

**DETROIT IN ITS WORLD
SETTING; A 250-YEAR
CHRONOLOGY, 1701-1951**

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Detroit in Its World Setting: A 250-Year Chronology, 1701-1951 by Detroit Public Library

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A 250-YEAR CHRONOLOGY

✓ ✓ ✓ 1701-1951



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Dedicated to

KENNETH L. MOORE—1891-1951

*Staunch Friend of Libraries, Public-Spirited Citizen,
Enthusiastic Historian*

whose interest in this Chronology while the work was in its formative stages was responsible for its being brought to the attention of McGregor Fund.

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INTRODUCTION

AS PART OF ITS CONTRIBUTION to the celebration of Detroit's 250th anniversary, the Library undertook the preparation of a Chronology for the period 1701 to 1951. The object of the Chronology is to show Detroit in its world setting, so that events in Detroit can be viewed in the light of events of national and international importance and these larger happenings in turn as reflected in Detroit.

Since the Chronology covers so many years and so many subjects, each item is obviously brief and great selectivity was necessary in choosing the events to be included. Influential and widespread occurrences and those of future as well as contemporary importance were preferred. Items were chosen to show change and to show progress, namely, the development of an idea or an object. The aim has been to present people's daily living and interests; therefore, the popular, the homely everyday things have been included as well as the great.

The Chronology is not a full, detailed history but rather a framework on which to organize one's memories of men and events and fads and fancies. It indicates not only rulers and wars but also what people were reading, how they amused themselves, what songs they sang, what kind of clothes they wore, what inventions affected their lives, etc. With such a tool as this Chronology it is possible to pick out the events of any particular year or to trace a subject through two and a half centuries. For example, one can follow the course of exploration or the conquest of disease or the changes in transportation.

Many chronologies of one sort or another are available in published form. This Chronology differs from others in that it is local in orientation. Detroit is the focus. Events in Detroit are given a separate and the leading listing. Events of local importance or interest are included whether or not they had national influence. Events of national importance may be treated in their local sense in the Detroit section as well as in their greater aspect elsewhere. Since so much of the early history of Detroit coincided with that of Michigan before statehood and since Detroit plays such a large role in the state and is inextricably bound up with state events, Michigan as well as Detroit is included in this local emphasis.

Moreover this compilation is American in orientation. Although its scope is worldwide, events in the United States receive major attention and "first" when used without other qualification means the "first American."

The Chronology, under each year, is divided into four sections or categories, viz., (1) *Detroit and Michigan* listing local events in general and social history, and intellectual, cultural, scientific, technical, and commercial progress; (2) *World History* covering political, military and diplomatic history, religion, labor, social welfare, governmental and legal progress, public health, crime, disasters, exploration, and expositions; (3) *Cultural Progress* including such topics as fads and fashions, education, recreation, sports, movies, radio and television as entertainment, the arts (music, theater, painting and sculpture, architecture), books and reading, magazines, newspapers, and other publications; and (4) *Scientific and Commercial Progress* devoted to events in the biological and physical sciences, medicine, technology (invention, industry, transportation), agriculture, applied arts and crafts, household arts and food, advertising, commerce, business and finance.

Because of the size and complexity of such a project, the preparation of the Chronology has taken much time and effort. All Library reference departments co-operated by selecting the significant events in its subject fields. The Chief of the History and Travel Department, serving as editor, classified and arranged the items, verified the data, filled in gaps, and checked discrepancies. Considerable effort was made during this editorial process to eliminate inconsistencies and inaccuracies, but it has not been possible to recheck formally every one of the thousands of items. No doubt omissions and errors both of fact and in arrangement will appear. If users of the Chronology will point these out to the editor, corrections can be made in any future editions.

The items themselves were taken from books, magazines, manuscripts, and other reference sources usually found in libraries. Especially helpful were books such as *Famous First Facts*, by Joseph N. Kane; the *Variety Radio Directory*; and Langer's *Encyclopedia of World History*. *A Short Chronology of American History*, by Irving and Nell Kull was available for consultation in the final editorial stages. Specialized sources were also used such as clippings from Detroit newspapers and the extensive files of the Burton Historical Collection of the Detroit Public Library.

At one time or another practically every staff member in the Library's reference services contributed to this Chronology in greater or lesser degree. Among the persons who contributed especially should be mentioned the