western ends of the state, and the state librarian served *ex officio* as secretary.⁶⁴ Reed provided space for its work in the attic of the state library. Raising \$2,800 from prominent men such as Henry C. Frick, George Westinghouse, and John

Wanamaker, the commission created eighty traveling libraries (sixteen library collections of fifty volumes each, with each “library” duplicated five times). Within just two years books had been placed in nearly half of Pennsylvania’s counties—“sections of the State utterly destitute of library privileges”—and had reached more than 2,500 borrowers.⁶⁵ Reed also facilitated the establishment of a statewide professional association for librarians. During the 1890s librarians in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh had established regional organizations, but neither could claim broad geographic membership. In November 1901, upon Reed’s invitation, members of both groups as well as dozens of librarians from other locations came to Harrisburg for the first annual meeting of the Keystone State Library Association, the forerunner of today’s Pennsylvania Library Association.⁶⁶

During his tenure Reed recommended building renovations, the establishment of a state museum, and various other improvements, but he did not remain with the state government long enough to implement them.⁶⁷ From the beginning, trustees of Dickinson College were dissatisfied with his “constant absence” from campus.⁶⁸ At the same time, Reed, an “independent Republican,” felt increasingly disenfranchised by the state political machine. During the gubernatorial election of 1898 he had made numerous addresses supporting William A. Stone over the Prohibition candidate, the Reverend Silas C. Swallow. As a result, Reed was tried for “imprudent and unministerial conduct” and threatened with official reprimand by the Methodist Episcopal Church.⁶⁹ Even after weathering the controversy for the sake of his party, Reed never received a high position in the Department of Public Instruction as he had hoped. In 1902, when the party convention selected Samuel W. Pennypacker over Reed’s preferred gubernatorial candidate, it was the last straw. Refusing “subserviency to political bossism,” he asserted that “no lash of party regularity shall compel me, in this contest, or any other, to support candidates in the determination of whose nominations I, as a citizen, can have no part.” When a trustee of Dickinson College, former Democratic governor Robert H. Pattison, ran for a third time, Reed changed sides and threw in his support. The very public nature of his resignation from the state library and the ongoing dominance of Republicans in Pennsylvania politics meant that Reed would never hold prominent state office again.⁷⁰

Governor Pennypacker was a beneficiary of the Quay political machine, but he also pursued a variety of literary and historical interests. Thus he had the motivation and connections to find a highly qualified state librarian. He chose fellow Philadelphian Thomas Lynch Montgomery for the position.⁷¹ Unlike any of his nineteenth-century

predecessors, Montgomery (served 1903–21) was a career librarian. Only a few years after his college graduation, he was hired as the actuary and librarian of the Wagner Free Institute of Science, an organization that today continues to provide free science lectures to the public. Although one might think of Wagner as a “special library,” Montgomery recognized similarities between the institute and public libraries, especially in terms of their educational missions. In 1892, when pending litigation stalled the establishment of the FLP, he arranged for Wagner to be designated the first branch in the system. While continuing his work at Wagner he also served on the FLP’s board.⁷²

Montgomery’s involvement in the public library movement extended far beyond Philadelphia. A frequent attendee at American Library Association (ALA) annual meetings, he met other Pennsylvanians who wished to extend library service throughout the state. In the early 1890s he collaborated with Hannah Packard James of Wilkes-Barre and John Thomson of Philadelphia to found the Pennsylvania Library Club (as mentioned above, one of the forerunners of today’s Pennsylvania Library Association).⁷³ In the club’s early years, he served as secretary pro tem, gathered materials from similar organizations in New Jersey and New York, sent meeting notices to dozens of librarians around the state, and corresponded with leading librarians throughout the nation.⁷⁴ Governor Pennypacker would have been hard-pressed to identify a man with more practical experience and a wider professional network than Montgomery. Throughout his tenure he drew upon his predecessors’ ideas as well as new methods learned through his participation in the ALA.

Judging from his early public remarks, one might conclude that Montgomery was not as ambitious as Reed had been. Taking the oath of office in February 1903, he stated that “there would be no changes” in the library’s activities for the time being.⁷⁵ Yet under Montgomery’s leadership the SLP expanded its activities further than during any previous administration. Sharing Egle’s interest in state and local history, Montgomery established Pennsylvania’s state archives and state museum as part of the state library. He also served as the first curator of the Historical Commission of Pennsylvania as well as founder and frequent officer of a statewide federation of county and local historical societies, two entities that were administratively separate from the SLP.⁷⁶ Following the cue of Wisconsin and other states, Montgomery also secured authorization for the creation of the Legislative Reference Bureau. Signed by Governor Edwin S. Stuart in 1909, the authorizing law gave the SLP a mandate far beyond the collection of legal material. It allowed the bureau to employ an “assistant director, learned in the law,” to “aid and assist the members of the General Assembly, the

Governor, and the heads of departments” by confidentially “advising as to bills and resolutions, and drafting the same into proper form, and by furnishing to them the fullest information upon all matters in the scope of the bureau relating to their public duties.”⁷⁷ Mentioned only briefly here, each of these accomplishments is worth its own essay.

