

Centennial Research Digest:



**Early Charter Years,
1901 to 1914**

**The Smith-Bailey-Canfield-
Early Carnegie Era**

(PML History in Summary Form, Part II)

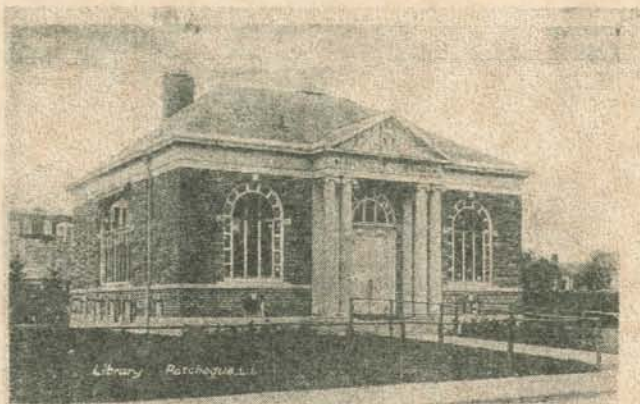
by Mark Rothenberg



John Roe Smith Building, 1st, 3rd, & 6th home of the Library.



Ackerly Building, 4th & 7th home of the Library.



Carnegie Library, 8th home of the Library, 1908-1981.

1901 (Getting Started: The Real 1st Year)

The five Trustees — Elizabeth Mott Smith, President; Dr. Frank Overton, Secretary; Dr. Wellington E. Gordon, Treasurer; D. Gertrude Brundage; & Hon. Walter H. Jaycox — first set the library's financial house in order, then purchased new books and repaired damaged ones. "...the librarian was authorized to keep the library open for an hour less in the morning, an hour later in the evening", on **June 26th**; & temporary residents depositing \$1, could borrow books, reclaiming the deposit on their departure. A review of new **bird books** appeared in **August 30th**'s *Patchogue Advance*. The most unique, *The Story of Birds*, held chapters on "bird wars and weapons" & "bird arithmetic". In **late-October**, a 4-part "**lecture course**" was announced: a *Colonial Ladies' Military Band* (11/6/01), "**Hon. Joseph G. Camp, Georgia's Silver-Tongued Orator**" on "Truth and Shams" (12/13/01), "**Prof. John B. DeMotte of Boston**," on "Character Building" (1/14/02) and the "**John Thomas Concert Company of Rochester**" (3/15/02). It was very well received.

1902 (Trimming the Sails)

In **mid-January**, the Library closed briefly for heater repairs; and on **April 28th**, the Board voted to move the collection to the Ackerly Building "... at an annual rental of \$200, fuel & lights included." **Hours** were cut to 3-5 PM & 7-8 PM, the librarian's salary, from \$300 to \$200 per year. It was "...deemed inexpedient that we purchase a work of fiction until it has been published at least one year...." [Today, that policy could provoke a public riot.] On **May 2nd**, the *Advance* observed: "**A Regents library inspector** was here recently and he told the trustees the library hours were longer than necessary and he thought they were paying too much for rent, for the amount received." He added that, "...the library was properly classified by the Dewey Decimal classification, and in good shape." The *Advance* commented: "If the people don't want to spend any more than \$600 on the library, the money will have to be apportioned in an economical way. The trustees seem to be acting in a business-like manner and are giving a good account of their stewardship with what little they have...." So on **June 1st**, the library moved to the Ackerly Block's **Southern-most room** ([S.] Ocean Ave., W. side, N. of the former Union Savings Bank). It was **George M. Ackerly's 3rd** time in care of the library, & the library's **7th** move, since 1883. **James A. Canfield**, *Patchogue Advance* Editor, joined the Board on **September 13th** (replacing D. Gertrude Brundage). *American Boy*, *Scientific American*, *McClure's*, & *Collier's*

were added; and a dispute with Lyceum Co. over a \$75 old library association debt was settled, in the library's favor, for \$25 ; & blank forms were to be printed for overdue books.

