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When First We Met: Conferences, Officers, and Activities of LSLA and LLA, 1909-1932

Florence M. Jumonville Ph.D.

University of New Orleans, fjumonvi@uno.edu

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WHEN FIRST WE MET

CONFERENCES, OFFICERS, AND ACTIVITIES OF LSLA AND LLA, 1909-1932

As the Louisiana Library Association's seventy-fifth anniversary in 2000 approached, attention focused on the organization's beginnings. An LLA History Committee was formed, chaired by LLA archivists Sue Hill and Dolores B. Owen, and Alma Dawson. To uncover details of LLA's origins, Hill and Owen combed the archives, Dawson directed a squad of library science students from Louisiana State University (LSU) who perused every issue of LLA's quarterly journals, and, with eleven committee members and other contributors, conducted interviews, videotaped reminiscences, scrutinized the professional literature, and compiled lists of noteworthy persons and events, such as officers, award recipients, and conferences. This extensive research culminated in the publication of *A History of the Louisiana Library Association, 1925-2000*, a collection of essays on various aspects of LLA of yesteryear.¹

Despite the researchers' ingenuity and persistence, gaps in the literature left some questions unanswered. In just two of the years before 1932/33, for example, were all of the officers' names recorded, for, as Sue Hill and Sharilynn Aucoin note, until *The Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* began publication in 1931, the organization's activities went largely undocumented. Even less was known about the Louisiana State Library Association (LSLA), a predecessor organization that existed for a few years beginning in 1909.²

Recent research on the history of libraries in Louisiana has serendipitously revealed several sources that shed new light on the LSLA and on LLA's formative years. *Library Journal* regularly published news of state library associations, and Helen Wells Dodd, first secretary of the LSLA, submitted reports diligently. Additional information comes from the paper Virginia

Fairfax presented at the LLA meeting in 1931 and from the 1936-1937 report of the Louisiana Library Commission, which includes the reminiscences of Margaret Reed, a longtime advocate for Louisiana libraries. This account is particularly welcome because Reed recalled events that occurred during the little-documented “unorganized” years between the two associations.³

Yet another source is Louisiana newspapers. In the 1920s and 1930s, libraries were a novelty. Newspapers reported extensively on library development, and even the routine activities of librarians made headlines.⁴ Much of that library development stemmed from the work of the Louisiana Library Commission and its executive secretary (later the first state librarian), Essae Martha Culver. Culver and her colleagues at the commission, predecessor of the present State Library of Louisiana, participated actively in LLA, and their names and library affiliation appeared in articles about the organization. This meant that the articles were clipped and added to the publicity scrapbooks that the staff maintained for fifty years. They cover LLA conferences in at least as much detail as conference wrap-ups in today’s *Louisiana Libraries*. Additional articles located through newspaper databases supplement those in the scrapbooks.

Although most of these publications are widely available in libraries, many of the specific items about LSLA and LLA are not easily located without citations. This article draws upon these obscure sources to complement and expand upon *A History of the Louisiana Library Association, 1925-2000* by bringing together forgotten facts about LSLA and LLA. It reminds us of our professional heritage and strives to ensure that the newly discovered information does not retreat into obscurity again.

Louisiana State Library Association

Especially in rural areas—and much of Louisiana remained rural in the early decades of the twentieth century—librarians often worked in isolation, with little occasion to interact with

each other. State and regional meetings yielded opportunities for collegial interaction and visits to other libraries, but the small number of librarians and the difficulties of travel over roads that were inadequate, if they existed at all, hindered attempts to assemble. These difficulties notwithstanding, communication among librarians was important, as William Beer knew well. A native of Plymouth, England, Beer (1849-1927) came to New Orleans in 1891 to direct the Howard Memorial Library, a position he held until his death in 1927. From 1896 until 1906 he concurrently headed the New Orleans Public Library. Beer was an inveterate “joiner” who maintained memberships in numerous library associations and historical societies and actively attended their meetings, which he found intellectually and socially stimulating. The idea of such a group comprised of Louisiana librarians apparently originated with William Beer in 1899.⁵

Through one of his many memberships, in that year Beer was asked to contribute Louisiana data to a library directory, and he issued a call for information about existing libraries. When contacting librarians, Beer took the opportunity “to broach to you the subject of forming a state library association. Almost every state to-day has such an institution, and it seems to me probable that concerted action might bring about many great improvements in the field of library work. For instance, we might possibly awaken into a state of activity the legislature of Louisiana on the subject of state publications and a state library.” He proposed that, “while New Orleans cannot claim to be in any way the center of the state, it is at a point to which all lines of travel converge,” and the organization occasionally might meet there. Beer further suggested that ten thousand books on miscellaneous subjects be withdrawn from the holdings of the State Library to form traveling libraries, which seem to have been one of his copious professional interests.⁶