From a twenty-first-century perspective, public library development and the professionalization of Pennsylvania’s librarians were the most enduring achievements of the SLP during Montgomery’s tenure. Given how closely the state library worked with the Pennsylvania Free Library Commission and with the Keystone State Library Association during these years, it is sometimes difficult to determine which entity deserves the most credit. Yet Montgomery was clearly a leader or contributor to many of their initiatives.⁷⁸ He believed that “in these days of physical, moral, and mental unrest, it is well for every community that they should possess a collection of books.”⁷⁹ From the beginning of his first term, he spoke about the benefits of traveling or public libraries at the meetings of the Pennsylvania State Grange and the State Federation of Pennsylvania Women as well as various county and local organizations.⁸⁰ To those who mistakenly thought that “political or other influence is necessary” to obtain a traveling library, he asserted that “nothing of the kind is true.”⁸¹ Any locale that could pay two dollars in transportation costs and find twelve citizens to sign an application could obtain a traveling library.⁸² Along with the books, the SLP sent posters and bibliographies for “advertising purposes” as well as blue borrowers’ cards and white book pocket cards.⁸³ The collections were sent to civic and literary clubs, country stores, churches, and a variety of other organizations, generally for six months at a time.⁸⁴

Unfunded in the beginning, the commission received substantial appropriations during the Pennypacker administration. In 1905–6 it hired Robert Pratt Bliss as assistant secretary, mainly responsible for the traveling library program, and Helen Price as consulting librarian for locations that wanted to establish free or public libraries. During the summer of 1905 Bliss inspected more than one hundred traveling and free/public libraries in fifteen different counties, mainly in the eastern half of the state. The following year he visited the northwestern corner of Pennsylvania and also spoke at teachers’ institutes in more than twenty counties.⁸⁵ A similar effort in the fall of 1911 brought word of traveling libraries to rural areas in the long-neglected center of the state, including Cameron and Elk Counties.⁸⁶ Thus the library system begun during Reed’s administration expanded to all but ten of Pennsylvania’s sixty-seven counties.⁸⁷

In time, the SLP staff felt that sets of books were too “fixed” for Pennsylvania’s diverse population and lent whichever items each community requested, pulling titles from the SLP’s as well as the commission’s collections. Staff intended to visit each station at least twice per year in order to “keep things going” and urge the establishment of permanent services.⁸⁸ After all, traveling collections simply cultivated “a taste for reading,” which would “lead to a demand for more elaborate and permanent” collections.⁸⁹ As Helen Price explained in 1909, though, the idea of tax-supported libraries was often a difficult sell, especially to communities that had hosted “gift” or “society” libraries. The attitude often was that “the library was his [the donor’s or subscriber’s], let him support it.” Nonetheless, Price found that such institutions could become “strongholds” of citizens “who believe in free libraries and honestly desire such an institution.” Commission staff shared anecdotes of a volunteer “janitress” who was “so glad to have her girl have good books” and a rural family who would venture to town every Saturday to use the library, alternately driving, riding horseback, or walking as the weather and dirt roads allowed.⁹⁰ Seeing rural citizens’ desperation for reading material motivated Price and her successors to brave the “nipping cold” and a “ghostly” predawn walk between a “cheerless hotel” and the train station to visit yet another community interested in establishing a library. Library organizer Anna MacDonald showed adaptability and ingenuity in using local business and secretarial students to type catalog cards and organizing Boy Scout troops to move books.⁹¹ Some of the methods used in Pennsylvania were learned through national conversations about traveling libraries, in which Montgomery and other commission staff regularly participated.⁹²

Another important development during Montgomery’s tenure was *Pennsylvania Library Notes* (*PLN*, 1908–41), a periodical that reported the activities of the commission, the state library, and related public library efforts. Significantly, any member of Pennsylvania’s “library world” could contribute to the publication. Montgomery and commission staff were aware that “there are many workers throughout the state who are doing splendid work but doing it so quietly that no one outside their own communities is able to benefit by their experiences.” With *PLN* they intended to stir up “wholesome rivalry,” hoping that reading about one library’s innovations would spur others to similar or greater activity.⁹³ In the words of a later contributor, the newsletter would help everyone “get away from the idea that we are individuals doing more or less up-hill work in a little corner of our own and realize that we are parts of a great movement in which the concerns of one are the concerns of all.”⁹⁴