1903 (Carnegie Correspondence Commences)

On *February 4*, complaints "about how the library was run," were passed on to the librarian by the Board; followed (*March 27th*) by Marion Brundage Dodge's resignation and replacement by Miss Edith Terry, 2nd Librarian under the Charter. Meanwhile (*March 9th*), Judge Wilmot M. Smith had applied to Andrew Carnegie's Private Secretary, James Bertram, for a grant to build a library in Patchogue. *Ladies' Home Journal* and the *Saturday Evening Post* were substituted for the *New York Sun*, on *June 15th*. In mid-July, Judge Smith, on behalf of his wife, Elizabeth M. Smith, re-applied for a Carnegie grant. "The library, now about 1400 volumes, is being gradually enlarged and is extensively patronized. The chief need now is that it be suitably and conveniently housed." But, the board lacked the requisite land for building.

1904

(Edwin Bailey, Sr.: His Gifts, Land, & Year)

On *February 12th*, the *Advance* reported, "Just double the number of books are now being issued from the village library, over last year. A new filing cabinet for cataloguing was received...", along with Edwin Bailey's gift, *The Beacon Lights of History*. *Harper's Weekly* & *Collier's Weekly* were added (*March 2nd*), and "...it was voted that patrons be allowed to retain class books [i.e., textbooks] two weeks, instead of one." *March 11th* & *June 10th* saw booklists in the *Advance* of 60 & 99 titles. *September 2nd*'s news was electric: Edwin Bailey, Sr. had donated a \$1000 lot on Lake Street, to the Trustees, for a library building (site of his original carpentry shop). *September 19th* board minutes also note his donation of 81 books that year. *October 21st*, *November 4th*, & *November 25th* booklists of 92, 21, & 24 works, included the *Library of Oratory*, 15 v., *Half Hours with Best Authors*, 8 v., & *Mulbach Works*, 16 v., all donated by Mr. Bailey. On *December 23rd*, the Board received a \$100 bequest from the estate of Dr. Lawrence S. Edwards.

1905 (Carnegie Negotiations, in Earnest)

With a plot of land, the Board could now re-approach Andrew Carnegie. But, village official Dr. E. Agate Foster, renewed the request *first* (*March 30th*), in the name of the village. Judge Smith again completed an application (*April 1st*), Dr. Foster the cover letter (*April 6th*). Mr. Bertram responded, *June 8th*: "...if the City agree by resolution of Council to Maintain a Free Public Library at a cost of not less than One Thousand Dollars a year and provide a suitable site for the building, Mr. Carnegie will be pleased to furnish Ten Thousand Dollars to erect a Free Public Library Building for Patchogue...." Dr. Foster reapplied (*June 27th*, reason unknown), commenting, "I will place the matter before the village authorities and will notify you of their action." The Village Board apparently recognized that School District funding approval was the prerequisite to Village approval. For on *July 8th*, Mr. Bertram wrote: "...Your action by the School District could do, provided that it is the legally constituted authority for the management of Libraries and taxation for the upkeep. Their action would of course have to be endorsed by the village authorities...." In a public vote at its annual meeting on *August 1st*, U.F.S.D. No. 24 unanimously adopted a resolution to fund the library at \$1000, instead of the previous \$600. On *August 6th*, the *New York Times* carried the expectant news that Patchogue was to have a Carnegie library, provided it met his terms. But, Mr. Bertram soon questioned the lack of a village resolution (*August 14th*). On *October 16th*, the State Library sent the Patchogue Library notice that it had received certified copies of the school board vote. So, on *October 24th*, with matching funds approved and registered, the Library Trustees formally voted to apply to Carnegie for a grant for a library building, and to accept Edwin Bailey Sr's. gift of land. Dr. Overton & Judge Jaycox prepared an application, including legal verification of the library's title to the Lake Street property, with a description of its dimensions (*October 30th*). This generated friction with Dr. Foster. Mr. Bertram sent a blistering reply to Dr. Overton (*November 23rd*): "Why is it you ignore Mr. Carnegie's offer of June 8th, 1905?" He demanded a village resolution and a set of building plans. Judge Jaycox fired back (*November 24th*) that the *June 8th* letter (containing Carnegie's terms), was in Dr. Foster's hands, "...and he declines to let the library have it." The Judge stated that the school district was the funding agency, the village council a separate, distinct corporation, whose resolution "...would add nothing to it [i.e., the school vote, already passed] whatever." Though this was the first mention of architectural plans, "We will procure plans at once and send them on for approval."