Although Beer would eventually mobilize traveling collections to a limited degree, no evidence has been found that his proposal for a librarians’ association took hold at the time. It

appears that the first professional organization for librarians in any part of the state was the New Orleans Library Club, which organized in 1907 “to promote acquaintance and fraternal relations among librarians and those interested in library work, and by consultation and cooperation to increase library interest in Louisiana.” The guiding force behind this group was Louise B. Krause, a librarian at Tulane University, who served as its first president.⁷

For the next year and a half, members surveyed the state to ascertain what public and academic library facilities then existed (school libraries were omitted because the Louisiana Department of Education maintained a list). They published their findings in a *Handbook of Louisiana Libraries, 1909*, which “gave the public its first definite knowledge of the library facilities of this State.” Information about the necessity for effective library-related legislation, a library’s value to the community, and recommended reading on the subject of library administration supplemented the descriptions of Louisiana’s libraries.⁸

While corresponding with librarians and trustees to obtain information for the *Handbook*, Krause received a letter from George Hathaway, mayor of Jennings and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Library there. Hathaway suggested the formation of a statewide association, and Krause seized upon the idea. In 1909, however, she left Tulane and moved out of state. Helen Wells Dodd, who succeeded her both in her position at Tulane and as president of the New Orleans Library Club, enthusiastically forged ahead with plans to expand statewide the professional interaction the club had created locally.⁹

In November 1909, the New Orleans Library Club invited Louisiana librarians, members of boards of trustees, and others “known to be interested in library work” to assemble in New Orleans “to co-operate in the organization of a State Library Association . . . Should such a State Association be formed, one of its objects would be to hold its meetings in different parts of the

State each year, in order to stimulate interest in library work in Louisiana.” *The Daily Picayune* supported the proposal, which, it predicted, would “bring . . . [Louisiana] libraries into sympathetic harmony and increase the public interest in them. . . . [The association] would work toward an increase in the number of libraries; bring to libraries the most improved and up-to-date methods of work; [and] furnish traveling libraries to small towns and clubs,” as well as the still-more-isolated farms, lumber mills, and oil fields.¹⁰

There being a “hearty response” within Louisiana and encouragement from colleagues in North Dakota, Wisconsin, and Virginia, the first meeting of the Louisiana State Library Association was set for December 10-11 at Tulane University. The timing suited the schedule of Chalmers Hadley, secretary of the American Library Association, who planned to visit the state “with the hope of stimulating library work.” After words of welcome and a roll call of the twelve libraries and four organizations (probably women’s clubs) that were represented, Hadley led a discussion of “the function and value of a state library association” and, the next day, spoke on “the library and the community.” The afternoon session included a presentation and an exhibition of library tools by Mr. H. C. Parker of Library Bureau. This constitutes the genesis of vendors’ exhibits at Louisiana library conferences.¹¹

For a first endeavor, the program appears to be surprisingly extensive, varied, and relevant to its era. George Hathaway spoke spiritedly on a public library’s importance to its community, and attendees from Alexandria, Amite, Baton Rouge, Jennings, and Napoleonville related their experiences in establishing public libraries in their towns. Inez Mortland of the LSU Library contributed a paper on the value of training for librarianship, something most Louisiana librarians of the day acquired on the job rather than in classrooms. New Orleans Public Library head Henry M. Gill addressed “public library work with schools,” followed by discussion.¹²

During a business meeting the second morning, the nascent organization elected its first officers, a geographically diverse group of men and women representing both public and academic libraries (see Appendix), and adopted a constitution. Delegates agreed that “the purpose and object of this Association is to establish a State library organization; to hold conventions and meetings in various parts of the State of Louisiana, for the purpose of having librarians, and other people interested in library work, instructed and made better acquainted with the most advanced theories of the work; to form and assist in the formation of libraries throughout the State.” December 11, 1909, when the LSCA adopted its constitution, was considered its founding date. The New Orleans Library Club, having stimulated the formation of the state association, apparently disbanded, and its leaders devoted their energies to the LSLA.¹³

The constitution further provided for three classes of members: active (librarians, other library personnel, and trustees), associate (those who engaged passively with library work), and institution. Applications for membership went before the Executive Committee, which was comprised of the officers (president, two vice-presidents, secretary, and treasurer) and two elected members. Upon receiving Executive Committee approval, members in all categories paid annual dues of one dollar, but only active members were permitted to vote.¹⁴