Perhaps one of the most important functions of the newsletter, especially in its early years, was imparting a shared vision for free public librarianship in Pennsylvania. Within a state trying to convert subscription libraries to public, tax-funded institutions, editors and contributors to the *PLN* were especially attuned to the political implications of library funding and information access. Editorials frequently voiced a message similar to one of April 1914 that explained that by “putting a given book into the hands of a given borrower one is directing a force which is going to revolutionize a human life,” a “possibility which should be in the mind of every member of the staff.”⁹⁵ After Scott Nearing, then a young economist at the University of Philadelphia, spoke at the Keystone State Library Association’s annual conference, the *PLN* reprinted extensive excerpts from his address, in which he proposed that “in so far as your library seeks to be a force in shaping the civic and social life of your community, see to it that the social and economic books on your selves represent the modern viewpoint of social service; treat the possibilities of social amelioration in terms of living reality; and present the message . . . in the language of the people.”⁹⁶ Apparently siding with Nearing, the *PLN* also published a reaction piece by Caroline Griest of the Erie Public Library, who agreed that “the public library belongs to all of the people all of the time. . . . The library is necessary to spread among the masses the literature of social unrest. It should create a sentiment in favor of any social movement for the betterment of mankind.” Griest recommended that libraries buy books on labor, socialism, and related topics, mentioning Edward Bellamy’s novel *Looking Backward* by name.⁹⁷

In addition to providing consultation and a communication channel for public libraries, Montgomery and the commission sought to improve educational opportunities for Pennsylvania librarians. One highlight was the beginning of a summer library training program at Pennsylvania State College (now Penn State University). At the time, there were only two library education programs in the state: a degree program at Drexel and the Training School for Children’s Librarians at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Neither program was viable for small-town public library staff, many of whom could not leave home to attend college or were generalists serving patrons of all ages. In 1911 Penn State began to allow librarians to attend its annual “summer course for teachers”; the same year it offered its facilities to the commission for an additional program geared specifically for librarians. “Gratefully seiz[ing]” the opportunity, the commission hired Julia Hopkins of Drexel and Helen Betterly of the Osterhout (Wilkes-Barre) Free Library as lead instructors. Penn State’s program was “intended only for those engaged now in

library work” or who already had “engagements to take up library work” in the near future.⁹⁸ In 1911 the six-week crash course included ninety hours of lectures, recitations, and supervised practice.⁹⁹ From the end of June through the beginning of August, fifteen students learned about bookbinding, children’s literature, acquisitions, reference work, cataloging, the psychology of reading, and other topics. Montgomery himself provided a lecture titled “Some Prominent Library Workers,” while Robert Bliss offered sessions titled “Book Buying,” “Book Ordering,” and “Pennsylvania Libraries.” In addition, Anna MacDonald provided fifty lectures pertaining to cataloging and classification.¹⁰⁰ An important means of education for in-service library staff, the Penn State training program continued until 1960.

By the time Thomas Lynch Montgomery left office in 1921, the SLP had grown to five divisions. The Law Division, tracing its roots to 1745, was accompanied by the General Library, which included rare books and local newspaper collections built throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There was also the Extension Division, which began as the Pennsylvania Free Library Commission in 1899 and was absorbed by the SLP in 1919; the Archives Division, established in 1903; and the State Museum, begun in 1905. Rather than simply providing legal resources for the state legislature, the SLP now held primary responsibility for documenting and preserving state history and for establishing, monitoring, and improving public library services statewide. Thus Gertrude MacKinney, director of the SLP during the 1930s, could truthfully write that the SLP had been transformed into a library “for the people of Pennsylvania.”¹⁰¹ It was far more than a mere “repository for government documents,” as some politicians view it today.

Aftermath and Conclusion

After Thomas Lynch Montgomery left office in 1921, the state library continued to expand its mission. Placed under the Department of Public Instruction in 1923, it moved to its current location within the Education/Forum building in 1931.¹⁰² During the mid-twentieth century, two important areas of growth were securing state and federal funding for public libraries and for interlibrary cooperation. On June 23, 1931, Governor Gifford Pinchot signed the first act providing state aid to county libraries.¹⁰³ Thirty years later, Governor David L. Lawrence signed legislation that provided state funding for public library collections. This act also created four regional resource libraries and thirty “district centers” to provide reference, training, and other services within their jurisdictions, a system that still exists today.¹⁰⁴ Federal

aid first came in 1957, when State Librarian Ralph Blassingame secured Library Services and Construction Act funds to commission a state-wide study of public library services. The 1960s saw state funding for services to the blind (1962) and the SLP's designation as a regional federal documents depository (1969). In recent years, the SLP has focused on improving libraries' technological resources. Since 1985 it has collaborated with the Pennsylvania Department of Education in providing *Access Pennsylvania*, a union catalog and suite of research databases available to nearly every academic, school, and public library in the state.

Although the state library maintains large newspaper and genealogy holdings, demands to reduce the size of government have generally resulted in a smaller SLP staff and shortened public service hours.¹⁰⁵ Gone are the days of Egle and Montgomery, when the state library was mandated by law to remain open on weekdays from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 or 10:00 p.m. when the assembly was in session. Given substantial cuts to education and related lines in recent years, Pennsylvania librarians sometimes worry what the future holds. Although I might like to end this account on a more assertive note, I can only advocate that history and public library development remain significant parts of the SLP's service to the people of Pennsylvania.

