

**CATALOGUE OF THE
VERMONT STATE LIBRARY,
SEPTEMBER 1, 1872**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649414406

Catalogue of the Vermont State Library, September 1, 1872 by Vermont State Library

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MONTPELIER :

J. & J. M. POLAND, PRINTERS.

1872.

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VERMONT STATE LIBRARY.

The real growth and life of the VERMONT STATE LIBRARY dates from 1858. As to what was done in the way of obtaining or preserving books before the first State House was occupied in Montpelier, in 1808, even tradition is silent; and during most of the next generation we cannot learn that anything was accomplished or attempted.

The first dawn of legislation we can discover is the following joint resolution of the Governor and Council and the General Assembly in 1825 :

IN COUNCIL, Nov. 17, 1825.

Resolved, the general assembly concurring herein, That it shall be the duty of the governor and council, annually, to appoint some suitable person, whose duty it shall be to take charge of, and keep in good order, all the books and publick documents, deposited in the state-house, in Montpelier; and that a suitable room in the state-house be placed under the control of such person, for a place of deposit for such books and documents; and such person, in the discharge of his duty, shall be governed by such rules and regulations as the governour and council shall, from time to time, prescribe.

[*Concurred Nov. 17, 1825.*]

From this time there has been, at least in form, a Library and a Librarian.

The Librarian was first required to be appointed by the Governor and Council; then the appointment was given to the Governor; and in 1848 the annual election of a Librarian was given to the Senate and House of Representatives. And from 1825 to 1856 legislation was ample in quantity, but quite small, inexpensive and unprogressive in result.

In 1856 the following joint resolution was passed by the Legislature :

JOINT RESOLUTION RELATING TO THE LIBRARY.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives. That the governor be instructed to appoint one efficient person to act conjointly with the librarian, to collect all books and property belonging to the state library, classify the same, prepare a catalogue, and report to the next legislature their action in full, together with such recommendations of repairs, purchases and regulations, for the future government of the library, as to them seem expedient.

IN SENATE, Nov. 15, 1856.

Read and adopted.

C. H. CHAPMAN, *Secretary.*

IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, November 15, 1856.

Read and adopted in concurrence.

D. F. FIFIELD, *Assistant Clerk.*

Under this resolution, Joseph H. Barrett was appointed Commissioner.

At the October session, 1857, the Librarian, Mr. Webster, and Mr. Commissioner Barrett made their several reports, which are printed in the Senate Journal of that session, pp. 264 and 284. Mr. Webster reports an immensely large list of missing volumes and broken sets of books. Mr. Barrett reports the condition of things in the Library, and says, "From such evidence as can readily be procured, it does not appear that any State in the Union, all circumstances considered, is worse off in regard to its Library than Vermont."

The Legislature at that session passed the Act of 1857, which is substantially embodied in Chap. VII. General Statutes. This law placed the management and control of the Library in the hands of Trustees and a Librarian elected by them. The Trustees organized their Board Nov. 16, 1858.

PRESENT :

His Excellency, HILAND HALL.

Chief Justice, ISAAC F. REDFIELD.

Secretary of State, BENJAMIN W. DEAN.

Resident Trustees,) FERRAND F. MERRILL,

) B. P. WALTON,

) CHARLES REED.

At this meeting, Charles Reed was elected Librarian and Secretary, and has occupied that position to this date.

Under the present administration, the Library has trebled in size, and while it may still justify the remark that Jared Sparks made while in it, "IT IS VERY SMALL FOR A STATE," it has certainly ceased to be the disgrace that Commissioner Barrett thought it. Later Legislatures have seen the growth of the Library with evident pleasure, and have not failed to supply funds when asked.

A catalogue of the Library was printed in 1850, and also in 1858, after the fire which destroyed the State House.

At the fire, (January 6, 1857,) most of the books were thrown from the second story windows into the snow, and thence carefully gathered up and piled into the parlor and out-buildings of Hon. Daniel Baldwin. The loss of books of the Library by this fire is supposed to have been small; and, as it was a bitterly cold night, they were not damaged by wet.

While the State House was building, the Masonic Hall was used for the Library, and it was well accommodated there during the session of 1857.

This Library is not yet complete in a single department. Even in Vermont Documents, the Library is destitute of some of the original Session Laws and Journals. It is strongest in American Law Reports, of which it requires only a score of volumes to be complete.

Our State Library and Historical Society should have all the materials from which to write our State history in all its branches. Nothing should be omitted in this direction to the full extent of our means.

The clerical work of making this Catalogue has been performed entirely by HIRAM A. HUSE, Esq., Assistant Librarian. It is printed under the provisions of Chapter 7, General Statutes.

The laws of the State in force in relation to the Library, and also the rules of the Library, will be found on pages ix-xiv.