The Executive Committee held the authority to form any additional committees that the organization might need and to call special meetings. Although the constitution required annual meetings and elections, in practice conferences occurred in odd-numbered years with a special meeting in 1910. Officers elected in 1909 were in place for just four months at the time of the 1910 special meeting, and they continued until the 1911 elections. No meeting was held in 1912, and officers chosen in 1911 remained active until 1913; in effect, officers were elected for the biennium. If the group had survived longer, it may have developed a regular cycle of annual

meetings and elections. “Two needs were stressed at this meeting: the need for trained librarians and for a practical library law.” In response to the latter, the group formed a legislative committee—the first committee appointed by a Louisiana library association—and charged it with “draw[ing] up a good library law to present at the next session of the state legislature.”¹⁵

Evidently the committee sprang into action, for it readied a bill—written by L. A. Ducros, brother of Elisabeth Ducros, children’s librarian at the New Orleans Public Library—in time for the membership’s consideration at a special meeting held for that purpose in Alexandria on April 29-30, 1910. Despite the specific focus of this gathering, descriptions portray it as a full-blown conference, attended by representatives of almost every library in the state. Sessions, like those held at the first conference, emphasized practical suggestions for dealing with mutual concerns. They included papers on publicizing the public library, local collections, “the problems of the small library,” working with children, and summer library schools, and a demonstration of book repair. After discussion, the library bill was approved, and a six-person committee comprised mainly of the association’s officers was designated to present it to the Legislature.¹⁶

Largely through the effective advocacy of L. A. Ducros and Helen Dodd, Louisiana had its first library law on July 6. Act 149 provided “for the creation, establishment, maintenance and equipment of libraries throughout the State” and “for the creation, commissioning and appointment of library boards, defining their duties and powers and authority.” It excluded cities of over one hundred thousand and existing libraries and library boards, which eliminated the New Orleans Public Library and probably was necessary to quell the vigorous opposition of that institution’s Henry M. Gill. The law further provided that as few as twenty-five citizens of any political subdivision in the state might petition its governing body to establish a public library, fixed the minimum membership of library boards at five persons, and set terms at six years.¹⁷

Now fifty-six members strong, the Louisiana State Library Association next met on April 21-22, 1911, at LSU. Conference-goers, consisting of approximately twelve delegates and a quantity of local citizens, heard a succession of papers, most of which related more or less directly to the expansion of library services. LSLA president George Hathaway spoke on “the importance of organized extension work throughout the parishes.” Howard Memorial Library’s William Beer addressed the library’s place in civic life, emphasizing its increasing importance to the community. Two presentations by LSU professors W. O. Scroggs and W. A. Read focused on student use of, respectively, American and foreign libraries. Prof. C. E. Coates highlighted the importance of department libraries in colleges and universities, and Mrs. T. P. Singletary described efforts to open a municipal library in Baton Rouge. Other librarians reported on recent progress in their localities, emphasizing happily that public interest in libraries was increasing.¹⁸

With a library law already enacted, the LSLA moved on to its ultimate goal: the establishment of a state library commission. The real purpose behind the legislation was to produce publicity that would stimulate discussion of libraries and, it was hoped, result in a groundswell of support for a state library commission. This agency was essential because its sole mission would be to develop statewide library service, something that no existing agency was pursuing or could accomplish as effectively. Helen Dodd presented a paper on the benefits of creating such a body. “An animated discussion then took place on desirable initial steps toward securing a commission, considering present conditions, and forces already at work in the state,” but ultimately the plan was dismissed as “untimely.”¹⁹

In addition, the group progressed toward a project that apparently was underway already: sending traveling libraries throughout the state for readers’ use. Plans were “matured” for the association to acquire and distribute “a few” collections. Like the library law, traveling libraries

were intended to ignite interest. William Beer, who had been advocating for traveling libraries for over a decade, agreed to chair a committee charged with assembling a collection of books for this purpose and with seeking cooperation from the Louisiana Board of Education. These endeavors progressed slowly, but by early 1913 it was reported that the LSLA had been organizing a traveling library collection which would shortly begin distribution.²⁰