Notes

Readers are cautioned that primary sources about the SLP's history were quite limited at the time of this writing. This article relies heavily on the SLP's annual reports and on newspaper articles, particularly from the *Harrisburg Patriot*. Most of the reports for this era were published as separate documents, although some were only found as part of *Legislative Documents*, an annual printed copy of materials read or distributed to members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. Publication details vary by year. Reports published separately are cited in italics by short title, while those from *Legislative Documents* are cited in quotation marks. The SLP only possessed two small folders, located in the current director's office, of original documents and photographs pertaining to the library's history. Unfortunately, vertical files, scrapbooks, and further archival records are nonexistent or unknown within the SLP's facilities. After consulting with various archivists and finding aids, I found no relevant material within the records of the Department of Education (RG 22) at the Pennsylvania State Archives, and other than a small collection pertaining to William H. Egle, the state archives possesses no manuscript collections of former state librarians. I searched *WorldCAT* for personal papers of every state librarian from Wein Forney through Thomas Lynch Montgomery (i.e., 1862–1921) but found very little material pertaining to their work at the SLP. After finding biographical data about each of these librarians, I also contacted repositories of their collegiate alma maters and former places of employ, hoping to find alumni files, personnel records, or other materials. Although this strategy turned up useful biographical information, it rarely

helped me locate relevant correspondence, diaries, or other items pertaining to state library work. Using the state archives, *WorldCAT*, and other sources, I identified various collections of gubernatorial papers from Robert H. Pattison to William C. Sproul (i.e., 1883–1923) but found very little pertaining to the state library in those resources. Pertaining to newspapers, the main publications in the state capital during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were the *Patriot*, the *Star-Independent*, and the *Telegraph*, none of which have been systematically indexed. To find articles pertaining to the state library, I performed various keyword searches in *America's Historical Newspapers*, a Readex database that provides full text of the *Patriot* (1854–1922), the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (1860–1922), the *Wilkes-Barre Times* (1892–1922), and the *Baltimore Sun* (1837–1901). Significant runs of the *Harrisburg Star-Independent* and the *Harrisburg Telegraph* for the 1870s through the 1920s were not available electronically at the time of this writing.

1. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the library was actually called the Pennsylvania State Library. The institution changed names in 1971 to draw clearer distinction between the state library and the libraries of Pennsylvania State University. I use the newer designation, which is usually less confusing to today's readers.

2. "Most State Library Jobs Could Be History," *Patriot-News*, February 13, 2009; Kathy Fisher, "Aid Libraries," *Patriot-News*, February 28, 2009; Amy Worden, "PA State Library Faces Budget Cut," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 5, 2009; Amy Worden, "Rendell: Staff Cut at Library in Error," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 7, 2009; Amy Worden, "Budget Proposal Had Error on State Library Staffing," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 7, 2009; "Budget Would Cut Public's Access," *Patriot-News*, April 9, 2009; David Hoffman, "Don't Close Book on State Library," *Patriot-News*, April 9, 2009; "State Library Cuts Hours," *Patriot-News*, August 19, 2009.

3. Samuel W. Pennypacker, *The Autobiography of a Pennsylvanian* (Philadelphia: John C. Winston Company, 1918), 3:284. Pennypacker served from 1903 to 1907 and appointed Thomas Lynch Montgomery as state librarian.

4. Pennypacker was president of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, which owned a substantial library, and he was likely familiar with the Library Company of Philadelphia (established by Benjamin Franklin in 1731) and the Mercantile Library Company of Philadelphia (founded ca. 1822).

5. Haynes McMullen, "The Founding of Social Libraries in Pennsylvania, 1731–1876," *Pennsylvania History* 32, no. 2 (April 1965): 130–52.

6. Barbara E. Deibler, "A Treasure Trove of Books," *Pennsylvania Heritage* 12, no. 2 (June 1986): 18–25. In recent years, the SLP has tended to celebrate 1745 as its founding date, but, as Deibler points out, 1816 is the year it became a legal entity.

7. Deibler, "Treasure Trove," 20–23; Robert Pratt Bliss, *A History of the Pennsylvania State Library* (Harrisburg: Telegraph Press, 1937), 3–21; Act of February 28, 1816, chap. 65, *Acts of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania*; Act 7 of January 25, 1854, *Laws of Pennsylvania*; "Report of the State Librarian" 1867, 1165–69.

8. For a detailed account of DeWitt's life and character, see George B. Stewart, ed., *Centennial Memorial, English Presbyterian Congregation, Harrisburg, PA* (Harrisburg: Harrisburg Publishing Company, 1894), 360–68.

9. William Henry Egle, A. S. Dudley, Harry I. Huber, and R. H. Schively, *Commemorative Biographical Encyclopedia of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania: Containing*

Sketches of Prominent and Representative Citizens, and Many of the Early Scotch-Irish and German Settlers (Chambersburg, PA: J. M. Runk, 1896), 343–44; Elwyn Burns Robinson, “The ‘Press’: President Lincoln’s Philadelphia Organ,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 65, no. 2 (April 1941): 157–70. See especially note 42 on page 163 in Robinson’s article.