Letters went flying on **November 27th**: Bertram to Jaycox: "*Mr. Carnegie's offer was to Patchogue, not to the school district, and therefore anything the school district does has to be ratified by the governing body of Patchogue....*" Bertram to Foster: "*Inasmuch as this letter was not to you personally...it would be proper for you to hand it over to the authorities dealing with the matter in succession to your good self....*" (The torch was being passed to the Library Board.) Overton to Bertram: "*...the library trustees visited the Regents office for the purpose of obtaining specific instructions how to obtain the gift...now that we understand better what you require, the village council at their next meeting will undoubtedly endorse the action of the school meeting. We would have had the matter in shape had we understood how to go at it.*" **November 28th**: Jaycox to Bertram: "*At the next meeting of the Board of Trustees of this village I will see that they pass a resolution in accordance with your letter.*" That night the Village Board: "**RESOLVED**, *That we the trustees of the village of Patchogue endorse and approve the action of the School District and express our hearty interest in and sympathy with the library. State of New York, County of Suffolk, Village of Patchogue.*" It passed. Judge Jaycox sent a certified copy to Mr. Bertram (**November 29th**); and on **December 1st**, came the long-awaited reply from James Bertram: "*...Yours of November 29th received. Mr. Carnegie has instructed his cashier, Mr. R.A. Franks, Home Trust Co., Hoboken, N.J., to honor the calls of the authorities of Patchogue for sums necessary to complete their Library Building, to the extent of Ten Thousand Dollars.*" **December 8th**'s *Advance* asserted, "*The \$10,000 Carnegie Library is now assured....*"

1906 (Taking a Breather)

The *Advance* of **January 19th** listed 30 new books; 15 more on **February 23rd**. On **August 14th** James A. Canfield was unanimously elected board President, succeeding Elizabeth Mott Smith (1900-06), who remained on the Board. H.A. Tenney (replacing Judge Walter Jaycox) & Dr. Frank Overton became a new **Committee on Building**. Librarian Edith Terry was to "*...prepare application blanks to be used by patrons to apply for books....*" Her salary was increased on **November 13th**, by "*...50 ¢ per week for building fires*" At the same time, negotiations began with H.T. Lang & Co. for architectural plans "*...not to exceed \$9000.*"

1907 (Design & Construction of a Carnegie Library)

On **January 26th**, the Board entertained competing architectural plans from H.T. Lang & Co. and John V. Van Pelt (of Manhattan). The library closed on **January 31st**, when required to vacate the Ackerly Building; to reopen when the new library was dedicated, all accumulated fines in the interim to be remitted. The Trustees met on **February 1st** with Mr. Lang, on **February 25th** with Mr. Van Pelt, reviewing initial plans. On **March 26th**, the Board examined specifications & estimates; and on **April 9th**, John V. Van Pelt & his firm, **Architectural Construction Company**, were awarded the contract to build a Carnegie Library for \$10,640, \$790 to be provided from library funds. It was decided to **insure the building** (**August 8th**); and to apply to the Village for a "*...cement walk in front of the library property.*" A **November 22nd** *Advance* article made short work of rumors that the library roof wasn't fireproof and didn't conform to village ordinances. A **library dedication committee** was created: W.E. Gordon, H.A. Tenney, & E.M. Smith (**November 23rd**). A janitor was to be hired; and the librarian's workroom would have a lavatory, "*...not to exceed \$28 in cost.*" 10 volumes of the *International Library of Technology* were listed on **December 13th**.

1908 (Carnegie Negotiations, Round Two, Library Construction & Dedication)

By **January 16th**, architect Van Pelt was in financial difficulty, due to serious cost under-estimates. Writing to a friend, Rev. Sylvester Beach (1st Presbyterian Church, Princeton, N.J.), he asked for a "*card of introduction*" to Andrew Carnegie, from Rev. Beach or President Woodrow Wilson, whom the architect's mother knew. "*I am out of pocket quite a little sum... in hopes that if the matter is properly presented to him [Carnegie], he may be willing to make good the deficit. I am anxious to meet him personally, in order to present the case effectually.*" **Edwin Bailey, Sr.**'s obituary appeared in **January 17th**'s *Advance*, where he was referred to as "*...Patchogue's most generous man.... He was always a leader in village improvements and by his forceful character carried his more conservative friends with him.... though not a reader and unacquainted with books he has been about the only man in town who has done anything for the Public Library. He gave a lot for the location of a library on Lake Street and when Carnegie's gift of \$10,000 for a library was secured, he gave an adjoining lot so that an ample site might be provided for*

