

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN PROGRESSIVE-ERA NORTH  
CAROLINA, 1896-1929

A thesis presented to the faculty of the Graduate School of Western Carolina University in  
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in History.

By

Robert Michael Manzo

Director: Dr. Alexander Macaulay  
Associate Professor of History  
History Department

Committee Members: Dr. Mary Ella Engel, History  
Dr. Gael Graham, History

April 2020

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The strengths and weaknesses of this paper are entirely the product of my own intellectual ability, or lack thereof, but invaluable help was given to me by many generous individuals who must be acknowledged. First, Dr. Alexander Macaulay, Dr. Gael Graham, and Dr. Mary Ella Engel at Western Carolina University (WCU) donated their time to reading the paper and offered much-needed critiques. Second, Dr. Jesse Swigger at WCU made me aware of several primary and secondary sources on educational and political history. Third, I owe thanks to the staffs of the State Library of North Carolina, the North Carolina Collection at the Durham County Library, the Southern Pines Public Library, the Wilson Library at UNC-Chapel Hill, the Hunter Library at WCU, Dr. James V. Carmichael, Jr. of UNC-Greensboro, Mac Whatley of the Randolph Room at the Randolph County Public Library, and Della Owens of the North Regional Branch of Durham County Library. I am sure there are others whose names escape me at the moment. I am grateful as well to the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, and their partners, who have digitized a vast amount of newspapers, photographs, the *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, and the *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, all available at [NCpedia.org](http://NCpedia.org) and [DigitalNC.org](http://DigitalNC.org). Finally, UNC's digital collection *Documenting the American South*, at [docsouth.unc.edu](http://docsouth.unc.edu), was also immensely helpful.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
Abstract .....	iv
Introduction: Looking Back on the History of Public Library Development in North Carolina ....	1
Chapter One: The Cooperation of New South and Progressive Visions in the Establishment of the Durham Public Library, 1896-1898 .....	5
Chapter Two: The Impact of Progressive Government, Philanthropy, and Grassroots Organizing on Public Libraries, 1901-1916 .....	46
Chapter Three: Slow But Steady Growth, and Libraries' New Sense of Mission in the Wartime and Business-Progressive State, 1917-1929.....	79
Conclusion: North Carolina Public Libraries in the Progressive Era and Today .....	127
Bibliography .....	132

## ABSTRACT

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN PROGRESSIVE-ERA NORTH CAROLINA, 1896-1929

Robert Michael Manzo, M.A.

Western Carolina University (April 2020)

Director: Dr. Alexander Macaulay

My research traces the history of one type of educational institution in North Carolina from the beginning to the end of the Southern progressive movement. Progressivism was a national movement that re-interpreted the role of the state in the nation's economic and social life. Reformers as different as Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson espoused a theory of positive government, meaning that government had a responsibility to meet more than just the basic needs of citizens. As a result, the administrative bureaucracy of government at all levels—federal, state, county, and city—grew to unprecedented size during the first quarter of the twentieth century. New agencies, commissions, and boards exercised new or expanded control over such matters as public health, education, interstate trade, and road construction. Although the liberal social-justice ideals of progressivism were somewhat restrained in the traditionally conservative Southern states, they still had a transformative impact. With efficiency and expertise as the guiding keywords of the era, a proliferation of government and voluntary organizations developed detailed strategic plans to address a range of social and economic problems. Public libraries were one such organization. They were supported by civic clubs,

operated under the auspices of government, dedicated to serving citizens' educational needs, and managed by experts in the novel discipline of library science. Using the interpretive framework of progressivism, I show how public libraries fit into the broad context of educational reform, civic activism, and government expansion that characterized progressivism from the 1890s to the Great Depression. The force of new progressive theories about society and government, and the reality of economic hardship that invited the intervention of such theories, finally tipped the South away from unyielding suspicion of big government and allowed new institutions, like the public library, to emerge. To be sure, conservatism tempered reform in North Carolina and the South. For example, public libraries mostly remained off limits to African-Americans until after World War II, although some independent libraries were started by middle-class black citizens who advocated the principle of self-help. Only three scholars have addressed the emergence of public libraries in North Carolina, and only two have addressed the context of progressive-era reform. State archivist Thornton W. Mitchell prepared a brief 1983 report summarizing library history over two centuries, including early church, college, and state libraries. More recently, Dr. James V. Carmichael, Jr. has assessed the unique opportunities for women in the library profession in North Carolina, as well as the mixed record of Southern librarians in challenging the region's conservatism and racism in the early twentieth century. Lastly, Dr. Patrick M. Valentine has treated the role of both homegrown and Northern philanthropy in financing North Carolina public libraries from 1900 up to World War II. My own approach is to use trade publications, newspapers, and secondary works to bring out the deeper connections between the broad context of progressivism and the emergence of the specific institution of the public library in North Carolina.

## INTRODUCTION: LOOKING BACK ON THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH CAROLINA

By the year 2010, every geographical section of North Carolina had public library service, whether administered through municipal, county, or multi-county (regional) public libraries. That year, state officials contemplated the next steps in the evolution of library service. As a result, the State Library of North Carolina initiated the “NC Cardinal” program.<sup>1</sup> The main task of the program was to develop a new web-based library catalog for the State Library, available to any citizen with a computer and internet service. State technicians built upon a customizable, open-source software originally developed by the Georgia Public Library system in 2006.<sup>2</sup> There was nothing new about web-based catalogs. The innovative aspect of NC Cardinal was that the State Library invited any and all North Carolina public libraries to implement the NC Cardinal software too, thus linking library resources across the state into a single, unified, searchable online catalog. Local library cards would become valid at any member library in the Cardinal consortium. In effect, local governments would cede some authority to the state government, in exchange for participation in an ambitious resource-sharing program. Currently, member institutions in the consortium share the cost of technical maintenance of the shared catalog, and each institution is entitled to free access to the collections of the other members. Each member library pays one annual fee, compared to previous interlibrary loan costs paid on a per-item basis. Books and other media ship back and forth among Cardinal libraries in

---

<sup>1</sup> “NC Cardinal,” *State Library of North Carolina*, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/ld/nc-cardinal>

<sup>2</sup> “About Us,” *Evergreen Integrated Library System*, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://evergreen-ils.org/about-us/>

forty-eight counties every day. Although not every public library has opted in, the NC Cardinal program is centralizing library service in much of the state, for better or worse. Future historians will be the judge.

The launching of NC Cardinal serves as a point of departure for a larger reflection on the history of library service in North Carolina. Today, NC Cardinal and many other library initiatives across the United States rely on grants from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), a federal agency.<sup>3</sup> The IMLS originated in a 1996 federal law, itself an iteration of the 1956 Library Services Act (LSA), the first-ever law to provide federal aid packages for public libraries. One historian has placed the LSA in the context of the “Great Society” movement of the 1950s-60s, when the “federal government began to assume major responsibility for human services which had formerly been almost entirely the domain of state and local government.”<sup>4</sup> Although that observation is valid, it only takes us back as far as the 1950s. Moreover, it implies another crucial question. When did our *state and local* governments first become responsible for human services, including library service? For that answer, it is necessary to go back to the early twentieth century, to the progressive era and the emergence of a system of administrative government which assumed unprecedented responsibility for citizens’ everyday social welfare. At the federal level, for example, the Federal Trade Commission and Federal Reserve Board were products of the progressive era. Prior to these agencies, the federal government had assumed very little responsibility for ensuring fair trade and a stable money supply. At the state level, progressive government created North Carolina’s first modern, fully

---

<sup>3</sup> “Grants to States,” *Institute of Museum and Library Services*, accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www.imls.gov/grants/grant-programs/grants-states>

<sup>4</sup> Joseph F. Shubert, “The Impact of the Federal Library Services and Construction Act,” *Library Trends* 24, no. 1 (1975): 30.

staffed State Board of Health, a State Board of Public Welfare, and a State Highway Commission. The state took on a new degree of responsibility for public health, social welfare, and roads. Founded in 1909, the North Carolina Library Commission was a progressive creation too, with responsibility for developing library service across the whole state.<sup>5</sup>

The present paper argues that the emergence of North Carolina's public library system in the late 1890s and early 1900s was primarily a product of progressive ideology, although other influences also came into play. In its approach, this paper focuses on institutional history—the factors surrounding the creation and development of institutions. The first chapter focuses on the founding of the state's first free, tax-supported public library in Durham, where dozens of interesting individuals with mixed motives came together in support of a public library. Most belonged to Durham's elite social class, who were interrelated by marriage, blood, and/or business dealings. Many believed in some variation of the New South vision, although a crucial few had a progressive viewpoint on cultural and human development. Importantly, the campaign for a public library in Durham had significance beyond that city. It resulted in a new statewide enabling law that allowed, for the first time, municipalities to create and fund libraries for their citizens. The second chapter focuses on the twentieth century prior to World War I, when progressivism matured and informed much about public policy and urban development in North Carolina and the nation. Grassroots organizations, government officials, and philanthropists set North Carolina's library development off to a modest but strong start. Notably, only two public libraries open to African-Americans were founded in this period, while about three dozen were established for whites. Although the roots of Jim Crow extended back to the post-Reconstruction

---

<sup>5</sup> The North Carolina Library Commission merged into the State Library of North Carolina in 1956, where it remains to the present day.

New South, its laws and customs were reinforced by progressive ideology, a fact backed up by public library history. The third chapter focuses on the war and the post-war state, and how North Carolina public libraries found a new purpose by participating in wartime mobilization and the post-war culture of conformity. The 1920s were a decade of slow but steady growth for public libraries. Few towns were willing to direct funds or enact new taxes for libraries. In a positive development, by the end of the decade, state law had been amended to allow counties, as well as municipalities, to establish public libraries. The impact of the amendment was cut short, unfortunately, by the advent of the Great Depression, which serves as the end point of the present study. Library development would accelerate only after the Depression, especially after state aid came about in the 1940s and then federal aid in the 1950s.