10. *American National Biography Online*, s.v. “Little, Charles Joseph,” by Gary Scott Smith, <http://www.anb.org>; Rossiter Johnson, ed., *The Twentieth Century Biographical Dictionary of Notable Americans* (Boston: Biographical Society, 1904), s.v. “Little, Charles Joseph”; “State Librarian,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 9, 1882; “A Political Minister,” *Patriot*, July 30, 1890; “Charles Joseph Little,” *Syracusan*, January 18, 1885 (the latter is the source of the “nervous temperament” and “vivid imagination” quotes). After serving as Pennsylvania’s state librarian and teaching for several years at Syracuse, Little then moved to Garrett Biblical Institute and became its president in 1895. When he died in 1911, the school compiled a substantial memorial volume of biographical information and reminiscences of his colleagues. See Charles M. Stuart, *In Memoriam, Charles Joseph Little* (Chicago: Forbes & Company, 1912).

11. *Report of the State Librarian* 1855, 7.

12. “Report of the State Librarian” 1860, 406.

13. W. R. DeWitt, *Catalogue of the State Library of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: A. Hamilton Boyd, State Printer, 1859).

14. O. H. Miller, *Catalogue of the Pennsylvania State Library* (Harrisburg: B. Singerly, State Printer, 1873); and *Catalogue of the Pennsylvania State Library* (Harrisburg: Lane S. Hart, 1878).

15. “Report of the State Librarian” 1856, 407.

16. “Report of the State Librarian” 1865, 554.

17. Bliss, *History*, 22.

18. Both DeWitt and Forney had advocated local newspaper collections. See “Report of the State Librarian” 1858, 439, and 1867, 1171.

19. For biographical information about Ehrenfeld, see J. C. Jenson, *American Lutheran Biographies, or, Historical Notices of Over Three Hundred and Fifty Leading Men of the American Lutheran Church . . .* (Milwaukee: A. Houtkamp, 1890), 184–88; John W. Leonard, ed., *Who’s Who in Pennsylvania: A Biographical Dictionary of Contemporaries*, 2nd ed. (New York: L. R. Hamersley, 1908), 232–33; and *Annual Proceedings, Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the Revolution* (Philadelphia, 1914), 39–40. After several years at Wittenberg, Ehrenfeld returned to Southwestern Pennsylvania State Normal School, where he stayed until 1913. He published an extensive history of the school, including many details of his own role and accomplishments: see *Brief History of the Founding of the Southwestern State Normal School at California, PA . . .* (Lancaster, PA: New Era Printing Company, 1910).

20. Robert W. Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 9–37.

21. *Report of the State Librarian* 1883–84.

22. *Report of the State Librarian* 1885–86, 2–3.

23. “An Attentive Officer,” *Patriot*, April 12, 1886; “They Want Party Men,” *Patriot*, February 24, 1887; “Civil Service Reform Slighted,” *Patriot*, February 24, 1887; “A Democrat Ousted,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 24, 1887.

24. A. Boyd Hamilton, “William H. Egle, M.D., M.A.,” in *History of the Counties of Dauphin and Lebanon in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: Biographical and Genealogical*, ed. William H. Egle (Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1883), 569–70;

George Lauman Laverty, *History of Medicine in Dauphin County Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: Dauphin County Medical Society, 1966), 38, 43, 61, 141, 314, 395–98; Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone, eds., *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), s.v. "Egle, William Henry."

25. Horace Edwin Hayden, "William Henry Egle, M.A., M.D.," *Proceedings and Collections of the Wyoming [PA] Historical and Geological Society for the Year 1900*, ed. Horace Edwin Hayden (Wilkes-Barre, PA: The Society, 1901), 319–26.

26. One can find Egle's scrapbooks at the Historical Society of Dauphin County (see MG 501, William Egle Collection) and San Diego State University (see MS-0389, William H. Egle Collection).

27. William Henry Egle, *Illustrated History of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania* (Harrisburg: De W. C. Goodrich); Egle, *History of the Counties of Dauphin and Lebanon* (Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1883); Egle, *Pennsylvania Genealogies: Scotch-Irish and German* (Harrisburg: L. S. Hart, 1886); and Egle, *Centenary Memorial of the Erection of the County of Dauphin* (Harrisburg: Telegraph Printing Office, 1886).

28. "Death of William Henry Egle, M.D., Ex-State Librarian," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 25 (1901): 133–34.

29. See "State Agricultural Society," *Patriot*, January 22, 1874; "Penna. State Agricultural Society," *Patriot*, January 16, 1879; "State Agricultural Society," *Patriot*, January 17, 1884; "Agriculture," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 20, 1887. Egle apparently continued his volunteer work with the society after his appointment as state librarian. See "State Agricultural Society," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 19, 1888; "State Agricultural Society," *Patriot*, January 22, 1891; and "Agriculturalists' Officers," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 20, 1898.