At the organization's "third annual conference" (apparently the 1910 "special meeting" wasn't counted), held April 11-12 in the Donaldsonville High School and Public Library, the traveling library committee exhibited a sample traveling library to a membership that had grown to seventy-one since the previous conference. The committee announced that between 500 and 600 books, 350 of which had been purchased with money donated by Annie Howard Parrott, were ready to circulate. Helen Dodd, a cataloguer at Tulane, conscripted students to paste pockets in the books and to label them and pack them in boxes. Other preparations included acquiring traveling cases "by purchase and gift" and having application forms and "readers' slips," presumably for use in requesting books, printed. "It was reiterated that the purpose of the Association in sending out these libraries, and incidentally enlarging the collection, was for . . . demonstration, and to arouse interest in securing a state library commission for Louisiana."²¹

The traveling libraries failed to arouse much of anything except William Beer's ire at their recipients' ingratitude. He shipped fifteen cases containing fifty books each, "well chosen for what he termed 'this gladsomely interesting adventure,'" to schools about the state. Borrowers, however, failed to respond with the enthusiasm and appreciation that the librarians probably expected. Recipients who did not acknowledge the books' arrival received indignant letters from Beer. Just one school requested a second set of books. Meanwhile, Helen Dodd had researched county library work in Van Wert County, Ohio, which she described as having

established “the first real county library in the country,” then in its thirteenth year of operation. “County Libraries are the only libraries that can get books among all the people,” Dodd concluded. “Beyond the shadow of a doubt . . . what [we] need is a State Library Commission.” After hearing papers on library extension and the role of library commissions, topics that had become mainstays of LSLA conferences, attendees voted to present legislation establishing such a commission at the next session of the General Assembly.²²

At this point, the historical trail of the Louisiana State Library Association grows cold. No conferences were held during or after 1914, and this date might reasonably be accepted as that of the LSLA’s demise. The last contemporary news of Louisiana’s first statewide professional organization for librarians appeared in *Library Journal* in 1917, by which time the association had “passed out of existence.” Margaret Reed attributed this to the outbreak of war in Europe. Virginia Fairfax blamed it on the departures of key members, notably Helen Dodd, who had served as secretary for the entirety of the group’s existence and evidently was a guiding force, and Inez Mortland, who had successively held the offices of first vice-president and treasurer. Shortly after the LSLA became dormant, its remaining members passed the library torch—and the traveling libraries—to the Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs (LFWC). Until the Louisiana Library Commission took responsibility for the itinerant collections, Harriet Daggett administered them with greater success than Beer had experienced.²³

Largely through the LFWC’s efforts, on July 8, 1920, Gov. John M. Parker signed into law Act 225, which created the Louisiana Library Commission. Act 225 provided that the commission would be domiciled at Baton Rouge and that it would consist of five persons, of whom at least two would be women. Although it was not explicit in the legislation, there seems to have been an understanding that the women would be selected from a list provided by the

Louisiana Federation of Women's Clubs. The law also called for the appointment of a secretary who would be a librarian with at least a year of training in a library school and a minimum of three years of successful experience as a public library head or high-ranking assistant. All that the commission lacked was money to implement the plan. Funding in the form of a Carnegie Corporation grant for fifty thousand dollars arrived in 1925, and the ensuing events link efforts to support a library commission, to develop library services to rural Louisianians, and to sustain a professional organization for library personnel and trustees.²⁴

Louisiana Library Association

Although the librarians and clubwomen who had pushed the library laws of 1910 and 1920 through the Legislature could not have foreseen it then, they were responsible in large measure for Louisiana's success in obtaining the Carnegie grant, for a major factor in the state's selection was the existence of this enabling legislation and a functioning, albeit struggling, library commission. Louisiana ideally suited the grant's purpose—to demonstrate the benefits a vigorous system of rural libraries would yield—because existing development was so inadequate that little would have to be replaced or undone. Gov. Henry Fuqua filled vacancies on the library commission and appointed Dr. G. P. Wyckoff, a professor of sociology at Tulane University who was interested in library development, to chair it. The commission met for the first time on April 8, 1925, two days after the Louisiana Library Association was reborn.²⁵

After the Louisiana State Library Association faded from the scene in about 1914, no state professional organization existed for Louisiana librarians for ten years. In 1923 and 1924, a small group of librarians, including survivors of the LSLA, gathered in one another's homes to discuss the prospect of reorganizing the association. They selected William Beer as acting chairman and Esther F. Harvey as acting secretary, furnished Beer with a list of librarians who

might be interested in participating, and drafted a constitution and by-laws. After a year passed with no activity on Beer's part, the leaders of the reorganization effort regrouped. Learning of Wyckoff's interest in library development, they invited him to join the group and to chair it temporarily. A Mrs. Bowman from the Tulane University Library served as acting secretary.²⁶