CHAPTER ONE: THE COOPERATION OF NEW SOUTH AND PROGRESSIVE VISIONS  
IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DURHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY, 1896-1898

The state of North Carolina did not, from its beginning, permit towns and counties to establish and fund public libraries. Not until 1897 did state law enable local governments to open libraries. That enabling law was a secondary outcome of the local public library campaign that took place in Durham in the late 1890s. The dozens of people who came together in Durham in 1896-97 to support the state's first free, tax-supported public library, and in the process change state law, are the subject of this chapter. The breakthrough in Durham formed the basis for the statewide system of public libraries that would emerge in the progressive era and mature after World War II. Durham's library was made possible by a convergence of interests, primarily the combination of the New South and progressive ideologies that emerged in the late nineteenth century. The two ideologies were different but not mutually exclusive. The New South idea arose out of Reconstruction. It envisioned a modern, industrial, wage-earning South, which contrasted with the pre-Civil War, agrarian, and self-sufficient Old South. Yet the neat division between Old and New South is an imperfect analytical device. Many New South proponents were not interested in giving up all of the cultural values of the Old South. Furthermore, the antebellum South had not truly been a "self-sufficient" region of independent yeoman farmers, in the way that New South idealists proclaimed. The Jeffersonian ideal of the independent, small yeoman farmer had never really been the norm in the South. In terms of economics, the region had long relied on an international trade in cotton, slaves, and other commodities. Thus, the New and Old Souths both participated in an interdependent network of markets spanning the whole world, and the Old South had not been so closed off and independent as many late-nineteenth-century

Southerners imagined. But the idealized Old South was taken as reality in the rhetoric of New South leaders, who fretted over how to transition to an industrial, urban society, without destroying the economic independence they believed had prevailed in agrarian, antebellum Southern society. Their response was to tout a self-contained factory system which could process manufactured goods from start to finish entirely within the region.

By contrast, progressivism arose later than the New South ideology, as industrialization and urbanization gained pace in the 1880s and 1890s, but it became a dominant force in American culture only after the turn of the century.<sup>1</sup> A pervasive cultural anxiety about the social order prevailed due to several factors. First, there was the perceived loss of the yeoman's independence, as more people became wage-earning factory workers and tenant farmers. Reformers expressed concern about workers' dependence on a shrinking class of landowners and industrialists who paid their wages. Second, there was a concern about disruptions to the established racial order, as African-Americans set up independent households and entered—at least in theory—a free labor market in competition with whites. Third, the mass move from small towns to larger ones put people in an anonymizing social environment that reformers saw as threatening to civilized life. In the city, the sense of community that had been nurtured by the small-town setting was lost. Anonymity freed people from faithfulness to the Christian moral code, since they were not accountable to known neighbors. Without morality, civilization itself might collapse. In the cities and mid-size towns, progressives sought to reinforce a particular sense of community, and thus “rescue” civilization, by establishing organizations, services, and institutions, including libraries, that promoted—or forcibly imposed—discipline and order. The

---

<sup>1</sup> For this reason, progressivism is examined in detail in the second chapter, which covers the first decade and a half of the twentieth century, although the broad themes of progressivism are addressed in this first chapter.

chapter begins by considering what factors made Durham conducive to a public library movement, and then examine who the library's founding supporters were and how they brought together the New South and progressive visions in the public library project. The chapter concludes by showing how the Durham library movement led to the passage of a state law enabling towns to open public libraries.

The state's first free public library arose in Durham, and not in an older, larger city like Raleigh or Wilmington, for a few different reasons. First, Durham was a young city seeking to fashion itself in a modern image—it “exemplified the New South movement,” with its many tobacco warehouses and factories, ready to ship product to distant markets via the North Carolina Railroad, around which the city had originally grown up in the late 1850s and 1860s.<sup>2</sup> By the 1890s, the post-Civil War tobacco boom had caused Durham's industrial development to exceed that of all other North Carolina cities at the time, making Durham an unusually wealthy municipality. The taxable wealth in the city rose with the tobacco boom, and would provide funding for public projects such as a library. Industrialists constantly expanded their factories, leading to more taxable property, and the sheer number of taxable workers went up as well. Thousands of men and women came to Durham seeking industrial jobs. Durham had seven tobacco factories with ninety-eight employees producing \$134,330 worth of product in 1869, the year the city was founded, and a decade later had fourteen factories with 870 employees producing product worth \$996,000.<sup>3</sup> In a single decade, the number of factories had doubled, the workforce had grown eightfold, and the value of industrial output had increased sevenfold. By

---

<sup>2</sup> Leslie Brown, *Upbuilding Black Durham: Gender, Class, and Black Community Development in the Jim Crow South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 12, 31.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Bradley Anderson, *Durham County: A History of Durham County, North Carolina*, 2nd ed. (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011), 123.

the mid-1890s, despite having a population of only about 6,000, Durham had one of the two largest municipal tax bases in the state. The city government was therefore able to enact policies and programs it might otherwise have not. While Durham's population was about half that of Raleigh and less than one-quarter that of Wilmington, "tax valuation in the city, real and personal property in 1894, amounted to \$6,148,614... The city tax rate was 98⅓ cents, which included indebtedness for railroad and school bonds."<sup>4</sup> By 1896, besides tobacco factories, Durham also had seven textile factories, three major banks, two carriage factories, a soap works, and a cannery.<sup>5</sup> Thus, unlike other industrialized cities in North Carolina, Durham had a relatively diversified economy that allowed for more economic stability as well as prosperity. In terms of a diversified, modern economy, perhaps only Greensboro and Winston compared, but the textile booms that would truly lift the economies of those two cities, under the Cone and Hanes families, respectively, happened later in the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>6</sup>

The second factor that made Durham conducive to a public library movement was its early adoption, compared to other Tar Heel cities, of the modern, tax-funded, graded school. The cause of education had advanced quickly in Durham. It had set up one of the state's earliest graded schools in 1881, just thirteen years after the first post-war state constitution had enabled towns to run graded school districts.<sup>7</sup> Durham's 1881 graded school law stated that "an annual

---

<sup>4</sup> A.C. Simpson and W.C. Dula, *Durham and Her People: Combining History and Who's Who in Durham of 1949 and 1950* (Durham, NC: Citizen's Press, 1951), 15.

<sup>5</sup> North Carolina Board of Agriculture, *North Carolina and Its Resources* (Winston, NC: M.I. and J.C. Stewart, 1896), 193; *Handbook of Durham, North Carolina* (Durham, NC: The Educator Company, 1895), 29-31.

<sup>6</sup> Helen Snow and Tim Cole, "Greensboro," *State Library of North Carolina*, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/greensboro-0>; *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, s.v. "Winston-Salem," by John A. Hutcheson, Jr., accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/winston-salem>

<sup>7</sup> Simpson and Dula, *Durham and Her People*, 35; *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, s.v. "Public Education, Part 3: The First Graded Schools, the State Constitution of 1868, and Legal Segregation," by Benjamin R. Justesen and Scott Matthews, accessed November 29, 2019, <https://www.ncpedia.org/public-education-part-3-first>.

tax shall be levied therein for the support of a graded school in said town.”<sup>8</sup> This time, the school tax was not tied to appropriations from a state fund, as with antebellum public school laws. Citizens and lawmakers had accepted that school funding was the primary responsibility of the taxpayer. Similarly, taxpayers would later accept financial responsibility for public libraries. With the success of the graded school movement in Durham, the ideological groundwork had been laid for the establishment of a public library. By the mid-1890s, the city had assumed responsibility for funding public education by issuing bonds and taxing citizens to pay off bonds. Southern local governments had only slowly come to accept that public school funding should come primarily from tax revenue rather than private sources or non-tax-derived public funds.

The third factor that made Durham a favorable setting for a public library movement was the opening of Trinity College in the city in 1892. The college’s students and faculty added an intellectual element to the city’s industrial culture. For decades, the modest Methodist college had grown up in rural Randolph County but was declining by the late 1880s. In 1887, there was “still only one building, an uncatalogued library of 10,000 volumes, six professors and two tutors, and a preparatory department with an enrollment half as large (fifty-one) as the total taking college courses.”<sup>9</sup> The Methodist Conference, at the urging of college president John F. Crowell, decided to move the college to a city. Julian S. Carr, a newly appointed Trinity trustee, offered sixty-seven and a half acres of park land for Trinity to relocate to Durham.<sup>10</sup> The Dukes,

---

<sup>8</sup> North Carolina General Assembly, “An Act to Establish a Graded School in the Town of Durham” (March 9, 1881), 1881 Public Laws, Chapter 231, *Public Laws of the State of North Carolina Passed in 1881*, 433-435, accessed November 29, 2019, [https://www.carolana.com/NC/Education/1881\\_03\\_09\\_Act\\_to\\_Establish\\_a\\_Graded\\_School\\_in\\_Durham.html](https://www.carolana.com/NC/Education/1881_03_09_Act_to_Establish_a_Graded_School_in_Durham.html)

<sup>9</sup> Earl W. Porter, *Trinity and Duke, 1892-1924: Foundations of Duke University* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1964), 9.

<sup>10</sup> Anderson, *Durham County*, 170.

a prominent Methodist family, donated money for buildings. Crowell was pleased to relocate Trinity College to a modern urban setting where the number of potential enrollees, and thus tuition revenue, was considerable.<sup>11</sup>

With its modern industry, public education system, and university, Durham was indeed an exemplary New South city. Influential industrialists and journalists identified industrialization and urbanization as necessary to the region's advancement into the New South. Although problematic, these phenomena were manageable, if people would only trust the self-proclaimed New South leaders to be the unfettered managers. Since it was in the context of an emerging New South that the Durham Public Library was founded, it is well to survey how Southerners who lived through that period defined the New South. The economic, social, and cultural changes that characterized the New South made an institution like a public library equally desirable to Durham's industrialists, small business owners, progressives, and conservative, well-to-do government officials.

Urbanization—the concentration of masses of people into the relatively small area of a city—created a demand for new public services, to be provided by the city's leading capitalists and government officials. Often, leaders were keen to provide these services. They had the means to do so, since the city official and the capitalist were the same person. The combination of money and political power in the capitalist-politician gave civic leaders immense power to shape human society. In 1895, for example, Durham alderman Leo D. Heartt was cashier of the First National Bank, under industrialist Julian S. Carr's management.<sup>12</sup> Economic misfortune

---

<sup>11</sup> Porter, *Trinity and Duke*, 19-21.

<sup>12</sup> *Handbook of Durham*, 30-31.

drove many people from farming in the countryside to factory work in the city, to labor under employers like Carr. Between 1890 and 1900, the number of cotton mill laborers in the state increased from 7,893 to 30,273, while the number of farm tenants and sharecroppers rose from 60,890 to 93,008.<sup>13</sup> Both increases represented a shift from a subsistence lifestyle to a wage-labor lifestyle dependent on a cash income. Since 1875, the crop-lien system had thrived under a Democratic rule indifferent to small farmers' needs. As a result, more people went into farm tenancy or factory work. Many moved in stages from farm ownership to farm tenancy to factories. In 1906, Holland Thompson reflected that during the 1890s American cotton farmers had faced a growing competition from abroad in the international cotton market. The Panic of 1893 further depressed cotton prices. Cotton was a major crop in North Carolina, and the only way to make it pay anymore was in factory processing, not in growing it. "To the mill towns," wrote Thompson, "turned the discouraged from the farms, hoping for better times in industry than in agriculture. Renters and laborers went to those places where there was work with money wages for all."<sup>14</sup> He noted that a sense of community was diminished in the new urban centers. In rural towns, a small number of families helped care for one another's physical, social, and spiritual needs, by bartering, visiting, and organizing churches and schools. In a city like Durham, where the majority of families were unlikely to know one another, they depended, in large part if not entirely, on the wealthy business owners and city officials to provide the necessary housing, supplies, and religious and social institutions. To an extent, business leaders were willing to provide their workers with "extras" beyond a wage, in order to maintain workers'

---

<sup>13</sup> Phillip J. Wood, *Southern Capitalism: The Political Economy of North Carolina, 1880-1980* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1986), 28-29, 45.