30. "Masonic Appointments," *Patriot*, December 28, 1882; "The Historical Society," *Patriot*, January 13, 1882; and "County Historical Society," *Patriot*, January 30, 1884.

31. William Henry Egle to "Mr. Dawson," September 23, 1874, MG 44, William Egle Collection, Pennsylvania State Archives.

32. See "Observed on the Hill" columns, often on page 5 of the paper.

33. *Report of the State Librarian 1888–89*, 95–101.

34. *Report of the State Librarian 1891–92*, 74.

35. For example, see *Report of the State Librarian 1891*, 3.

36. "State Records Falling into Decay," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 17, 1893.

37. "The State Library," *Patriot*, January 1, 1889; "About the State," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 1, 1894.

38. Act 225 of May 13, 1889, *Laws of Pennsylvania*.

39. Act 11 of April 14, 1893, *Laws of Pennsylvania*.

40. "One Week's Work at Harrisburg," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 30, 1893.

41. "Looking at the Libraries," *Baltimore Sun*, May 29, 1893.

42. "Observed on the Hill," *Patriot*, August 17, 1893; and "Pennsylvania's New State Library," *Worcester [MA] Daily Spy*, October 30, 1893.

43. "The New Capital," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 11, 1894.

44. "Moving the State Library," *Patriot*, July 11, 1894; and "A force of workmen under the personal supervision of State Librarian Egle . . .," *Patriot*, November 2, 1894.

45. "The Burning of the Capitol," *Patriot*, February 3, 1897.

46. "Furious Flames Wipe Out the Keystone State Capitol," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 3, 1897.

47. Bliss, *History*, 23–24.

48. See “Starting a Public Library,” *Patriot*, July 24, 1889; “Library Money Needed Now,” *Patriot*, October 18, 1889; and “The Public Library,” *Patriot*, November 29, 1894.

49. *Report of the State Librarian 1894*, 4. For comparison to the NYSL, see *New York State Library Seventy-Sixth Annual Report for the Year Ending Sept. 30, 1893* (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1894), 7–8.

50. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of General Services, *Pennsylvania Manual* (Harrisburg, 2011), §6, 4–6, 9, 11, http://www.dgs.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/publications_and_media_services/. The schools were especially relevant because an 1864 law had authorized them to establish both school libraries for their pupils as well as “public” libraries open to any resident aged twelve or older. See Act 722 of 1864, *Laws of Pennsylvania*.

51. Act 398 of July 20, 1917, consolidated and repealed all previous library development laws.

52. See Act 722 of May 5, 1864, and Act 291 of June 28, 1895, *Laws of Pennsylvania*.

53. “Free Libraries,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 15, 1895; *Report of the State Librarian 1895*, 4.

54. *Report of the State Librarian 1897*, 3; and “Librarian Egle’s Report,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, February 1, 1898. See also *Report of the State Librarian 1898*, 3–4.

55. “Dr. Reed for Librarian,” *Baltimore Sun*, January 31, 1899.

56. *Twentieth Century Biographical Dictionary of Notable Americans*, ed. Rossiter Johnson (Boston: Biographical Society, 1904), s.v. “Reed, George Edward”; “George Edward Reed (1846–1930), Dickinson College,” http://chronicles.dickinson.edu/encyclo/r/ed_reedGE.htm.

57. “State Librarian Reed May Become Pennsylvania’s Superintendent of Public Instruction,” *Baltimore Sun*, July 17, 1899; and “Dr. Reed Balks at Penny-packer,” *Patriot*, September 18, 1902.

58. “Still True to Dickinson,” *Baltimore Sun*, February 3, 1899.

59. *Report of the State Librarian 1900*, 18.

60. “Dr. Reed’s Big Task,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 2, 1899.

61. *Report of the State Librarian 1902*, 22; *Catalogue of the Law Books of the Pennsylvania State Library* (Harrisburg: Wm. Stanley Ray, State Printer, 1899).

62. “Traveling Libraries for Philadelphia,” *Library Journal* 26 (June 1896): 277; and “Traveling Libraries for Pennsylvania,” *Public Libraries* 2, no. 2 (February 1897): 47–49.

63. For the enabling legislation, see Act 142 of May 5, 1899, *Laws of Pennsylvania*. For a history of traveling libraries, see Joanne E. Passet, “Reaching the Rural Reader: Traveling Libraries in America, 1892–1920,” *Libraries & Culture* 26 (Winter 1991): 100–118.

64. The first commissioners were W. M. Frew, chair of the board at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh; Henry Belin, a corporate magnate and a trustee of Scranton’s library; William M. Stevenson, librarian of the Carnegie Library of Allegheny; and John Thompson, librarian of the Free Library of Philadelphia. See “Governor Names Library Commission,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 4, 1900.

