

A Guide to the Virginia State Library. Office of the State Librarian. American Library Association Library War Service Records, 1917-1920

Virginia State Library. Office of the State Librarian. American Library Association Library War Service Records,
1917-1920
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A Collection in the Library of Virginia 41509
Library of Virginia
2004

History

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Title Statement

A Guide to the Virginia State Library. Office of the State Librarian. American Library Association Library War Service Records, 1917-1920

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Descriptive Summary

Accession number

41509

Language

English

Physical Characteristics

State Records Collection, Accession 41509

Repository

Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection is open to research.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Transferred.

Preferred Citation

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Biographical/Historical Information

For many years, The Library of Virginia had no definitive home. Valuable early records were kept at Jamestown as early as 1676 and were then moved to the College of William and Mary for a brief period at the century's end. By 1780, extant records were moved to the Capitol in Richmond. Coincidentally, in 1779, the Virginia General Assembly was presented among its legislation, "A Bill for Establishing a Public Library" drawn up by Thomas Jefferson. The bill provided for 2000 pounds yearly to be expended to maintain a State Library in Richmond. The facility was to be a reference library only without books being lent for home use. Perhaps ahead of its time, the bill failed to pass. The Virginia State Library was created by an act passed by the General Assembly on January 23, 1823, to establish a public library with funds derived from the sale of William W. Hening's *THE STATUTES AT LARGE*. From 1823 to 1828, the Library was under the control of the governor and council. In 1828, the General Assembly created a joint committee on the library (located in a room in the southeastern corner of the Capitol) to oversee its administration. Use of the State Library was restricted to members of the state government in a policy that continued until at least 1856. The Secretary of the Commonwealth served ex officio as state librarian from 1832 to 1903. The growth of the State Library was somewhat erratic. Book holdings increased from 1,313 in 1828 to 17,480 in 1856. Lack of funds and politics frequently intermingled to slow library development. General W.H. Richardson, State Librarian in 1852, became embroiled in an effort to remove him "to make way for some politician of democratic principles." At the close of Reconstruction, Dr. George William Bagby, then State Librarian, was terminated and his position abolished at the hands of Readjusters. Eventually, on May 15, 1903, the General Assembly passed an act that created a library board to administer the library, authorized the deposit of public records in the library, provided for the publication of historical records by the library, and established a library fund for the purchase of books and private papers. The Library Board, which was responsible for naming the State Librarian, was itself appointed by the Board of Education. The General Assembly passed an act on March 29, 1944, transferring the power to appoint the Library Board to the governor. While many public records somehow survived the Commonwealth's early years, many losses occurred due to fires, the ravages of war and negligence. When the library was moved, for example, in 1895 to a building separate from the Capitol, "chutes were constructed from the upper story of the Capitol to facilitate the delivery of books to the wagons of the junk dealer who had bought them." The move was poorly planned and the library's contents suffered great loss at the hands of those very authorities assigned to protect them. The new facility quickly was found to be inadequate and efforts were made both in 1910 and 1920 to construct a proper building for the State Library and its collections. Ground was broken for the current facility on December 7, 1938. At last, on December 23, 1940, the newly completed Virginia State Library was opened to the public. The Virginia State Library adopted the name, the Virginia State Library and Archives, in early 1987 to more adequately reflect its mission and purpose today. In July 1, 1994 the name was changed to The Library of Virginia. It serves as a general reference and research library, as the official repository of state archives and publications, and as a repository of state and federal documents. It provides assistance and advice to libraries around the state, and it administers state and federal library funds. The Archives and Records Division of the library administers the state records management program, arranges and describes records deposited in the division, and provides assistance and advice to state and local government agencies concerning the management of their records. Additionally, the agency produces many publications. The most notable among those regularly issued are the quarterly *VIRGINIA CAVALCADE* and the annual accession reports of the Archives and Records Division showing its most recent records and manuscript acquisitions.

Scope and Content

Contains the records of H.R. McIlwaine, State Librarian, in his function as the Virginia coordinator for the American Library Association Library War Service between 1917 and 1920. The state coordinators were responsible for encouraging public libraries in patriotic activities including the distribution of government and war-related bulletins, and the solicitation of donations of published materials for troops and money for the purchase of additional materials. Contents include correspondence with prospective local coordinators, correspondence with publishers regarding purchased and donated materials. The collections includes correspondence with various officials from the American Library Association Library War Service. Also included are correspondence of the Richmond War Library Committee, one of the many community groups throughout the state working to provide materials for the military. Correspondence includes requests for donations and responses from members of the local community.

Arrangement

Alphabetical.

Contents List

Series I.Administrative Records

box 1

Scope and Content

Contains notes and invoices related to the work of H.R. McIlwaine as the Virginia administrator for the American Library Association Library War Service. Also contains records from the Richmond War Library Committee. The invoices reflect donations and purchases from publishers to support the war effort.

Arrangement

alphabetical

Administrative Notes

box 1

folder 1

Invoices

box 1

folder 2

Richmond War Library Committee

box 1

folder 3

II.II. Correspondence

box 1

Scope and Content

Contains correspondence with citizens of Virginia and staff of the American Library Association Library War Service. Included are records of donations, both monetary and property, as well as efforts to recruit citizens to aid in the gathering of books, magazines and other printed materials for the military.

Arrangement

Alphabetical

A, 1917-1920

box 1

folder 4

B, 1917-1920

box 1

folder 5

C, 1917-1920

box 1

folder 6

D, 1917-1920

box 1

folder 7

E - F, 1917-1920

box 1

folder 8

G, 1917-1920

box 2

folder 1

H - J, 1917

box 2

folder 2

H - J, 1918

box 2

folder 2

H - J, 1919-1920

box 2

folder 4

K - L, 1917-1920

box 1

folder 5

M, 1917

box 2

folder 6

M, 1918

box 2

folder 7

M, 1919-1920

box 2

folder 8

N - O, 1917-1920

box 3

folder 1

P - Q, 1917-1920

box 3

folder 2

R, 1917-1920

box 3

folder 3

S, 1917-1920

box 3

folder 4

T - V, 1917-1920

box 3

folder 5

W, 1917

box 1

folder 6

W, 1918-1920

box 3

folder 7

Y, 1917-1919

box 3

folder 8