<sup>14</sup> Holland Thompson, *From the Cotton Field to the Cotton Mill: A Study of the Industrial Transition in North Carolina* (New York: Macmillan, 1906), 70.

health and productivity. Also, elites' provision of civic services and institutions kept workers from organizing their own independent, and uncontrollable, culture.

In this time of change, Southern leaders with a large media presence urged Southerners to embrace industrialization and city life, which they saw as the hallmarks of a New South that would lead the nation in economic and social prosperity in the late nineteenth century. Henry Grady, editor of the *Atlanta Constitution* newspaper, told an audience of New Yorkers in 1886 that “There is a New South, not through protest against the Old, but because of new conditions, new adjustments and, if you please, new ideas and aspirations.”<sup>15</sup> He envisioned a new oligarchy of men akin to the class of antebellum plantation owners, who would exercise benevolent leadership over industrial workers and small farmers just as planters had exercised power over black slaves. If the Old South was identified with vast plantations and a system of enslaved labor, Grady's New South was comparable in its vision of vast industries and a system of wage labor. As he himself said, the New South was not in conflict with the Old, and the Old did not fade away with the emergence of the New South. In Durham, men like Julian Carr and Washington Duke fit the profile of the New South oligarch. While they pursued wealth in the modern industries of tobacco and textile manufacturing—the emblematic industries of the New South—their moral values remained rooted in such Old South ideas as paternalism and a natural racial and social hierarchy, with themselves at the apex.

A more liberal vision of the New South was articulated by journalist Walter Hines Page, a native North Carolinian who spent much of his career as a magazine editor in New York City.

---

<sup>15</sup> Henry Grady, “The New South,” Speech, New England Society, New York, December 22, 1886, reprinted in *ANCHOR: A North Carolina History Online Resource* (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources), accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/anchor/henry-grady-and-new-south>

In the 1890s, Page held editorships at the monthly current affairs magazines the *Forum* and the *Atlantic*.<sup>16</sup> In a speech delivered in June 1897 at the North Carolina Normal and Industrial School in Greensboro, Page tempered Grady's stress on the role of elites:

A community is not rich because it contains a few rich men, it is not healthful because it contains a few strong men, it is not intelligent because it contains a few men of learning, nor is it of good morals because it contains good women—if the rest of the population also be not well-to-do, or healthful, or intelligent, or of good morals. The common people is the class most to be considered in the structure of civilization.<sup>17</sup>

For Page, the primary means of raising the welfare of the common people, and thus advancing civilization, was education. To illustrate his point that education should be a force for social equality and advancement, he recalled a moment from his childhood school days. Page recounted a time he had consoled a friend who had been upset that his father was not a Colonel, as were so many other students' fathers. The upset boy had internalized the idea that education was for children of distinguished families only, and that he was undeserving. In Page's vision of the New South, by contrast, the "aristocratic idea" in education would be abandoned and all people would have equal access to schooling.<sup>18</sup> Once educated, common people would prove just as capable and intelligent as the upper class. There was nothing inherently superior about planters or Colonels, or their sons and daughters, compared to the "common people." Page's New South would remove structural barriers to opportunities for learning and achievement. An institution such as a public library could help advance that goal.

---

<sup>16</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Page, Walter Hines," by John M. Cooper, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/page-walter-hines>

<sup>17</sup> Walter Hines Page, "The Forgotten Man," in *The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1902), 3.

<sup>18</sup> Page, "The Forgotten Man," 11.

Thus, a public library might serve different purposes according to different visions of the New South. In Grady's and Carr's visions, a public library would serve as a way for oligarchs to show their supposed benevolence, to provide workers with a leisure activity that was morally respectable, and to exercise discipline over their workers. Discipline and social control were paramount, since the basis of profitability was worker productivity. Therefore, New South oligarchs backed the building of libraries, recreation halls, and churches, and opposed the saloon and brothel. The former institutions contained controlled environments that promoted a disciplined life. Recreation halls provided healthy physical activity, churches taught obedience and the Protestant work ethic, and libraries offered "good reading" to induce "good social behavior."<sup>19</sup> Through these institutions, industrialists held a degree of control over working-class culture, discouraging unruly ideas and agitators. The less independent that working-class culture was, the better. Prior to Durham's public library movement, the W. Duke & Sons Tobacco Company had built churches "near every factory to encourage the religious interests of their employees."<sup>20</sup> Similarly, Julian Carr and the other oligarchs who supported the public library hoped to encourage good social behavior through good reading.

In Page's contrasting vision, a public library would be a way to diminish class boundaries by providing equal access to education for all. While rooted in New South rhetoric, Page's viewpoint also reflected the emerging creed of progressivism, which emphasized individual social development over impersonal economic development. Page embraced both ideas. But unlike Carr, Page's credo heralded "free speech and free teaching" which might stimulate

---

<sup>19</sup> Wayne A. Wiegand, *"An Active Instrument for Propaganda": The American Public Library During World War I* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), 3.

<sup>20</sup> Porter, *Trinity and Duke*, 24.

“intellectual curiosity” in “the mass of Southern men.”<sup>21</sup> Then, the South might flourish economically by producing thinkers, inventors, and innovators, while also diminishing class prejudice. The South would become a more unified community. Page’s predicted outcome of social equality rested, unfortunately, on the assumption that the only factor separating working- and upper-class Americans was a difference in levels of education. Ultimately, Page’s analysis of class difference, and the means to overcome it, overlooked the unequal power dynamic inherent in the economic relationship between the wage-earner and wage-provider. No amount of education in itself could undo that power dynamic, thus schools and libraries would not automatically lead to social equality.

In the long run, schools and libraries served neither as a perfect means of social control nor of social leveling, although they achieved a little of both. Grady’s and Page’s conflicting visions of education and the New South converged in the founding of the Durham Public Library. Many individuals came together to make the Durham Public Library a reality, and all of their differing viewpoints, backgrounds, and interests merit consideration. By examining who the founding supporters were, it is possible to see how different New South visions and the emerging progressive creed all overlapped to make the library possible. The cooperation of the founding board members and city officials in supporting a public library was neither predictable nor inevitable. Indeed, the two people credited with the original idea of the Durham library, Edwin Mims and Lalla Ruth Carr, were liberals in the context of their time and place. As we will see later in this chapter, both became involved in community outreach organizations that promoted interracial and cross-class cooperation. But the people who assumed control of the Board of

---

<sup>21</sup> Edwin Mims, *The Advancing South: Stories of Progress and Reaction* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1926), 36, 44.

Trustees were mostly conservative business men. Preliminary to an examination of the individuals whose interests came together in the library's founding, just the basic facts of the founding can be outlined—they have been documented in detail elsewhere.<sup>22</sup>

The library idea came out of the Canterbury Club, a co-ed literary group started in 1895. Among its members were an English professor and a young social activist, namely Edwin Mims and Lalla Ruth Carr, Julian's daughter.<sup>23</sup> Members of the Canterbury Club launched a library campaign in 1896, which achieved its first milestone on April 20, when the city's Board of Aldermen "agreed to co-operate in the maintenance and support of the enterprise."<sup>24</sup> Ten days later, at a public meeting called by Mims and a Methodist minister, Julian Carr made the case that a public library would bring needed spiritual and social uplift to urban, factory-dominated Durham.<sup>25</sup> Matching his philanthropic gift to Trinity, Carr donated a plot of land along Main Street for a library building. When the lot was judged too narrow for the desired building, the owner of the adjacent lot added to Carr's gift. Encouraged by the land donations, citizens collectively pledged \$1,300 toward the estimated \$4,000 cost of the proposed building. To raise the remaining money, Lalla Carr and the matriarchs of several of Durham's prominent families organized the Board of Lady Managers, a twelve-member fundraising group which went on foot around town to ask people for pledges. Julian Carr objected to his daughter leading what he

---

<sup>22</sup> Jessica Harland-Jacobs, *The History of Public Library Service in Durham, 1897-1997* (Durham, NC: Durham County Library, 1998).

<sup>23</sup> Anderson, *Durham County*, 171.

<sup>24</sup> Jessica Harland-Jacobs, "Chapter 2: Bringing Culture to Durham," in *The History of Public Library Service in Durham, 1897-1997*, accessed November 29, 2019, [https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/dclhistory\\_02.php](https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/dclhistory_02.php)

<sup>25</sup> Mena Webb, *Jule Carr: General without an Army* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 157-158.

deemed a vulgar method of raising money, but the Lady Managers succeeded in obtaining the additional funds.<sup>26</sup> “At a mass meeting held” in Durham in early May, an incredible sum of “nearly \$9,000 was subscribed.”<sup>27</sup> By the end of the month, an all-male Board of Trustees was formed. Although women had worked hardest to fundraise for the library, the gendered composition of the board aligned with the patriarchal politics of the era before universal women’s suffrage. Mims, Julian Carr, and ten more of Durham’s wealthiest men served as trustees. Thus, with a fundraising board, a board of trustees, donated land, a building fund, and the blessing of city officials, the public library seemed set to go ahead.

The respective participants in the library’s founding were devoted to different aspects of the New South vision. These aspects included the paternalism and control valued by the industrialist-capitalists like Carr, the idealized oligarchical leadership touted by Grady, and Page’s progressive idea of equal opportunities for the educational and social advancement of common folk. Fortunately, with few exceptions, it is possible to identify exactly who the individuals were who supported the library project in Durham. By examining their individual histories and interests, the motivations of the Durham library supporters come into focus, revealing an unusual confluence of different interest groups. The supporters can be classed into three different groups, as suggested by the different aspects of the New South vision. First, there were the industrialist-capitalists, such as Julian Carr and the three other industrial magnates who served with him on the inaugural Board of Trustees. Second, there were the non-industrialist oligarchs. These include a few lawyers and other middle-class professionals who served as

---

<sup>26</sup> Harland-Jacobs, “Chapter 2: Bringing Culture to Durham”; Webb, *Julie Carr*, 158, 247.