65. Pennsylvania Free Library Commission, *First Report of the Free Library Commission of Pennsylvania, 1899–1902* (Harrisburg: Wm. Stanley Ray, State

Printer, 1902); Reed, "Summary for Use by the Governor," 3, undated typewritten document, William A. Stone Papers (MG181), Pennsylvania State Archives; "Growth of Libraries," *Patriot*, November 15, 1902.

66. Bernadette A. Lear, "The Pennsylvania Library Club and Western Pennsylvania Library Association: Forgotten Chapters in PaLA's History?," *PaLA Bulletin* 63, no. 6 (June 2008): 6–7. See also "Meeting of Librarians," *Patriot*, November 13, 1901; and "Librarians Meet," *Patriot*, November 14, 1901.

67. See *Report of the State Librarian* 1901, 22–23. Reed felt that the library's current layout was a "monstrosity," with little room for "private study and research, no decent provisions for office and administrative work, no reading rooms for newspapers and magazines, no museums for the gathering and display of curious and rare books, no adequate system of lighting, and no privacy."

68. "Seeking Mr. Reed's Scalp," *Patriot*, October 7, 1899.

69. Reed was ultimately cleared of these charges, but not without extensive negative publicity and some damage to his reputation. See "Methodist Church Trial," *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, April 2, 1902; "Accusations against Reed Unsustained," *Patriot*, April 3, 1902.

70. "Dr. Reed Balks at Pennypacker," *Patriot*, September 18, 1902; "Librarian Reed Resigns Place," *Patriot*, October 27, 1902; "State Librarian Reed Steps Out," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 27, 1902; "Doctor Reed's Position," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 28, 1902; and "Reed Declares for Pattison," *Patriot*, October 28, 1902.

71. See William Rodearmel, *Twentieth Century Pennsylvania State Government in Picture and Story* (Harrisburg: Press of the Star-Independent, 1903), xi and xxii to compare Pennypacker's and Montgomery's social activities. Both were members of HSP and the Philobiblon Club.

72. George S. Bobinski, Jesse Hauk Shera, and Bohdan S. Wynar, eds., *Dictionary of American Library Biography* (Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1978), 367–68; and Free Library of Philadelphia, "History: Founding, 1889–1898," Free Library of Philadelphia, <http://libwww.freelibrary.org/75th/founding.htm?page=his>.

73. See "The Pennsylvania Library Club," *Library Journal* 42 (September 1917): 739–40. For further biographical information on Montgomery, see Bobinski, Shera, and Wynar, *Dictionary of American Library Biography*, s.v. "Montgomery, Thomas Lynch"; and John W. Leonard, ed., *Who's Who in Pennsylvania*, 2nd ed. (New York: L. R. Hamersley, 1908).

74. See materials in boxes 3 and 4 of Records of the Actuary and Librarian of the Wagner Free Institute of Science, 1883–1901 (series 91-040), held by the Wagner Free Institute of Science, Philadelphia. The collection includes correspondence from Mary Ahern, Mary Salome Cutler, Henry L. Elmendorff, Tessa Kelso, Mary Wright Plummer, and other prominent librarians.

75. "New Librarian Takes Oath," *Patriot*, February 10, 1903.

76. For a full account of the founding of the Pennsylvania State Archives, see Louis M. Waddell, "The Emergence of an Archives for Pennsylvania," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 73, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 198–235. Also see Joint Resolution 3 of April 15, 1903, and Act 232 of May 14, 1915, *Laws of Pennsylvania*. For legislation pertaining to the historical commission, see Joint Resolution 291 of June 5, 1913, and Act 216 of June 22, 1917, *Laws of Pennsylvania*. See also *First Report of the Historical Commission of*

Pennsylvania (Lancaster, PA: New Era Printing Company, 1915). For a history of the museum, see Eric Ledell Smith, *The State Museum of Pennsylvania: A Centennial History, 1905–2005* (Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 2005). For early news coverage of the museum, see also “Will Establish a State Museum,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, August 3, 1906. For information about the Pennsylvania Federation of Historical Societies, see “State Historical Societies’ Delegates Meet in This City,” *Patriot*, January 5, 1906; “State Historians Meet in This City,” *Patriot*, January 8, 1909; and “Historians to Meet Here,” *Patriot*, December 16, 1909. The activities of the state archives, museum, historical commission, and federation of historical societies also appear in the state librarian’s reports.

77. Act 143 of April 27, 1909, *Laws of Pennsylvania*. See also *Report of the State Librarian* 1909, 9; and *Report of the State Librarian* 1910, 12–13.

78. Montgomery often recounted the commission’s successes in his annual reports to the governor and often referred to commission staff as “attaches” to the SLP. Also, he and commission employees often spoke as a team at public events. In 1919 the commission was abolished and its functions transferred to the SLP.

79. Thomas Lynch Montgomery, “The Book and the Farm,” in *Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Board of Agriculture* (Harrisburg: Wm. Stanley Ray, State Printer, 1914): 99–103.