the building. He has also given largely of valuable books." Rev. Beach wrote to William Allen Butler (of Manhattan) on *January 18th*, asking him to meet and intervene for Van Pelt, as a personal favor. "I know a word from you would be an open sesame." Mr. Butler received a letter from James Bertram (*January 29th*), ruling out a personal interview, but saying that "...if he puts what he wishes to say in a typewritten letter, it will get early attention", accompanied by a photo & plans of the building. On *February 18th*, W. E. Gordon, invited **Andrew Carnegie** to speak at the dedication. On *February 19th* Dr. Overton reported that **Hon. David Boody** (of Brooklyn) had agreed to deliver a dedication address. A janitor was engaged @ \$15 per month, for 3 months; the librarian's salary reset at \$30 per month. On *February 20th*, W.E. Gordon received a reply: "**Mr. Carnegie** tenders his thanks for your kind invitation of February 18th but it is impossible for him to be present in the flesh at the opening of the Library Building, but you can be sure that he will be with you in spirit, and begs to send his wishes for the success of the Library and the happiness of all the people of Patchogue...." On *March 1st*, library hours were expanded to 3:00- 5:30 P.M. & 7:00-8:30 P.M. John Van Pelt's letter of explanation was sent to Andrew Carnegie (*March 3rd*), accompanied by a lengthy itemized *List of Labor and Material Furnished for the Erection and Completion of a Carnegie Public Library at Patchogue, L.I.*

Wednesday, March 4th, 1908 was a signal day: The Carnegie Library was dedicated, with major coverage in the *Patchogue Advance* and *Argus*, on *March 6th*. Speakers included **H. Allen Tenney** (Library Building Committee Chairman), **George D. Gerard** (President, Board of Education, and first Vice President of the old library association), **James A. Canfield** (President, Patchogue Library Board of Trustees, and Editor, *Patchogue Advance*), **Hon. Edwin Bailey, Jr.** (President, Patchogue Village Council), **Hon. David A. Boody** (Ex-Mayor of the City of Brooklyn, and Carnegie representative to Brooklyn libraries). **George Gerard** remarked, "...this library will be a part of our educational system...its privileges are free to all, while its influence, directly or indirectly reaches every person in the community.... This institution is of the public, for the public,...and will prove a great blessing to the community." **James Canfield** said, "...I believe it was **James Russell Lowell** who said that the opening of a free [i.e., public] library was the most important event in the history of any town. The library is said to be the real university of literature. If this be true, then here, friends, is the University of Patchogue." He added, "Some kinds of learning can be forced into a student by skilled instructors, but nobody can gain a knowledge and appreciation of litera-

ture through lectures or cramming for examinations, or in any other way than by cultivating a long and affectionate personal intimacy with books. Here we are actually in the presence of the largest minds, the noblest poets, the greatest instructors the world has ever known...[who] speak to us as friends and helpers." **Hon. Edwin Bailey, Jr.** added, "*Within the memory of those not yet old all the public occasions of our village have been created. We have witnessed the start and creation of our schools, churches, fire department buildings, and many other improvements of public benefit. The creation of each has been the result of hard and continued labor of public-spirited and patriotic citizens who desire to see the community in which they lived provided with better facilities for enlightenment and education than was given them to enjoy. Running down the line of years from the time of our first memory, we are now participating in an event more important than any which has preceded.*" He spoke of his father's pleasure in watching the construction, and expectation of living to see the dedication. "It is our great regret that this pleasure could not have been his." **Ex-Mayor David Boody** said, "...the library will reach out and touch a larger number of lives than any other institution.... It appeals now to everybody and has something to help the lives of all classes of people if they will give it the opportunity. He urged the people to use it - to feed their minds as they do their bodies, systematically." After 25 years in a limbo of rented (back & side) rooms, the library had the 1st real home of its own.