<sup>27</sup> “All Over the State: A Summary of Current Events for the Past Seven Days,” *Goldsboro Headlight*, May 7, 1896.

trustees, the middle- and upper-class women on the library's Board of Lady Managers, and the city's board of aldermen, who pledged support for the library. Third, there was a small group who can be labeled among North Carolina's earliest social progressives, in the mode of Walter Hines Page. The leading social progressives in the Durham library movement were Edwin Mims and Lalla Carr. In the mid-1890s, both were youths just starting their respective careers, and they represented the youthful, liberal spirit of progressivism, which would only fully blossom in the South in the following decade. A few of the Lady Managers fall outside of the three interest groups, either because their backgrounds are unknown or, in a unique case, one came from a working-class household. Despite these exceptions, the three groups remain a useful scheme for defining the various interests that came together to support the library project. The coalition of industrialists, lawyers, and aldermen was not unusual, but the addition to the group of middle-class business men, women of different classes, and young progressives was unique. All came together to support a public library.

Starting with the industrialist-capitalists, Julian S. Carr was the leading figure. In 1870, his father, a wealthy Chapel Hill merchant, purchased a one-third share in the Blackwell Durham Tobacco Company, which had emerged out of the first tobacco processing plant set up in Durham in the late 1850s.<sup>28</sup> Julian Carr took up management of the rising tobacco company. The next year, co-owner William T. Blackwell built Durham's first tobacco warehouse. As a result, buyers could now come to Durham to buy the product from local sellers, instead of sellers having to travel to market centers outside the state or peddle their product around the countryside.<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, warehouses could store tobacco when market prices were low and

---

<sup>28</sup> Anderson, *Durham County*, 94, 147; Webb, *Jule Carr*, 33.

<sup>29</sup> Anderson, *Durham County*, 124-125.

release it when prices were high, thus maximizing profit. By the end of the 1870s, the quantity of farmland, factories, and warehouses in Durham meant that the costs of producing ready-for-market tobacco were reduced and, consequently, that the new industrialists could realize profits unprecedented in the state's industrial history. A proud Confederate veteran, Julian Carr must have taken pride in building up a Southern industry that rivalled and even surpassed many Northern industries.

Carr's Confederate service was central to his self-image and personality. Although he left the Confederate Army with the rank of private, he styled himself as "Colonel Carr" or "General Carr" throughout his life, and took the lead in several veterans' groups.<sup>30</sup> In 1886 he co-founded the North Carolina Confederate Veterans Association, and from 1899 to 1915 was chair of "the state division of the United Confederate Veterans (UCV), the largest Confederate veterans' organization."<sup>31</sup> Through a friendship with Josephus Daniels, Carr helped launch the *Raleigh News and Observer* as the major media outlet for white supremacist rhetoric. Furthermore, Carr described slavery as "the gentlest and most beneficent servitude mankind has ever known," and blamed Northerners for disrupting the Southern racial hierarchy by giving the vote to African Americans.<sup>32</sup> Ex-Confederates often cited the enfranchising of African-Americans under the

---

<sup>30</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Carr, Julian Shakespeare," accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/carr-julian-shakespeare>; C. Beauregard Poland, *North Carolina's Glorious Victory, 1898: Sketches of Able Democratic Leaders and Statesmen* (Raleigh, NC: C.B. Poland, 1898), 4; James Leutze, Oral History Interview with George Watts Hill, January 30, 1986, Excerpt 4954, Interview C-0047, Southern Oral History Program Collection #4007, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, [https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/C-0047/excerpts/excerpt\\_4954.html](https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/C-0047/excerpts/excerpt_4954.html)

<sup>31</sup> Adam H. Domby, *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory*, (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2020), 14, 18.

<sup>32</sup> Julian S. Carr, *Address of General Julian S. Carr: 'The Confederate Soldier'* (Richmond, VA: 1915), 6; Domby, *The False Cause*, 31.

fifteenth amendment to be the cause of the supposed decline of Southern white civilization. Carr was one of the foremost proponents of this view, which he repeated in many speeches. In his rhetoric, he often salvaged white manhood and civilization by claiming that pure Anglo-Saxons still survived and held power, even though slavery had been outlawed, and that whites must hold fast to their superior place in society.

At the same time, Julian Carr was a benefactor of black entrepreneurs and institutions. A biographer of John Merrick, the black barber and entrepreneur who co-founded the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company in the 1890s, described the Carrs of Durham as Merrick's customers and friends.<sup>33</sup> Writing in the early 1920s, when Carr was still alive but Merrick deceased, the biographer did not have the perspective needed to see that cordial business relations was not the same thing as personal friendship. Merrick was dedicated to the social and economic advancement of African-Americans in a way that Carr was not. Besides his cordial, if not personal, relationship to the entrepreneur Merrick, Carr also donated to the Training School for Colored People in Augusta, Georgia.<sup>34</sup> But the man who, in 1913, bragged about whipping a black woman for "maligning" a white woman in the streets of Chapel Hill in 1865 was by no means a civil rights supporter.<sup>35</sup> Rather, Carr's superficial friendship and support of African-Americans was a means of reinforcing Confederate values, by establishing a paternalistic and "beneficent" power over blacks. Selective donations to black causes also deflected accusations of

---

<sup>33</sup> R. McCants Andrews, *John Merrick: A Biographical Sketch* (Durham, NC: Seeman Printery, 1920), 40.

<sup>34</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Carr, Julian Shakespeare."

<sup>35</sup> Julian S. Carr, "Unveiling of Confederate Monument at University," Speech, June 2, 1913, Page 9-B, Scan #104 (digitized), Folder 26, Julian Shakespeare Carr Papers #141, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/00141/>

racism, a common strategy among Southern white elites. “The implication,” according to one historian of white supremacy, “was clear: friendship—and protection from white friends—was contingent on southern blacks’ subservience and complacency.”<sup>36</sup>

The same strategy of exercising control through limited benefactions applied in Carr’s management of his factories. In 1895, he became part-owner in the Durham Hosiery Mills, where he implemented welfare-capitalist practices. Welfare capitalism sought to pre-empt the intervention of labor law in business by implementing benefits defined by the employer, rather than by government. In this way, benefits would avoid becoming rights inscribed in law, but remain “gratuities” offered by “generous” employers.<sup>37</sup> The Durham Hosiery Mills had its own commissioning agent in New York, who secured a lucrative government contract to supply socks for the US Army in the Spanish-American War.<sup>38</sup> Profits ran high. To keep production steady, a disciplined workforce was needed. Discipline was legally enforced by a business-friendly county court system that protected factory owners’ rights while dismissing the rights of workers. At the Durham Hosiery Mills, techniques of industrial discipline reached an apex in 1916. A Personnel Department was created to hear workers’ grievances and to mediate between managers and workers. Millhands were therefore not represented by an independent union but by a company-run department. This was a form of welfare capitalism and paternalistic control.<sup>39</sup> Thus, Carr’s

---

<sup>36</sup> Domby, *The False Cause*, 39.

<sup>37</sup> Jennifer Klein, *For All These Rights: Business, Labor, and the Shaping of America’s Public-Private Welfare State* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 2-5.

<sup>38</sup> Pamela C. Edwards, “In Good Faith: The Rise and Fall of a Company Union in the Durham Hosiery Mills,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (2004): 367-368.

<sup>39</sup> Edwards, “In Good Faith,” 371.

philanthropy and managerial practices were typically guided by the goal of social control, not altruism.

Besides Carr, the other eleven men who served on the inaugural Durham Public Library Board of Trustees in May 1896 included Howard A. Foushee, Thomas B. Fuller, H.H. Markham, Edwin Mims, Edward J. Parrish, James H. Southgate, Clinton W. Toms, Reverend L.B. Turnbull, George W. Watts, Jonathan F. Wiley, and Robert W. Winston.<sup>40</sup> Of the twelve trustees, four were industrialist-capitalists, seven were non-industrialist, middle-class professionals, and the odd one out was Professor Mims of Trinity College. Although a college instructor and thus a middle-class professional, Mims's liberalism contrasted to the conservative character of the rest of the trustees. Therefore, in this analysis he will be classed as neither an industrialist nor a middle-class oligarch, but as a social progressive.

One of the industrialists, Thomas B. Fuller (1857-1927), had moved from Fayetteville to Durham with his family in 1881. His well-connected father, Bartholomew Fuller, had been a lawyer, Confederate soldier, and finally legal adviser and personal secretary to Julian Carr.<sup>41</sup> In 1881, Carr hired young Thomas Fuller as a manager at the Carr-owned Golden Belt textile factory, where Fuller excelled and eventually became company president. Interested in civic life, Fuller co-founded the Associated Charities of Durham in 1899 and joined the first county board of health in 1909. Fuller was an eager and early contributor to the library fundraising campaign, and in 1911 he led the library board's successful effort to secure a \$32,000 Carnegie library

---

<sup>40</sup> North Carolina General Assembly, *Private Laws of the State of North Carolina Passed by the General Assembly at Its Session of 1897* (Winston, NC: M.I. and J.C. Stewart, 1897), 196; Jessica Harland-Jacobs, "Footnotes," in *The History of Public Library Service in Durham, 1897-1997* (Durham, NC: Durham County Library, 1998), accessed March 18, 2020, <https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/footnotes.php>

<sup>41</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Fuller, Thomas Blount," by Carolyn F. Raney and Mena F. Webb, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/fuller-thomas-blount>

grant, against Carr's wishes to avoid Northern philanthropy.<sup>42</sup> Fuller might best be described as a conservative aristocrat and industrialist with some social-progressive tendencies, an unusual combination.

A decade older than Fuller was Edward J. Parrish (1846-1920), a Confederate veteran who had set up as a grocer in Durham in 1871. After a first attempt to open a tobacco warehouse failed, Parrish later succeeded as a tobacco merchant and moved into manufacturing in 1886.<sup>43</sup> His brand, "Pride of Durham," was moderately successful. However, debt brought on by failed real estate investments landed Parrish in court. In 1899 the Dukes and Julian Carr, his creditors, sued him for \$27,000.<sup>44</sup> To settle the debt, the "Pride of Durham" brand was sold off. However, the Dukes offered him a job, which he accepted, as vice-president of Murai Brothers, a Japan-based firm within the American Tobacco trust, on a \$15,000 salary. This was six times the salary of Durham's top lawyer, Robert W. Winston, also a library board member. Parrish could hardly refuse.<sup>45</sup> At the time of the library board's formation, Parrish was a successful local tobacco manufacturer.

The fourth industrialist-capitalist on the board was George W. Watts (1851-1921). After graduating from the University of Virginia with a degree in civil engineering in 1871, he worked

---

<sup>42</sup> Betty Irene Young, "Lillian Baker Griggs: Pioneer Librarian," *The Durham Record* 1 (1983): 34-35.