In addition to chairing the reviving library association and the library commission, the busy Wyckoff served as president of the Louisiana State Conference for Social Betterment (LSCSB). Perhaps because of his professional affiliation, it was at the Library Section meeting on April 6, 1925, during the LSCSB conference in Shreveport, that the library organization's constitution and by-laws were presented and approved. Attendees also elected officers and heard presentations on timely topics: "The Work of a State Library Commission," a history of the LSLA, and county/parish library work as a social force. It was anticipated that the newly reinvigorated library association, formed "to promote the library interests of the State of Louisiana," would support the newly energized library commission by helping to inform Louisiana citizens of the value of statewide library service. What may not have been widely expected was the degree to which the commission's work would bolster librarianship in Louisiana. Primary responsibility for the Louisiana Library Commission's work rested with its executive secretary, Essae M. Culver, who had extensive experience with libraries in rural California.²⁷

By this time, traveling collections had been supplanted by other alternatives. Although successful in quickly spreading reading material over a wide area, they gave superficial service and, by definition, remained in any location only briefly. After assessing the library situation in Louisiana, Culver recommended the California model, which placed a large central library at the state capitol and a branch at every county seat. In addition, rotating collections of 50 to 300 books were established in every village, offering each citizen, no matter how remote his

residence, access to books. This system portended greater success in establishing permanent, financially stable libraries. Culver found that the volumes left from the traveling libraries and donated by various entities were outdated and worthless. She was particularly dismayed by seventy-eight copies of *Cotton Growing in Egypt*.²⁸

As parish libraries and their branches slowly dotted the map of Louisiana, the need for librarians grew proportionately. Louisiana State University began offering summer training for librarianship in 1926, and those who completed the course and wanted library jobs found them immediately. Five years later the program was expanded to cover a full year (or three summers), which was the beginning of the present School of Library and Information Science. All of these graduates, as well as library trustees and staff, were prospective members of the fledgling library association. In addition to significantly expanding the organization's membership pool, the Louisiana Library Commission lent its personnel, who quickly became active as conference speakers, officers, and committee members. Essae Culver, for example, served on the Program Committee for the 1927 and 1930 conferences and as president of LLA in 1928/29.²⁹

In January 1926 the Louisiana Library Association convened in Lafayette, independent of any other organization, in the second of a succession of annual conferences that stretches almost unbroken to the present. Already the basic format we know today was in place. Conferences of some eighty years ago typically lasted for two days, with morning, afternoon, and evening sessions; banquets on one or both evenings, first dubbed the "book dinner" in 1929; and a business meeting on the second day. Full and varied programs resembled those of today, except that papers by Louisiana librarians still emphasized library development. To a limited degree, concurrent sessions began at least as early as 1931, when a luncheon meeting split into separate discussion groups for public library personnel and for college and university librarians.³⁰

Yesteryear's conferences offered addresses by American Library Association officers and prominent authorities (the national luminaries came out in full force in 1927, when attendees heard addresses by Carl H. Milam, secretary of the American Library Association, on "Why Do We Read?"; Louise Krause, who had advocated for the LSLA and by 1927 was the librarian of a Chicago bonding house, on "Libraries and the Business Man"; and Milton J. Ferguson, president of the League of Library Commissions). Conferences highlighted Louisiana-related publications and their authors, often hosting the foremost Louisiana authors of the day, such as Roark Bradford and Grace King. Entertainment included performances by local talent (in 1926, for example, the Boys' Double Quartette of Southwestern Louisiana Institute regaled conference-goers with standards that included "Mary Had a Little Lamb") and sessions called "introducing book friends," at which "each person present will describe some interesting book he or she has read recently." Today's programs sometimes include tours of nearby libraries, but the association has ceased to organize post-conference "car caravans" to points of interest in the vicinity of the conference location, such as the 1928 excursion to a St. Francisville plantation.³¹

Then, as now, librarians and others representing all types of libraries throughout the state attended the conferences. Attendance started at about 50 in 1926 and, by 1930, rose to 130. The benefits of connecting professionally, as described in 1935, included promoting "discussion of all sides of a problem, in the development of all points of view so that out of the exchange of ideas and convictions the very best plans will be perfected." Among other rewards were *esprit de corps* and the exchange and promotion of ideas. Not considered important at that time was the history of the organization.³² Three quarters of a century later, the existence of the LLA History Committee suggests that this is one thing that *has* changed.