May 6th saw a blistering letter from Bertram to Van Pelt: "...the main fact remaining that you went ahead with a building which your professional knowledge would enable you to know the community had not the money to pay for. Under the circumstances, it is extraordinary that Mr. Carnegie should be asked to consider the matter at all...." A gentler letter followed on *March 8th*, asking if the library intended to cover the extra 10%, in the unlikely event that Mr. Carnegie chose to fund the additional amount requested. Van Pelt wrote (*March 9th*) that **H.A. Tenney**, Building Committee Chair, was uncertain whether or not the library could obtain matching funds. Van Pelt added, "While your letter is not encouraging, I am taking the matter up, intend putting it through, if possible, and shall write you in a few days." On *March 13th* **Elizabeth Mott Smith**, **Sorosis** President took firm exception to articles belittling Sorosis' role in the establishment of the public library. "There were no setbacks whatever; we raised nearly \$1,000 and went on working and talking of our plan until the evening of August 7th, 1900, when our efforts were crowned with success. Now, we like to be called capable women, but without qualifications." On *March*

24th the Trustees voted to take out a 6-month \$200 note, to cover running expenses. They resolved to "...petition the voters at their next annual meeting in August, to increase the annual appropriation for maintaining the library from one thousand dollars to one thousand five hundred dollars." On March 28th, Mr. Van Pelt informed Mr. Bertram of the resolution and pending School District vote, documenting new construction fees he'd incurred. The board appointed an **auditing committee** (May 5th). On May 20th, Mr. Van Pelt wrote directly to Andrew Carnegie, asking him to consider the supplemental grant, with a plea of heavy, mounting debt. On June 2nd, reading room hours were extended to Sunday afternoons, 2:00-5:30 P.M. The prior resolution about transients was amended, to say that return of the \$1 deposit (minus per-book fees) was conditional on "...return in good condition of the last book taken." The trustees took out a \$500 supplemental loan, again for running expenses. Front and rear exterior faucets were investigated, letterhead stationery & matching envelopes authorized. On June 5th, the *Advance* wrote, "There is plenty of room on the shelves for new books and the trustees have no funds with which to purchase them.... The library grounds have been graded and seeded and protected with a wire fence.... Planting of trees has been made in the rear, and vines will be planted and trained on the wire fence. The Forest Lakes Company contributed over a hundred loads of topsoil and Mr. Canfield about fifty." That day, the Thimble Club was thanked for a set of *Stoddard's Lectures*. On July 7th, it was decided to place an awning over the East Window, and a screen door in front. (A hot summer.) On Tuesday, August 4th, the annual School Board meeting took place, and the \$500 additional annual maintenance fee for the library was publicly approved. "Since getting into the building, the business of the library has grown in leaps and bounds, and the librarian, Mrs. Mills [nee Terry], has hard work...The clerical work must be done after hours, as the issuing of books [occupies] her whole [time]..." reported the *Advance*, on August 7th. On August 14th, James Van Pelt dutifully reported public approval of the new yearly appropriation to Carnegie. "...in the arrangement I have proposed, my architectural services would receive no remuneration, and it would surely be a fair arrangement if you would consent to supply the money to pay the cost of construction. The Trustees need all available funds for the purchase of books which are in great demand...." On October 1st the Board re-authorized the \$200 note for 6 mos., starting October 6th. Correspondence on November 12, from James Canfield to James Bertram, yielded James Bertram's decisive reply, on Nov. 21st, "...As \$1500 a year has been guaranteed for maintenance of the Library, Mr. Carnegie has instructed his cashier to send you the ad-

ditional Five Thousand Dollars to cover the additional cost of the Building. It is understood that out of this Five Thousand Dollars, you will reimburse Mr. Van Pelt for the proportion of the building that he has paid out of his own pocket so far, and that the proportion paid by the community out of its revenues will also be reimbursed...." On November 24th, Pres. Canfield read the board Bertram's letter, and was instructed to express its gratitude, and to officially accept the gift. Building accounts were directed audited, arrangements to be made for "...proper disposition of Mr. Carnegie's gift." Secretary Overton wrote to the State Library about "desk drawers in the Library Desk sticking so they cannot be opened." 10 tungsten electric lights were ordered installed in the library. Six children's chairs with mahogany finish were ordered from Hammond Mills & Co. "Dr. Gordon was instructed to arrange to have books on textiles put on the shelves for the special benefit of the lace mill operations." He was also to arrange for an alcove of High School English texts. On November 25th, James Canfield wrote to James Bertram, "...I am in receipt of your kind favor of November 21st regarding the additional \$5000 which Mr. Carnegie will give toward the completion of our library. Proper statement will be rendered you showing the disbursement of this additional \$5000. On behalf of the trustees, and the people of this community, please convey to Mr. Carnegie sincere thanks for the additional gift, which is most timely...." On December 2nd, the State Regents were requested to approve school district acceptance of Andrew Carnegie's new gift and \$500 added maintenance, approved on August 4th. On December 7th, "...it was voted to pay the final certificate of John V. Van Pelt, Architect, as per detailed estimate of extra work passed on by Mr. Carnegie, and with the understanding that the leaking chimney and defective desk be repaired...."