<sup>43</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Parrish, Edward James," by Burton F. Beers, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/parrish-edward-james>

<sup>44</sup> James L. Hunt, "Law and Society in a New South Community: Durham County, North Carolina, 1898-1899," *North Carolina Historical Review* 68, no. 4 (1991): 458.

<sup>45</sup> Parrish proved adept at navigating Japan's culture and banking system. When the Japanese government nationalized the country's tobacco industry in 1902, Parrish helped American Tobacco liquidate Murai assets with minimal loss of the Duke trust's money. In 1914, he quit on good terms from American Tobacco and lived out his remaining years on a Durham farm.

as a tobacco merchant with his father's company in Baltimore, Maryland.<sup>46</sup> The elder Watts became a major shareholder in the W. Duke & Sons Tobacco Company, and in 1885 the younger Watts became secretary-treasurer of the company. That same year, Watts formed a business partnership with Julian Carr and Eugene L. Morehead, son of the antebellum governor John M. Morehead. The resulting corporation, the Durham Electric Lighting Company, held an exclusive city contract until 1900. Other business ventures came through the Commonwealth Club, a group of capitalists organized by Watts in 1884.<sup>47</sup> The club funded the creation of the Lynchburg and Durham, the Oxford and Durham, and the Durham and Northern Railroads, all of which bolstered Durham as a market center of the state. The Durham and Northern Railroad was heavily subsidized by the city of Durham, which incurred \$100,000 of bonded debt for its construction in 1895.<sup>48</sup> This example of indebtedness reveals the kind of government-corporate entanglement that Populists had opposed in the 1890s. Also in 1895, Watts underwrote the construction of Watts Hospital, which became one of six general hospitals in the state.

The railway line and hospital represented the kinds of projects that industrialists used to advance their own self-interest, apart from any altruistic motives. By convincing the city to issue bonds to subsidize the railroad, Watts and the Commonwealth Club had shifted a large part of the railroad's cost to the taxpayer. Further, by financing the hospital and gifting it to the city, Watts provided a memorial to his presumed benevolence while leaving the city to pay long-term operational costs. The tactical manipulation of public monies and the careful disbursement of

---

<sup>46</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Watts, George Washington," by Nathaniel F. Magruder, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/watts-george-washington>

<sup>47</sup> *History of North Carolina*, vol. 4, *North Carolina Biography* (Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Co., 1919), 172.

<sup>48</sup> *Handbook of Durham*, 9-10.

philanthropy enhanced industrialists' self-interest and public image, and it is likely that Watts had these motives in mind when he joined the library board. Meanwhile, fortunes continued to grow. By 1912, Watts and the Dukes shared ownership in the Erwin Mills textile factory. Additionally, Watts held board positions with numerous railroad, oil, chemical, and steel companies. Thus, in the 1890s Watts, Carr, and the Dukes represented the top echelon of industrialist-capitalists in Durham.

Another stratum of citizens, the non-industrialist oligarchs, made up most of the library Board of Trustees, most of the Board of Lady Managers, and the city's library-supporting Board of Aldermen. Each of these boards can be considered in turn. On the Board of Trustees were six middle-class professionals, including two lawyers, an insurance agent, a school superintendent, a bank cashier, and a reverend. One of the lawyers, Howard A. Foushee (1870-1916), had graduated with a Master's degree from Wake Forest College in 1889, then studied law under a judge in Murfreesboro, and capped his training with a law course at UNC in 1893.<sup>49</sup> In 1896, he formed the Durham law firm Manning and Foushee with James S. Manning. The two were also "directors of the Durham Traction Company, and charter members of the North Carolina State Bar Association, formed in 1899."<sup>50</sup> Manning and Foushee argued an infamous 1899 case against eleven-year-old Cora Hicks, a black girl accused of murdering an infant in an open fire. At the trial's end, the jury issued a conviction of second-degree rather than first-degree murder, and the judge sentenced Hicks to seven years' imprisonment.<sup>51</sup> Thus, Foushee was involved in

---

<sup>49</sup> *History of North Carolina*, vol. 5, *North Carolina Biography* (Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Co., 1919), 20-21.

<sup>50</sup> Hunt, "Law and Society in a New South Community," 443.

<sup>51</sup> Hunt, "Law and Society in a New South Community," 449.

high-stakes criminal cases early in his career. When he served on the Durham Public Library Board, Foushee was a young lawyer just starting out.<sup>52</sup>

A more mature and experienced lawyer was Robert W. Winston (1860-1944), well-known defender of “banks, insurance companies and corporations.”<sup>53</sup> After graduating from UNC in 1879, Winston moved to Oxford where was a successful lawyer and politician. He served in the state senate in 1885-87 and as a Superior Court judge from 1889 to 1895.<sup>54</sup> Moving to Durham in 1895, he operated a succession of law firms with various partners, while serving as legal counsel to the American Tobacco Company, the Southern Railway Company, the National Bank of Virginia, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, journalist Josephus Daniels, and the state of North Carolina.<sup>55</sup> Winston was a high-profile lawyer with a lucrative client list. Although new to Durham when he joined the library board, he was already an established public figure in the state. No doubt he was perceived as an asset to the board. From Winston’s perspective, he had an existing interest in books and scholarship, as reflected in his term as president of the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association and his authorship of several biographies of famous men.<sup>56</sup> A keen student of the Old South, he spent his retirement after 1924

---

<sup>52</sup> Later in his career, Foushee entered politics. In 1901, he began a four-year, elected term as state senator for Durham County. In 1913, Foushee was elected to a Superior Court judgeship. But after two years, poor health forced him to retire from the strenuous job of constantly traveling the county court circuit. See R.D.W. Connor, ed., *A Manual of North Carolina: Issued by the North Carolina Historical Commission for the Use of Members of the General Assembly Session 1913* (Raleigh, NC: E.M. Uzzell and Co., 1913), 598, 1026; and Hunt, “Law and Society in a New South Community,” 433-434.

<sup>53</sup> *History of North Carolina*, vol. 5, 109-110.

<sup>54</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. “Winston, Robert Watson,” by William S. Powell, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/winston-robert-watson>

<sup>55</sup> Hunt, “Law and Society in a New South Community,” 442.

<sup>56</sup> *History of North Carolina*, vol. 5, 109-110; *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. “Winston, Robert Watson.”

writing biographies of Andrew Johnson (1928), Jefferson Davis (1930), and Robert E. Lee (1934). As a library board member in 1896, Winston's interest in Confederate heroes and his client list of big corporations indicated a conservatism to match Carr's.<sup>57</sup>

A less overtly intellectual yet equally conservative board member was insurance executive James H. Southgate (1859-1916). Southgate had spent two years at UNC, but left in 1878 to join his father's successful insurance company in Durham.<sup>58</sup> A devoutly religious man, he took leadership roles in the YMCA and the North Carolina Sunday School Association. His ardent support of prohibition led him into politics in 1896. He stood as the vice-presidential candidate for the National Party, which had recently splintered from the Prohibition Party. Neither party won. As chairman of the Trinity College Board of Trustees from 1897 to 1916, Southgate became friendly with the faculty. Praising the chairman in 1905, history professor John Spencer Bassett wrote that Southgate

...represents in a striking manner the rise of a class of young and influential business men in the South since the Civil War who are to-day more an indication of what Southern society is coming to be than any other class of people in it. ... They are going to be, as it seems, the representative men of the new South as truly as the old planters were the exponents of the old South. ...but of all of them none is more truly representative man than James Haywood Southgate.<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>57</sup> Unusually, upon retiring, Winston enrolled again at UNC, which had become a modern university by the 1920s, far removed from its provincial 1870s condition. See George B. Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 266-267. Further, according to Edwin Mims, Winston's second college experience transformed him. Long reputed to be a "Southern Bourbon," the mature student Winston, "freed of family responsibilities and no longer ambitious of honour in his profession," was "born again in the atmosphere of his alma mater." See Mims, *The Advancing South*, 141.

<sup>58</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Southgate, James Haywood," by Mattie U. Russell, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/southgate-james-haywood>

<sup>59</sup> John Spencer Bassett, "James Haywood Southgate," in *Biographical History of North Carolina: From Colonial Times to the Present*, vol. 2, ed. Samuel A. Ashe (Greensboro, NC: Charles L. van Noppen, 1905), 410.

As much as Carr or Watts, Southgate was a New South business leader who, in the rhetoric of Grady and Page, would push Southern society into the modern era. As a member of the library board, Southgate not only supported a modernizing institution in the New South, but also was among literal family. Board member Thomas B. Fuller had been his brother-in-law since 1882, when Southgate had married Kate Fuller, Thomas's sister. Thus, numerous ties bound together Durham's elites. Family ties, as well as political ambition, seems to have motivated Southgate to support the public library.

Clinton W. Toms (1868-1936) represented yet another distinctive variant within that circle of elites. In his lifetime he had two successful careers, one as an educator and one as a corporate executive. One of the youngest on the library board, Toms had graduated from UNC in 1889, and he went to teach at the Durham Graded School in 1892.<sup>60</sup> Elected county superintendent two years later, he gained a reputation as a progressive educator, introducing manual training into the white graded school curriculum. Upon obtaining Peabody Fund grants, he made North Carolina history a part of the curriculum too. Perhaps because he grew up after the war, Toms had a relatively sympathetic view of black education. With another Peabody grant in 1896, he opened a graded school for African-Americans. Through his fundraising efforts he became acquainted with the Dukes, and became friends with Benjamin N. Duke. Together, Toms and Ben Duke served as trustees of the Colored Orphanage of Oxford and of the Freemasons Order. Toms' second career in business started in 1897, when he left a briefly held professorship at UNC to work as a plant manager for American Tobacco.<sup>61</sup> When the Durham library board

---

<sup>60</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Toms, Clinton White," by Wayne K. Durrill, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/toms-clinton-white>

<sup>61</sup> When the American Tobacco trust was broken up in 1910, Toms moved to New York City, where he served as executive vice-president of the newly independent Liggett and Meyers Company. He became president in

formed, Toms was still superintendent of Durham County schools. Public education was his career, and so he logically supported the public library.

The lives of three other library board members are obscure. The readily available documentary sources reveal little about them. One of them, Jonathan F. Wiley (1867-1938), was listed as the cashier of Fidelity Bank in the 1897 Durham city directory, placing him squarely in the middle-class of Durham society.<sup>62</sup> He was probably known to Carr and Watts before his involvement with the library board, through his marriage to Eliza Lindsay Morehead. Eliza's parents, Greensboro banker Eugene L. Morehead and Lucy L. Morehead, were, respectively, Carr's business partner and a Lady Manager.<sup>63</sup> Eugene Morehead had been Carr's classmate at UNC in the early 1860s, and was an equal partner with Carr and Watts in the Durham Electric Light Company.<sup>64</sup> Wiley's father-in-law must have served as a fruitful source of business and social connections. It is likely that either Mr. or Mrs. Morehead suggested that Wiley serve on the library board, on which Carr was the chairman. Another obscure board member was Reverend L.B. Turnbull, who apparently moved with ease among Durham's elites. He presided over the celebration that unveiled the Watts Hospital in 1895.<sup>65</sup> Reverend Turnbull also spoke at the funeral of a soldier killed in the Spanish-American War and buried in Durham, a young man

---

1928 and held that position until his death eight years later. Also, concurrent with his second career, from 1901 to 1932, he was a trustee of Trinity College, with Southgate.