APPENDIX: LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OFFICERS BEFORE 1932

Some of the following information appears in *A History of the Louisiana Library Association, 1925-2000*, edited by Alma Dawson and Florence M. Jumonville (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana Library Association, 2003), 15. *Italics* indicate added or revised data.

Louisiana State Library Association

1909/11

Pres.: *George Hathaway*
1st VP: *Inez Mortland*
2nd VP: *Lillie J. Thornton*
Sec.: *Helen Wells Dodd*
Treas.: *Jane Grey Rogers*³³

1911/13

Pres.: *William Beer*
1st VP: *Lillie J. Thornton*
2nd VP: *Mattie H. Williams*
Sec.: *Helen Wells Dodd*
Treas.: *Inez Mortland*³⁴

1913/15

Pres.: *Lillie (Mrs. John R.) Thornton*
1st VP: *Minnie M. Bell*
2nd VP: *George Hathaway*
Sec.: *Helen Wells Dodd*
Treas.: *Inez Mortland*³⁵

Louisiana Library Association

1925/26

Pres.: Edwin L. Stephens
1st VP: Lois W. Henderson
2nd VP: Esther F. Harvey
Sec.: Lois Shortess/
Lois Henderson (acting)
Treas.: Virginia Fairfax

1926/27

Pres.: Edwin L. Stephens
1st VP: *Lois W. Henderson*
2nd VP: *Esther F. Harvey*

Sec.: *Lois Shortess*
Treas.: *Virginia Fairfax*³⁶

1927/28

Pres.: Lois W. Henderson
1st VP: NA (not available)
2nd VP: NA
Sec.: *Anna Foster*
Treas.: *Virginia Fairfax*³⁷

1928/29

Pres.: Essae M. Culver
1st VP: *Lucy B. Foote*
2nd VP: *Esther F. Harvey*
Sec.: *Ethel (Mrs. Robert) Usher*
Treas.: *Virginia Fairfax*³⁸

1929/30

Pres.: Robert J. Usher
1st VP: *Lillian Mitchell*
2nd VP: *Olive Henry Crane*
Sec.: *Marjorie Williams*
Treas.: *Mercy Ellis*³⁹

1930/31

Pres.: Lois Shortess
1st VP: Lillian H. Mitchell
2nd VP: D. D. Moore
Sec.: Mary W. Harris
Treas.: Kathleen Graham

1931/32

Pres.: Nancy Bauman
1st VP: *Charles Flack*
2nd VP: *Mrs. C. M. Dees*
Sec.: *Muriel Richardson*
Treas.: *Sara Driver*⁴⁰

NOTES

¹ Alma Dawson and Florence M. Jumonville, eds., *A History of the Louisiana Library Association, 1925-2000* (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana Library Association, 2003).

² Sue Hill and Sharilynn Aucoin, "LLA Officers," in *A History of the Louisiana Library Association, 1925-2000*, edited by Alma Dawson and Florence M. Jumonville (Baton Rouge, La.: Louisiana Library Association, 2003), 13; Debora Abramson, "The Louisiana Library Association: Its History," *LLA Bulletin* 15 (Summer 1952): 66-74, based on Virginia Fairfax's recollections (cited in note 3).

³ Virginia Fairfax, [Untitled] (paper, annual meeting of the Louisiana Library Association, May 1. 1931), in Vertical File, Louisiana Collection, State Library of Louisiana; Margaret McD. Reed, "Early History of the Library Movement in Louisiana," in Louisiana Library Commission, *Seventh Biennial Report of the Louisiana Library Commission, 1936-1937* (Baton Rouge: The Commission, 1938), 25-32.

⁴ See, for example, "Librarians Have Conference Here This Afternoon," Baton Rouge *State-Times*, Oct. 30, 1928, in Louisiana Library Commission Scrapbook, 1925-1928, Louisiana Collection, State Library of Louisiana (hereinafter cited as LLC Scrapbook, [date], .SLOL-LC).

⁵ Joanne E. Passet, *Cultural Crusaders: Women Librarians in the American West, 1900-1917* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994), 56-58, 152; Joe W. Kraus, *William Beer and the New Orleans Libraries, 1891-1927* ([Chicago]: Association of College and Research Libraries, Publications Committee, 1952), 2, 4-6, 7 (quotation), 10; "Proposed Library Association," New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, Nov. 26, 1899, p. 7.

⁶ "Proposed Library Association." For more information about the State Library, albeit during an earlier period, see Faye Phillips, "To 'Build upon the Foundation': Charles Gayarré's Vision for the Louisiana State Library," *Libraries & the Cultural Record* 43 (2008): 56-76.