1909 (Gaining Acceptance)

A 57-item booklist appeared on January 22nd. Even by June 30th, the Regents would not endorse acceptance of the gift, as the School District, though voting the increase, hadn't yet voted to accept it (and its condition). So, the library asked the District to formally accept the gift with its condition, at its annual meeting. The debt to Mr. Van Pelt having been settled, it was decided to install two additional bookcases. At the August 3rd U.F.S.D. #24 annual meeting the Carnegie gift and its condition were formally, publicly accepted. Next (August 6th), Library Trustees and Officers, were re-elected. Librarian, Edith (Terry) Mills was re-instated @ \$35 a month; and the Regents were to be requested to approve the terms of the August 3rd

vote. "...it was voted to send the librarian to the state convention at Lake George in September, & to pay her expenses...and furnish her with a substitute while she is away." Further, "...the secretary was instructed to ask the library department to assign a round table meeting to Patchogue in the near future." This was the beginning of staff professional development, & Patchogue Library's first claim to its place in the statewide library world. Mr. Canfield was authorized to have "...one hundred postal cards printed to be sent to those who are delinquent in the return of books." On December 2nd, the board passed a resolution requesting the State Regents to approve the August 3rd, U.F.S.D. #24 acceptance of the Carnegie gift and its conditional yearly appropriation of \$500, "...and to record their approval in their book of charters." It was also decided to send discarded old magazines to the Mission Yacht Association of New York.

1910 (Setting Some Policies, Expanding the Art Collection)

On February 1st (a) "...it was voted that identification cards be supplied to the librarian for use at her discretion in case persons unknown to her apply to her for books." (b) "...the first Tuesday of each month at 3:30 was designated as the time of the regular meeting of the trustees." (c) "...it was ordered that 250 postal cards be printed for use...in notifying delinquents to return books. (d) "...the time limit of fiction, except recent books & those in constant demand, was extended to two weeks, & the fine on all books was increased to two cents per day...." On March 1st, it was decided to take up literally straightening out the back boundary of the library, with Syndicate Building trustees. On July 5th the board approached Miss Claire Sumner (Admiral Sumner's daughter) to become librarian @ \$30 per month. Screens were ordered for the back windows (another long, hot summer). On August 2nd, the Study Club was thanked for subscriptions to *St. Nicholas*, *Youth's Companion*, & *Little Folks*. The board voted (November 15th) to "...receive & classify donations of prints, engravings, & photographs of works of art."

1911 (Advertising Books on Themes, Squaring off the Property)

On January 20th the *Advance* listed 17 new "Religious Books in the Library"; 18 "Books on Art" on February 17th; 5 "Books on Mexico" on March 17th; 15 "Books on Gardening" on March 24th; & 18 "Books for

Spring Reading" on April 7th. The board voted (April 22nd) that "...on account of Miss Sumner's efficient work as librarian, her salary be increased...to thirty-five dollars per month..." and President Canfield reported "...that a round table of the librarians in this vicinity will be held in our library early in May...." On August 16th, trustees and officers were reinstated, and Miss Sumner was granted a 3 week vacation (a 1st). With a treasury balance of \$908.30 (as of August 1st), it was decided to spend \$300 to square off the library property's back border, and buy a bookcase from E. Bailey & Sons (duplicating the case in the E. entrance).

1912 (Collection Expansion, Experimental Story Hours & A Vacation Tableau)