<sup>62</sup> *Mangum's Directory of Durham and Suburbs* (Durham, NC: The Educator Company, 1897), 212.

<sup>63</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Morehead, Eugene Lindsay," by C. Sylvester Green, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/morehead-eugene-lindsay>

<sup>64</sup> John M. Morehead III, *The Morehead Family of North Carolina and Virginia* (New York: John M. Morehead III, 1921), 78, 86.

<sup>65</sup> Charles L. van Noppen, *In Memoriam: George Washington Watts* (Greensboro, NC: Charles L. van Noppen, 1922), 55.

from the prominent Barbee family. Also in attendance at the funeral were city alderman Leo D. Heartt, Edward J. Parrish, and Julian Carr.<sup>66</sup> Finally, little can be said about board member H.H. Markham. It is likely, but uncertain, that this is the same H.H. Markham buried at Maplewood Cemetery, Durham, who lived from 1855 to 1903.<sup>67</sup> Wiley, Markham, and Turnbull can be classed with the non-industrialist oligarchs on the library Board of Trustees.

Next to consider are the members of the Board of Lady Managers, a fundraising group of women who did not hold any executive power in library affairs. Ironically, while executive decisions were made by the all-male trustees, the Lady Managers actually labored hardest to raise funds for the library. They went door to door to solicit donations. The Lady Managers can mostly be classed with the industrialist-capitalists or middle-class professionals, since many were married to men of those classes. However, one of the Lady Managers came from a working-class household, while the background of a few others remains unknown. The four wealthiest board members were Clara Branson, Mary W. Duke, Sarah P. Duke, and Lucy L. Morehead. Each was married to a prominent industrialist. While Clara Branson had no occupation listed in the 1897 Durham city directory, her husband W.H. Branson was, in 1895-96, secretary and treasurer of two large East Durham textile factories.<sup>68</sup> He also owned textile factories in other parts of the state. The Bransons enjoyed the high dividends of industrialization as much as their peers in the Duke family.

---

<sup>66</sup> "Durham's Hero Laid to Rest," *North Carolinian*, May 26, 1898, reproduced in "William Matthew Barbee," *Find-a-grave* (database), accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/127127836/william-matthew-barbee>

<sup>67</sup> "Hackney Hiram Markham," *Find-a-grave* (database), accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/111963289/hackney-hiram-markham>

<sup>68</sup> *Handbook of Durham*, 41-44; *Mangum's Directory of Durham and Suburbs*, 68; North Carolina Board of Agriculture, *North Carolina and Its Resources*, 193.

As with Mrs. Branson, Mary W. Duke (1857-1920) had no occupation listed in the city directory.<sup>69</sup> Known as Minnie, she was the second wife of the least successful Duke brother, Brodie, whom she had married in 1890. Brodie was the only surviving child from Washington Duke's first marriage, which had ended with the death of Brodie's mother when he was one year old.<sup>70</sup> Minnie Duke must have enjoyed the chance to participate in the library campaign, since her home life was difficult. Her husband was an alcoholic and impulsive spender. She divorced him in 1904, after which the family tried to have Brodie committed to a sanitarium.

Minnie's sister-in-law Sarah P. Duke (1856-1936) fared better in her relations with the famous tobacco family. After marrying Ben Duke in 1877, Sarah Duke soon became active in business and philanthropy. She became a shareholder in Durham's Erwin Mills in 1892.<sup>71</sup> In philanthropy, like her husband and his friend Clinton W. Toms, she donated to the Oxford Colored Orphanage.<sup>72</sup> Sarah Duke's interest in business and public welfare must have inspired her to join the library's Lady Managers, as a means of guiding the city's factory workers and professionals toward a docile, respectable morality.

---

<sup>69</sup> *Mangum's Directory of Durham and Suburbs*, 92.

<sup>70</sup> "Duke, Brodie Leonidas," *OpenDurham* (database), accessed March 18, 2020, <http://www.opendurham.org/people/duke-brodie-leonidas>; "Mary Agnes 'Minnie' Woodward May," *Find-a-grave* (database), accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/69047668/mary-agnes-may>

<sup>71</sup> "Benjamin N. Duke," *Duke University Libraries*, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/collections/creators/people/bnduke>

<sup>72</sup> One of Sarah Duke's donations paid for a school building at the orphanage, named the Angier B. Duke Memorial School, after her son who died in an accident at age thirty-nine. See T.K. Borders, *Report of Superintendent, the Colored Orphanage of North Carolina, February 1, 1937 to June 30, 1940* (Oxford, NC: Colored Orphanage of North Carolina, 1940), 11, 30; and *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Duke, Benjamin Newton," accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/duke-benjamin-newton>

Just as aristocratic in standing as the Dukes was Lucy L. Morehead (1851-1918). Born in Georgia, she married into the Morehead family of North Carolina in 1874.<sup>73</sup> Her marriage was akin to an act of high diplomacy, which interlinked several of the state's elite families. Her father-in-law was former governor John M. Morehead, and her husband was Eugene Morehead, business partner of Carr and Watts. Further, her daughter Eliza married Jonathan F. Wiley, a well-to-do banker and Durham library trustee.<sup>74</sup> Lucy Morehead's social position in 1896, in itself, must have been invaluable to the Lady Managers' fundraising mission.

Three other members of the Board of Lady Managers came from well-to-do families. They were credited in the board's minutes as Mrs. A.G. Carr, Mrs. L.A. Carr, and Mrs. J.A. Robinson.<sup>75</sup> Neither the two Mrs. Carrs nor their husbands appear to have been immediate relatives of Julian Carr. The woman noted as Mrs. L.A. Carr was Clara Louise Watts (1857-1898), sister of George W. Watts.<sup>76</sup> In 1878 she married Louis Albert Carr, who was listed in the 1897 city directory as manager of the Durham Fertilizer Company.<sup>77</sup> Pursuing many business interests in the 1890s, Louis Carr joined George Watts as a director of the Durham and Northern Railroad, succeeded Julian Carr as director of the First National Bank, and co-founded the Virginia-Carolina Chemical conglomerate in 1895.<sup>78</sup> Thus, he was a typical Gilded Age

---

<sup>73</sup> Morehead III, *The Morehead Family*, 81.

<sup>74</sup> Morehead III, *The Morehead Family*, 66-69.

<sup>75</sup> Harland-Jacobs, "Footnotes."

<sup>76</sup> Van Noppen, *In Memoriam: George Washington Watts*, 49; "Clara Louise Watts Carr," *Find-a-grave* (database), accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/47966283/clara-louise-carr>

<sup>77</sup> *Mangum's Directory of Durham and Suburbs*, 72.

<sup>78</sup> Samuel A. Ashe, "Lewis Albert Carr," in *Biographical History of North Carolina: From Colonial Times to the Present*, vol. 5, ed. Samuel A. Ashe (Greensboro, NC: Charles L. van Noppen, 1906), 55-57.

executive. In family life, Clara and Louis Carr's daughter Annie married George L. Lyon, a grandson of Washington Duke.<sup>79</sup> Thus, like James Southgate and Lucy Morehead, Mrs. L.A. Carr had familial and business ties with Julian Carr, among other participants in the library campaign. These ties must have influenced her decision to support the library as a Lady Manager.

The other Mrs. Carr on the board was the wife of Dr. A.G. Carr, a well-known physician. Little is known about her. More is known about Dr. Carr, who had a hand in improving health care in Durham in the 1890s, through the Watts Hospital and the Lincoln Hospital for African-Americans. The grandson of George Watts later recalled that Dr. A.G. Carr was "instrumental" in raising support to get the Watts Hospital built in 1895.<sup>80</sup> Similarly, Dr. Aaron M. Moore, Durham's first licensed black physician and founder of the Lincoln Hospital, recalled that Dr. Carr was "the family doctor for the Dukes" and helped Dr. Moore and John Merrick fundraise for the black hospital.<sup>81</sup> Dr. and Mrs. Carr's son, W.F. Carr, became mayor of Durham in the 1930s.<sup>82</sup> Clearly, a concern for civic improvement ran in the family. It is not surprising that Mrs. A.G. Carr joined in the library fundraising effort in 1896.

As with the wife of Dr. Carr, the full name of board member Mrs. J.A. Robinson is unknown. The 1897 city directory showed that she worked as a teacher at the Durham Graded

---

<sup>79</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Lyon, George Leonidas," by Clara H.R. Flannagan, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/lyon-george-leonidas>

<sup>80</sup> James Leutze, Oral History Interview with George Watts Hill, January 30, 1986, Excerpt 4953, Interview C-0047, Southern Oral History Program Collection #4007, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, [https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/C-0047/excerpts/excerpt\\_4953.html](https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/C-0047/excerpts/excerpt_4953.html)

<sup>81</sup> Andrews, *John Merrick: A Biographical Sketch*, 47.

<sup>82</sup> W.F. Carr, Speech, Lincoln Hospital, Durham, NC, June 1, 1939, in *Thirty-Eighth Annual Report: 1938* (Durham, NC: Lincoln Hospital, 1939), 30.

School, while her husband was the proprietor of the *Daily Sun* newspaper.<sup>83</sup> Both occupations place the couple in the realm of middle-class professionals. Given that her work was education, it makes sense that Mrs. Robinson signed up to the Board of Lady Managers. In sum, as with the Board of Trustees, the Board of Lady Managers was clearly dominated by the most powerful and wealthiest people in Durham, with little representation of working-class citizens.

Leaving out Lalla Ruth Carr, who will be considered separately, the remaining four Lady Managers included one exceptional working-class member and three unknowns. The working-class woman was Mrs. T.D. Jones, listed as a spooler in the 1897 city directory. Her husband was a carpenter.<sup>84</sup> It is unknown how she came to serve on the Board of Lady Managers alongside Durham's elite women. Yet her participation shows that there was at least some cross-class collaboration, however limited, in the founding of the library. The directory listing for another board member, Cora Tyree, shows her living in the crowded household of a Reverend W.C. Tyree in 1897.<sup>85</sup> No information could be found about the last two board members, Bessie Leak and Mrs. W.E. Lloyd.