⁷ *Handbook of Louisiana Libraries, 1909* ([New Orleans: New Orleans Library Association], 1909), [3] (quotation); Fairfax, [Untitled], [1].

⁸ *Handbook of Louisiana Libraries*, passim.; "Woman's World and Work," New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, Nov. 11, 1909, p. 9 (quotation).

⁹ Fairfax, [Untitled], [1].

¹⁰ “State Library Association,” New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, Nov. 9, 1909, p. 5 (first quotation); “For a State Library Association,” New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, Nov. 13, 1909, p. 8 (second quotation).

¹¹ Helen Wells Dodd, “Louisiana Library Association,” *Library Journal* 35 (Jan. 1910): 31-32 (quotations); “State Library Association Will Be Incorporated and Convention Held About Dec. 10,” New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, Nov. 18, 1909, p. 5; Reed, “Early History,” 26.

¹² “State Librarians Form Organization,” New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, Dec. 11, 1909, p. 4; Dodd, “Louisiana Library Association” (1910), 32 (quotation).

¹³ *Constitution of the Louisiana State Library Association* (New Orleans: Tulane University Press, 1909), [1], [3] (quotation). Another organization named the New Orleans Library Club formed in 1931 and, within two months, attained a membership of eighty-five. By the 1990s, interest had waned, and around the end of the twentieth century, the Greater New Orleans Library Club faded into oblivion. “New Orleans Library Club,” *Louisiana Library Association Bulletin* 1.2 (Dec. 1931): 8.

¹⁴ *Constitution of the Louisiana State Library Association*, [3]-[4].

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, [5]; Reed, “Early History,” 26 (first quotation); Dodd, “Louisiana Library Association” (1910), 32 (second quotation).

¹⁶ Helen Wells Dodd, “Louisiana State Library Association,” *Library Journal* 35 (July 1910): 331.

¹⁷ *Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, Begun and Held in the City of Baton Rouge on the Ninth Day of May, 1910* (Baton Rouge: The New Advocate, Official Journal, 1910), 227 (quotations); Fairfax, [Untitled], 2.

¹⁸ Helen Wells Dodd, “Louisiana Library Association,” *Library Journal* 36 (June 1911): 301-302 (quotation); “State Library Association Holds Convention at Baton Rouge,” New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, Apr. 22, 1911, p. 3; “The Latest News in All Louisiana,” New Orleans *Daily Picayune*, Apr. 23, 1911, p. 17. Proceedings of the 1911 meeting were published by Louisiana State University in its *University Bulletin* 2.6 (n.s.) (June 1911), including a complete list of members (p. 28-30).

¹⁹ Dodd, “Louisiana Library Association” (1911), 301-302 (first quotation); Reed, “Early History,” 27 (second quotation); Christine Sanders, “Problems Faced by a Young Commission,” *Library Journal* 57 (Jan. 1, 1932): 18.

²⁰ Dodd, "Louisiana Library Association" (1911), 302 (quotation); Reed, "Early History," 27; Untitled news item, *Library Journal* 38 (Jan. 1913): 54. Other members of the Traveling Libraries Committee were Mrs. James Andrews of Alexandria, Anna E. Joyce of the New York Public Library (one of LSLA's two out-of-state members), and Helen Wells Dodd, cataloguer at Tulane. *Louisiana State Library Association, 1911: Proceedings of the Meeting Held April 21-22, at Louisiana State University*, in *University Bulletin* 2.6 (n.s) (June 1911): 28.

²¹ Helen Wells Dodd, "Louisiana State Library Association," *Library Journal* 38 (May 1913): 289 (quotations); Abramson, "Louisiana Library Association," 69.

²² Reed, "Early History," 27 (quotations); Dodd, "Louisiana State Library Association" (1913), 289.

²³ May V. Crenshaw, "Public Libraries in the South," *Library Journal* 42 (Mar. 1917): 169 (quotation); Reed, "Early History, 27-28; Abramson, "Louisiana Library Association," 69-70. According to Virginia Fairfax, Helen Dodd took the LSLA's records with her when she left Louisiana. In 1931 they resided in a trunk in the basement of her home in New York. She promised to return them to Louisiana, but if she did, their whereabouts have not been discovered. Fairfax, [Untitled], 2-3.

²⁴ *Acts Passed by the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana at the Regular Session, Begun and Held in the City of Baton Rouge on the Tenth Day of May, 1920* (Baton Rouge: Ramires-Jones Printing Co., 1920), 372-375; "Rural 'Travelling Libraries.'"