80. “Federation of Women,” *Patriot*, October 12, 1903; “State Grangers in Convention,” *Wilkes-Barre Times*, December 9, 1903; “State Officers to Talk,” *Patriot*, February 27, 1904; “Civic Club Meets in State Museum,” *Patriot*, May 18, 1909; “Talks on Library Before Civic Club,” *Patriot*, February 22, 1910.

81. “Free Libraries in This County,” *Patriot*, July 25, 1903.

82. Thomas Lynch Montgomery, “The Book and the Farm,” in *Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Board of Agriculture* (Harrisburg: Wm. Stanley Ray, State Printer, 1914), 99–103.

83. Pennsylvania Free Library Commission, *Hand Book of the Pennsylvania Free Library Commission* (Harrisburg: C. E. Aughinbaugh, Printer to the State of Pennsylvania, 1912), 2–5.

84. Anna A. MacDonald, “A Library for the State-at-Large,” typescript document apparently of a speech “given at Atlantic City Meeting, 1917,” folder “State Library History,” State Library of Pennsylvania Director’s Office Files. An edited version of MacDonald’s speech also appeared as “The Work of the Traveling Librarian,” *Public Libraries* 22 (1917): 219–22. MacDonald was a public library “organizer” for the Free Library Commission in the 1910s and eventually became director of the SLP.

85. *Report of the State Librarian* 1905, 12; and *Report of the State Librarian* 1906, 16–17.

86. *Pennsylvania Library Notes* 5, no. 1 (January 1912): 1.

87. *Report of the State Librarian* 1908, 10.

88. *Pennsylvania Library Notes* 5, no. 1 (January 1912): 2.

89. “Free Libraries in This County,” *Patriot*, July 25, 1903.

90. Helen Underwood Price, “The Making of Pennsylvania Libraries,” typescript document, 1909, folder “State Library History,” State Library of Pennsylvania Director’s Office Files. See esp. pp. 11–15. A similar version of this speech was printed as “The Making of Pennsylvania Libraries,” *ALA Bulletin* 4 (1910): 715–21.

91. MacDonald, "A Library for the State-at-Large," 10–11, 15.

92. For example, Montgomery participated in the "Round Table Meeting" on traveling libraries at ALA's 1901 annual conference, and Bliss attended a session titled "Traveling Library Problems" held at the ALA's 1916 conference. See "State Library Commissions and Traveling Libraries," *Library Journal* 26 (1901): 171–83; and "Traveling Library Problems," *ALA Bulletin* 10 (1916): 454–61.

93. *Pennsylvania Library Notes* 1, no. 1 (April 1908): 1.

94. *Pennsylvania Library Notes* 10, no. 1 (January 1920): 1.

95. "Editorial," *Pennsylvania Library Notes* 7, no. 2 (April 1914): 44.

96. *Pennsylvania Library Notes* 7, no. 4 (October 1914): 109–10. According to *American National Biography Online*, "Nearing's economic writings focused on the unequal distribution of wealth in American society and the concepts of earned and unearned income as a way of understanding the U.S. economy. His outspoken views on social reform directly challenged the local manufacturing interests, including some university trustees who owned manufacturing plants that hired child labor" (not to mention the local businessmen who typically founded and served on the boards of Pennsylvania's public libraries!). For these reasons, Nearing was fired from the University of Pennsylvania in 1915 and became "a major figure in the socialist movement of the 1910s and the counter-culture of the 1970s and 1980s" (<http://www.anb.org>).

97. *Pennsylvania Library Notes* 7, no. 4 (October 1914): 111. Bellamy's novel was influenced by and was an influential text for Marxist thinkers of the time. First published in 1887 and one of the most popular books of the mid- to late nineteenth century, it advocated the nationalization of private property. A librarian citing Bellamy may have had in mind a desire to convert Pennsylvania's fee-based subscription libraries into public institutions.

98. "Women Enrolled in Library School," *Patriot*, June 8, 1911.

99. *Pennsylvania Library Notes* 7, no. 5 (January 1915): 121.

100. "Summer School," *Pennsylvania Library Notes* 5, no. 1 (January 1912): 17–18.

101. Gertrude MacKinney, "A Century of Library Development of the Pennsylvania State Library," *Pennsylvania Library Notes* 14 (1934): 407–11.

102. Partially because of the growing size and importance of the state library's various efforts, in 1945 the archives and museum were split off from the library and joined to the Pennsylvania Historical Commission.

103. See Act 329 of June 23, 1931, *Laws of Pennsylvania*. Through this law the state matched county library appropriations by 20 to 125 percent based on the "class" (population) of the county, with the highest percentage going to the smallest counties.

104. Act 188 of June 14, 1961 ("Library Code"), *Laws of Pennsylvania*.

105. Robert Bray Wingate and David Hoffman, "History of the State Library of Pennsylvania," http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/commonwealth_libraries/7225/history_of_the_state_library_of_pennsylvania/524079; and "Significant Dates in the History of the State Library of Pennsylvania," unpublished typescript, ca. 1976, office files of Alice Lubrecht, state librarian.

Contributors

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