The city's Board of Aldermen represented another layer of New South oligarchs, besides those on the two library boards. Aldermen were newly elected each year. Rather than examine all of the aldermen in office at the time of the library campaign, a few representatives will suffice to show the general character of the board. The rosters of aldermen for two different years in which the library campaign occurred, 1895-96 and 1897-98, show that William A. Guthrie, Leo D.

---

<sup>83</sup> *Mangum's Directory of Durham and Suburbs*, 178.

<sup>84</sup> *Mangum's Directory of Durham and Suburbs*, 130.

<sup>85</sup> *Mangum's Directory of Durham and Suburbs*, 202.

Heartt, C.A. Jordan, and W.H. Proctor were among the elected.<sup>86</sup> William A. Guthrie was a Durham lawyer who “frequently represented the businesses of Julian S. Carr,” his brother-in-law.<sup>87</sup> Guthrie had attended UNC in the early 1860s with Carr and Eugene L. Morehead, thus placing him in the network of the state’s elites. Aligned with the cause of white supremacy, Guthrie dropped out as a Populist candidate in the 1896 gubernatorial election to join the Democratic party. He was, therefore, a firmly conservative white elite by the time he was elected Durham alderman. Another acquaintance of Carr’s was Leo D. Heartt, cashier at the Carr-owned First National Bank. Heartt was also a co-director of the Durham and Northern Railroad along with Louis Carr and George Watts.<sup>88</sup> Third, alderman C.A. Jordan was an accountant for the American Tobacco Company.<sup>89</sup> This critical white-collar position in the city’s largest conglomerate must have bound him close to the Duke brothers. Thus, Jordan was aligned with the interests of capital. Finally, W.H. Proctor owned one of the four major grocery stores listed in the 1897 city directory, which places him among the city’s leading merchants.<sup>90</sup> Among the aldermen, then, there were lawyers, bankers, corporate accountants, and merchants. It is fair to say that city government was conservative and heavily oriented toward business interests.

County government was dominated by conservative business interests too, as shown in one legal scholar’s 1991 analysis of the Durham County court system in the 1890s. A brief review of the court-system analysis will further reveal the conservative culture in which the

---

<sup>86</sup> *Handbook of Durham*, 7; *Mangum’s Directory of Durham and Suburbs*, 3.

<sup>87</sup> Hunt, “Law and Society in a New South Community,” 444.

<sup>88</sup> *Handbook of Durham*, 30-31.

<sup>89</sup> *Mangum’s Directory of Durham and Suburbs*, 132.

<sup>90</sup> *Mangum’s Directory of Durham and Suburbs*, 39, 171.

Durham Public Library project arose and succeeded. It was not apparent that an innovative, Northern-style institution like a public library would gain the support of Durham's conservative political and business leaders. Indicative of Durham's ultra-conservative culture in the 1890s are surviving county court records, which reveal a systemic bias against African-Americans and factory workers. In the late 1890s, African-Americans comprised about two-thirds of all defendants in Superior Court cases heard in Durham County, but comprised only about one-third of the county population. Further, while blacks and whites were convicted at the same rates, the sentences for blacks more frequently included incarceration. In 1898-99, only three of seventeen whites convicted of a violent crime went to jail, compared to seventeen of thirty-one blacks for the same class of offenses. For convictions of larceny, only two of five whites went to jail, compared to twenty-one of twenty-five blacks. "This evidence," the legal review stated, "suggests that, in a frankly racist, segregated, and economically stratified society, a primary function of the criminal law was to control Durham's poor, especially its poor blacks."<sup>91</sup>

The courts were also biased against factory workers. Records of civil cases show "that not one of the town's thousands of manufacturing employees dared to sue his local employer for personal injuries."<sup>92</sup> Thus, court records reveal the economic insecurity of factory workers, as well as the power that industrialists like Julian Carr held over laborers. At the Durham Hosiery Mills, managers cultivated loyalty to Carr through a company-run personnel department, as previously described, but also, no doubt, through reminders that the courts were on the side of the business owners. The extent of the subjection of factory workers is further revealed in one

---

<sup>91</sup> Hunt, "Law and Society in a New South Community," 452.

<sup>92</sup> Hunt, "Law and Society in a New South Community," 458.

scholar's finding that mill "documentation records an almost cult-like affection of employees for the senior Julian..."<sup>93</sup> The closing of the 1991 legal-historical analysis stated:

The behavior of Durham's courts suggests that law's principal function was to advance the interests of concentrating capital by giving greatest attention to the protection and security of private property. In contrast, the legal rights of individuals, which once had been partly protected by widespread ownership of real property, were for most practical purposes reduced to a jury trial in a criminal prosecution. The ends of government were demonstrated by the superior court's preoccupation with the protection of creditors and thus the capital market.<sup>94</sup>

In such a conservative political culture, with mostly business elites in charge of the library's two boards and the Board of Aldermen, why did city leaders choose to open and maintain a public library at considerable expense? Some answers have already been given, in the discussion of elites' desire to define and control public institutions, to steer the growth of a modern New South while retaining beloved Old South values, and to memorialize their self-proclaimed benevolence by financing utilities, hospitals, and other public works.<sup>95</sup> However, one other crucial answer lies in the rise of a new generation of young social progressives, two of whom were at the center of the Durham library campaign.

The two individuals credited with first proposing the idea of the Durham library were Lalla Ruth Carr (1876-1921) and Edwin Mims (1872-1959), who served, respectively, on the Board of Lady Managers and the Board of Trustees. Lalla Ruth was the second oldest of Julian Carr's five children, with an older sister and three younger brothers. She was always drawn to community-minded work, and in the last decade of her life, spent in Kansas City, she co-founded

---

<sup>93</sup> Edwards, "In Good Faith," 372.

<sup>94</sup> Hunt, "Law and Society in a New South Community," 459.

<sup>95</sup> Often, there existed what were really *public-private* works, as in the case of railroads partly financed by municipal bonds, or utilities financed by municipal contracts. The public treasury was freely manipulated by Gilded-Age business executives.

a school for girls, directed a hospital outreach program, led a local Consumers' League and the Women's City Club, and became head of the city's Red Cross chapter.<sup>96</sup> Therefore, she was a social progressive. Her grief following the death of her husband in July 1920, combined with the burden of a heavy workload, led to her premature death at age forty-four. Lalla Ruth led a remarkable life of service which began with her library activism in Durham at the age of nineteen, when she and Professor Mims led the campaign for a public library.

Lalla Ruth's colleague in the Canterbury Club, Edwin Mims, was an "outspoken" English professor at Trinity College, and also a social progressive.<sup>97</sup> He had come to Durham after earning an English degree at Vanderbilt University in 1893. While teaching at Trinity, he earned a doctoral degree and got married. After 1912, he taught at Vanderbilt and eventually retired from there.<sup>98</sup> Perhaps one of North Carolina's earliest social progressives, he praised decades of progressive achievement in his 1926 book *The Advancing South*. The book celebrated the lives of several Southern progressives from North Carolina, including William L. Poteat, John Spencer Bassett, and Walter Hines Page. Poteat, a zoologist and president of Wake Forest College, had stood by the teaching of evolution when its inclusion in textbooks was challenged in court. Mims deemed Bassett, a colleague at Trinity, heroic for writing a controversial 1903 article that stated that black educator Booker T. Washington was as great a Southerner as Confederate General Robert E. Lee.<sup>99</sup> Mims reserved special affection for Sidney Lanier, the

---

<sup>96</sup> Webb, *Jule Carr*, 157, 247.

<sup>97</sup> Anderson, *Durham County*, 199; Porter, *Trinity and Duke*, 33.

<sup>98</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Mims, Edwin," by J. Isaac Copeland, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/mims-edwin>

<sup>99</sup> Mims, *The Advancing South*, 155, 305-306.

short-lived Georgian author who had advocated for the modernization of the rural South after the war. Lanier had called for towns to maintain libraries, social clubs, public schools, and orchestras.<sup>100</sup> Mims characterized Lanier as a New South writer “who was national rather than provincial, open-minded, and not prejudiced, modern and not medieval. His characteristics are all in direct contrast with those of the conservative southerner.”<sup>101</sup> Mims’s own biographer pointed out that, although the professor was a Democrat, “he has always been ready to urge and to take independent action, when he was convinced that the occasion demanded it.”<sup>102</sup> Mims departed from the official Democratic position on several issues. As a young man in 1896, he belonged to the same class of early progressives as Poteat, Bassett, and Page.

Clearly, an intriguing cast of characters came together to support the Durham Public Library in 1896. There were the paragons of industrial patriarchalism, including Julian S. Carr, William J. Parrish, and George W. Watts. There were the matriarchs of the city’s elite families, among them Mary W. Duke, Sarah P. Duke, Lucy L. Morehead, and Clara Watts Carr. There were the leading middle-class professionals of their time and place, such as Robert W. Winston, James H. Southgate, W.H. Proctor, and Howard A. Foushee. Also participating were conservative elites with liberal leanings, such as Clinton W. Toms and Thomas B. Fuller. The odd ones out were Lalla Ruth Carr and Edwin Mims, yet they were a crucial force in pushing the library idea. They represented a progressive concern with equal opportunities for educational and social advancement by all, regardless of class, if not race. Different motives and overlapping interests converged. The industrialist-capitalists and most of the middle-class professionals

---

<sup>100</sup> Mims, *The Advancing South*, 53.

<sup>101</sup> W.H. Glasson, “Edwin Mims,” in *Biographical History of North Carolina: From Colonial Times to the Present*, vol. 7, eds. Samuel A. Ashe and Stephen B. Weeks (Greensboro, NC: Charles L. van Noppen, 1908), 354.

<sup>102</sup> Glasson, “Edwin Mims,” 351.

seemed to follow Grady's vision of the New South, in which a small, benevolent oligarchy would guide the mass of Southern people from a primitive, subsistence-farming world to a modern, wage-earning one. The conservatives who had some liberal leanings followed Page's emphasis on education, and the idea that school curricula should be updated and public libraries well-funded. Compared to the conservatives, the social-progressives embraced a more genuine, if not entirely selfless, concern for the welfare of the working class. While the combination of these various interests was an asset in getting the library started, it would prove to be a liability once the library was fully operational. The Lady Managers' lack of executive power and the Trustees' time-consuming business affairs stunted the library's growth for over a decade.<sup>103</sup> Only when full control was handed to the Durham library's first trained librarian, in 1911, would the library become fully functioning.