²⁵ Milton J. Ferguson, "Why Louisiana?," in Louisiana Library Commission, *Report on the Louisiana Library Demonstration, 1925-1930* (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), 7-8; Untitled editorial, *Library Journal* 50 (May 1, 1925): 411.

²⁶ Fairfax, [Untitled], 3-4.

²⁷ Lois Shortess, "Louisiana Library Association," *Library Journal* 50 (May 1, 1925): 418; Essae M. Culver, "The Louisiana State Library," *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 16 (1953): 42; *Constitution and By-Laws of the Louisiana Library Association* [Baton Rouge: Louisiana Library Association], 1928), [1] (quotation).

²⁸ Culver, "Louisiana State Library," 42-43.

²⁹ Louisiana Library Commission, *Report on the Library Demonstration, 1925-1930* (New York: League of Library Commissions, 1931), 30; Florrinell F. Morton, "Twenty-Five Years in the Life of a Library School:

Louisiana State University Library School, 1931-1955,” *Bulletin of the Louisiana Library Association* 18 (1955): 126-141; “Baton Rougeans on Program of Library Meet,” *Baton Rouge State-Times*, Apr. 4, 1927; “Miss Culver Is State Libraries Ass’n President,” *Baton Rouge Morning Advocate*, Nov. 3, 1928, both in LLC Scrapbook, 1925-1928, SLOL-LC.

³⁰ “Baton Rougeans on Program”; “State Library Meet Thursday,” *New Orleans States-Item*, Apr. 15, 1929, in LLC Scrapbook, 1928-1929, SLOL-LC; “Library Association Convention Here Comes to Close This Morning,” [clipping from unidentified Lafayette newspaper; undated but Jan. 7, 1926], in LLC Scrapbook, 1925-1928, SLOL-LC; “Many from Here to Take Part in Library Program,” *Baton Rouge Morning Advocate*, Apr. 14, 1931, in LLC Scrapbook, 1930-1935, SLOL-LC.

³¹ “Baton Rougeans on Program”; “Entertainments Being Planned for Librarians,” unidentified newspaper, Oct. 23, 1928; “State Library Meet Thursday,” *New Orleans States-Item*, Apr. 15, 1929, both in LLC Scrapbook, 1928-1929, SLOL-LC.

³² “Library Association Convention Here Comes to Close This Morning” [clipping from unidentified Lafayette newspaper; undated but Jan. 1926], in LLC Scrapbook, 1925-1938, SLOL-LC; “Writers Talk to Librarians” *New Orleans Morning Tribune*, Apr. 19, 1929, in LLC Scrapbook, 1928-1929, SLOL-LC; Margaret M. Herdman, “Library Organization,” *Library Journal* (June 1 1935): 471-472 (quotation). Herdman was assistant director of the LSU Library School.

³³ The slate of officers for 1910/11 that appears in *A History of the Louisiana Library Association, 1925-2000* came from a letterhead that Helen Wells Dodd attributed to 1910/11. These officers actually served in 1913/14. No election occurred in 1910 and the first officers, whose service began in 1909, remained in office until the election in 1911. In addition to the officers listed above, Minnie M. Bell and Eleanor Kopman served on the Executive Committee. Dodd, “Louisiana State Library Association” (1910): 331; Dodd, “Louisiana State Library Association” (1913): 289.

³⁴ Dodd, “Louisiana Library Association” (1911): 302. C. E. Coates, a professor of chemistry at Louisiana State University, and George Hathaway won election to the Executive Committee. *New Orleans Daily Picayune*, Apr. 23, 1911, p. 17.

³⁵ Executive Committee members elected in 1913 were William Beer and John S. Thibaut. Dodd, "Louisiana State Library Association" (1913): 289.

³⁶ "Baton Rougeans on Program."

³⁷ "Southern Book Women to Meet in Capital City," New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, Aug. 12, 1928, in LLC Scrapbook, 1928-1929, SLOL-LC.

³⁸ "Miss Culver Is State Libraries Ass'n President"; "State Library Ass'n to Meet on April 18-19," Baton Rouge *State-Times*, Mar. 8, 1929, in LLC Scrapbook, 1928-1929, SLOL-LC.

³⁹ "Usher Heads Librarians," New Orleans *Morning Tribune*, Apr. 20, 1929, in LLC Scrapbook, 1928-1929, SLOL-LC.

⁴⁰ "Banquet Program Brought Library Meeting to Close," Lake Charles *American Press*, May 2, 1931, in LLC Scrapbook, 1930-1935, SLOL-LC.