52 new books were listed in the *Advance* on January 4th, 67 more on January 19th. On January 23rd, Treasurer W.E. Gordon reported roughly 175 new books, and satisfactory finances. Pres. Canfield "...suggested a 'Vacation table,' which shall contain time tables & information of rates of travel. He also suggested that a reception day be held in the library some time in the near future." Library participation in the Dickens Centenary (born 1812) was highlighted (February 4th), listing 20 of his titles in the library. On March 29th, another list of 38 new titles appeared; and 52 more on April 5th. On April 26th, it was reported that about 25 "quiet and attentive" children (ages 6-13) attended a 10 a.m. "experimental" story hour, "...and expressed a desire to have the experiment repeated." Another was planned for May 4th. On May 3rd, a 41-title booklist appeared. On May 17th the *Advance* carried a notice that the story hour would be at 2 p.m. instead of 10 a.m., resuming at the usual time the following week. On May 24th, 24 books donated by Mrs. R.W. Caldwell, Jr. of Bayport, were listed. On May 31st, Mrs. Smith Conklin read the Women's Study Club a paper on French Art and Miss Mary Deery, one on the "...modern French Republic." On June 7th, the new "vacation table" was profiled, as containing "...abundant literature relative to summer resorts, tours abroad, to the West Indies, Bermudas, etc. This feature is introduced not only as a help for travelers, but because the artistic pictures and up-to-date descriptions of the historical and picturesque sections of our own country and foreign lands give most entertaining studies in modern geography." A 57-title booklist appeared on June 21st, a 54-work list on June 27th, a 49-title list on October 4th. Trustees & Officers were re-elected on October 22nd. On November 8th, Dorothea Rebecca Lodge presented the library *The Grand Master's Treasure*, by Gertrude W. Sargent. On December 27th, another 57-item booklist appeared in the press.

1913 (Sprucing Up)

On **January 11th**, "...the librarian was authorized to secure Mrs. R.A. Phelps from the State Library Department, in order to **recatalogue and rearrange the books.**" Shades were ordered for basement windows to darken the room for use of a **stereopticon**. A 5 volume set of **children's Bible stories** was highlighted in **January 31st's Advance**. On **February 14th**, it carried news of **25 German-language books** (for the large local German-speaking population), on 6-month loan from the State Library, later to be exchanged for 25 more. It was reported (**April 16th**) that "...Mrs. Phelps had spent two weeks at the library, recataloging and rearranging the books." Evergreen trees were to be planted on the East side of the lot, and the treasury contained about \$1000, nearly all bills paid. On **Dec. 16th**, Treasurer Gordon was authorized to insure library furniture and books at "a sum not to exceed \$2,500.00." The building committee was "...to have the inside of the building cleaned, the floors refinished, & a storm porch built over the entrance. An estimate of between \$40 & \$50 was submitted as the cost of a new front door."

1914 (Changing of the Guard)

The *Advance* (**January 30th**) listed 19 Library books, among *New York Times Book Review's* "Best Books of 1913"; plus 3 books obtained for the Women's Study Club, & another of special interest to physicians. On **April 21st**: "...Dr. Gordon moved that we invite Mrs. Alma Custead of Erie, Pennsylvania...to be librarian for one year beginning July 1, 1914...[@ \$600 a year]. Motion carried." Books, already insured for \$1,000, were supplemented by another \$1,500. "The committee on building reported that the cleaning & refinishing had been completed & the storm porch had been built, & the bills paid...." The **May 1st Advance** heralded, "**New Librarian Secured**", announcing that after an interview, **Alma D. Custead** had been hired, starting **July 1st**, "...when Miss Sumner retires." (Actually, Miss Sumner was about to get married & move to N.J.) "Miss Custead is a trained librarian who is just completing a course at the New York Public Library School and is highly recommended by the principal. The trustees have also received through acquaintances in Erie, the highest personal references...." A dynamic new era was about to begin. Still, life continued. A 9-title "**List of Boy Scout Stories in the Library**" appeared in the **May 1st Advance**; and on **June 19th**, came news that Trustee Dr. Frank Overton had photographed a hummingbird with wings in motion (a 1-1500th sec. exposure), a feat then rarely accomplished.



Mrs. Elizabeth Mott Smith
1st President of the Public Library
(Wife of Judge Wilmot Smith)



All were affiliated with the library in different ways.

Special thanks to the *Long Island Advance*
(formerly the *Patchogue Advance*) and to the
New York Times for permission to paraphrase an
article of 8/6/05.

Special thanks also to the Board, Administration & Staff
of Patchogue-Medford Library.

Note:

Information contained herein is derived from sources in a
documentary history of the library in progress.

The current draft is over 365 pages in length, plus portraits,
maps, charts, and other illustrations.

Research continues and copyright permissions are being sought.

The general work will be published chronologically,
section-by-section (e.g., 1883-1900, 1901-14, 1914-45...),
and portions will be placed on the web.

The text of this work is also the basis of the
Patchogue-Medford Library Centennial Video.

Patchogue-Medford Library

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