However, in 1896 the library's supporters were not sure that the library would even be opened. Even with the backing of the city's most influential men and women, there was one more constituency whose participation was indispensable to the library. State legislators needed to grant approval. State law enumerated specific powers that county and municipal governments held, and operating libraries was not among them. Thus, the Durham Board of Aldermen had to seek a special charter granting the city the legal right to open a public library. Municipalities could provide services such as a water supply, sewage system, fire stations, police, tax offices, roads and public transit, electricity, and telegraph and telephone services. Some of these services were administered directly by municipal government, while others were outsourced or provided

---

<sup>103</sup> Jessica Harland-Jacobs, "Chapter 3: A Slow Start," in *The History of Public Library Service in Durham, 1897-1997* (Durham, NC: Durham County Library, 1998), accessed March 18, 2020, [https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/dclhistory\\_03.php](https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/dclhistory_03.php)

by private companies that held special permits to operate in the city. In the late nineteenth century, state and local governments were working out the most efficient and legally appropriate way to organize city services. For example, Durham's fire brigade was a private, all-volunteer organization until 1909, when the city established a professional fire department, and for decades several Carr-owned companies held exclusive rights to provide the city's electricity, gas, streetcar, and telephone services.<sup>104</sup> In the last third of the nineteenth century, state and local officials were working out how to provide citizens with all the benefits of modern technology, while simultaneously preventing government overreach. Durham officials deemed a library a legitimate government service, and so appealed to the General Assembly for its approval to open one. Their appeal to the state legislature not only obtained permission for Durham but also led to a general enabling law, under which all municipalities of a certain size were permitted to open a library.

The details of how the special charter was obtained are somewhat obscure. It probably helped that the Dukes, some of whom were on the Board of Lady Managers, were friendly with Governor Daniel L. Russell. The records of the 1897 state senate only report that "S.B. 637, an act to incorporate the Durham Public Library," was referred to and approved by the Committee on Corporations and the Committee on Engrossed Bills.<sup>105</sup> On March 5, 1897, Senate Bill 637 and its counterpart House Bill 1761 were "duly ratified" by the General Assembly.<sup>106</sup> Records of

---

<sup>104</sup> Anderson, *Durham County*, 157-159.

<sup>105</sup> North Carolina General Assembly, *Journal of the Senate of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina at Its Session of 1897* (Winston, NC: M.I. and J.C. Stewart, 1897), 260, 301, 557, 601-602.

<sup>106</sup> North Carolina General Assembly, *Journal of the Senate... 1897*, 724-725; North Carolina General Assembly, *Journal of the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina at Its Session of 1897* (Winston, NC: M.I. and J.C. Stewart, 1897), 1026-1027.

the Durham Board of Aldermen, not examined for the present investigation (due to time constraints), may reveal a more complete story of how the bills were drafted and presented to the legislature. After ratification, the law allowing the Durham Library Board of Trustees to operate a publicly supported library was printed as Chapter 108 of the Private Laws of 1897. Under the law, the trustees could buy and sell property, set rules and regulations for the library, accept up to ten dollars in annual dues from individual subscribers, and accept public money from the city of Durham.<sup>107</sup> Thus, Durham became the first municipality in North Carolina enabled by the state to collect public funds for the operation of a public library. Four days later, the legislature passed a general law enabling any town of one thousand or more people to establish a public library and to pay a board of trustees out of city tax funds.

As with the Durham library law, the details of how the general library law was drafted and presented to the legislature are unclear. State senate records report that “Mr. Scales” introduced to the legislature “S.B. 719, an act to permit the establishment of public libraries,” and that the Committee on Counties, Cities, and Towns passed the bill “favorably.”<sup>108</sup> The sponsor of the bill was Alfred M. Scales (1870-1940), senator from Guilford County, who served in the legislature of 1897.<sup>109</sup> Louis R. Wilson of the UNC library, who later worked with Scales to draft the 1909 bill that created the North Carolina Library Commission, recalled that “Mr. A.M. Scales... had secured the passage in 1897 of the Public Library Act.”<sup>110</sup> Although a lawyer

---

<sup>107</sup> North Carolina General Assembly, *Private Laws of the State... 1897*, 196-197.

<sup>108</sup> North Carolina General Assembly, *Journal of the Senate... 1897*, 317, 390.

<sup>109</sup> Scales served in the state senate in 1905, 1917, and 1919, too. See John L. Cheney, Jr., *North Carolina Government, 1585-1974: A Narrative and Statistical History* (Winston-Salem, NC: Hunter Publishing Co., 1975), 475, 483, 493, 495.

<sup>110</sup> Louis R. Wilson, “The North Carolina Library Association, 1904-1909,” *North Carolina Libraries* 13, no. 1 (1954): 5; Louis R. Wilson, “The North Carolina Library Commission, 1909-1949,” *North Carolina Libraries* 7, no. 2 (1949): 7.

by training, Scales also held jobs as a Ford dealership president, real estate developer, and insurance executive.<sup>111</sup> For librarians, the senator was so closely identified with the Public Library Act that they called it the “Scales Library Act.”<sup>112</sup> The Act was printed as Chapter 512 of the Public Laws of 1897. It allowed town aldermen or commissioners to establish a public library, appoint a library board, and pay the board up to two per cent of taxes collected annually plus any amount collected by the town from court fines.<sup>113</sup> The prospect of additional income out of the city treasury likely attracted middle- and upper-class professionals in Durham—and in other cities—to support the library as trustees, and to advocate its establishment as a city service. As for Scales, he would maintain an interest in libraries throughout his life, and would be appointed a member of the Library Commission in the late 1920s.<sup>114</sup> With this breakthrough in state law, the way was open for cities besides Durham to establish public libraries too.

Libraries had joined the core set of services that North Carolina municipalities were permitted to provide to citizens— although, realistically, “citizens” translated to whites only. Still, this was a momentous development, as a cultural and political shift had happened. Development would be slow, however. The first significant wave of public library openings would not occur until several North Carolina towns received Carnegie grants starting in 1901.

---

<sup>111</sup> Benjamin Briggs, “An Iconic Mansion with a Tabloid Past Opens for One-Time Tour,” *Preservation Greensboro* (blog), May 11, 2015, accessed March 9, 2020, <https://preservationgreensboro.org/an-iconic-mansion-with-a-tabloid-past-opens-for-one-time-tour/>; UNC University Libraries, “Collection Overview,” *Alfred Moore Scales Papers, 1872; 1874; 1906-1932* (finding aid), accessed March 9, 2020, <https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/04037/>

<sup>112</sup> Elizabeth House Hughey, “Public Libraries in North Carolina,” *North Carolina Libraries* 13, no. 1 (1954): 14; “Scales Library Act,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 2 (1910): 3.

<sup>113</sup> North Carolina General Assembly, *Public Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina Passed by the General Assembly at Its Session of 1897* (Winston, NC: M.I. and J.C. Stewart, 1897), 692-693.

<sup>114</sup> North Carolina Library Commission, *Tenth Report of the North Carolina Library Commission* (Raleigh, NC, 1928), 4.

Even then, public libraries would only be established in the state's most populous cities. Smaller towns could not meet the burden of ongoing tax support for a library. Furthermore, service was not extended to African-Americans. Charlotte established a separate public library for blacks in 1905, but it would remain an exception for many years. Private libraries, attached to black colleges or churches, would provide the only library service for African-Americans in much of the state until after World War II. This racial exclusion fit perfectly with the vision of a New South articulated by white leaders. It even fit with the progressive vision of a modern South, as outlined by Page and Mims. Conservative-leaning supporters of education like Charles B. Aycock retained an overt racism and, at best, endorsed separate-but-equal public facilities. Liberal-leaning progressives like Page and Mims often accommodated overt racism, even if they were skeptical of the dogma of inherently superior or inferior races of humankind.

In conclusion, the general enabling law of 1897 was a secondary outcome of the local library movement in Durham. That movement was shaped by variations on the New South vision held by a combination of different men and women. Elite men and women loaded with Gilded-Age wealth joined with conservative middle-class professionals, a pair of young liberal progressives, and at least one working-class woman to set up the Durham Public Library, which started service in February 1898.<sup>115</sup> In the rest of the state, after the turn of the century, the rise of progressive theories of social justice and expanded administrative government would be consequential for library development. At the turn of the century, federal and state governments operated relatively few services that affected people's everyday lives. Government oversaw courts, schools, tax offices, post offices, and sometimes utilities, but little else. The first two

---

<sup>115</sup> Harland-Jacobs, "Chapter 2: Bringing Culture to Durham."

decades of the twentieth century witnessed the creation of federal agencies to regulate food, drugs, interstate trade, and labor. At the state level, North Carolina created an agency to manage roads and highways. As well, the State Board of Health was given its first full-time director and counties were authorized to set up county health boards.<sup>116</sup> The creation of a state Library Commission in 1909 was part of this trend in government expansion, guided by progressive belief in expert management by the state. In the late 1910s and 1920s, North Carolina enacted several new taxes and took on unprecedented levels of bonded debt, which provided no direct state funding for libraries but resulted in some indirect benefits.<sup>117</sup> Furthermore, wealthy philanthropists pushed the cause of Southern public education and contributed money to schools often, libraries occasionally. Finally, grassroots organizations which aimed to improve the social welfare of local communities abounded, some of them dedicated to setting up libraries or other civic institutions. Historians have attributed the rise of philanthropy, administrative government, and grassroots social-activist groups to progressive ideas. Progressive ideas and the changes they brought about would shape library development between the turn of the century and the Great Depression.

---

<sup>116</sup> *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, s.v. "Public Health, Part 1: The State Board of Health and Other Early Public Initiatives," by Jay Mazzocchi, accessed March 4, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/public-health>

<sup>117</sup> Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, 225-233.

## CHAPTER TWO: THE IMPACT OF PROGRESSIVE GOVERNMENT, PHILANTHROPY, AND GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING ON PUBLIC LIBRARIES, 1901-1916

The present chapter aims to show how public libraries fared as progressivism matured and permeated the lives of individuals and institutions. A central thread running through this chapter is how core progressive beliefs manifested in the actions of three groups which aided in library development. Those three groups include government officials, philanthropic organizations, and grassroots organizations, such as civic clubs and professional associations. Before examining the influence of these groups, a foundational question must be addressed. What was progressivism? The definition is not straightforward. The term refers to a variety of different responses to urbanization and industrialization, but also a few common core beliefs that underlay the variety of responses. Many kinds of people were labelled progressives. Theodore Roosevelt, a Republican, identified as a progressive because he stood “for any form of social justice,” including child labor laws, urban housing improvements, and assistance to farmers.<sup>1</sup> Woodrow Wilson, a Democrat, identified as a progressive because he believed “that government is not a machine, but a living thing,” and that old laws and institutions must be open to interpretation and revision in order to meet the challenges of the modern age.<sup>2</sup> Ordinary citizens identified as progressives because they joined civic clubs and voluntary associations that promoted temperance, town beautification, or other reform causes. Some progressives retained conservative views on class and race, which they did not perceive as a contradiction to their

---

<sup>1</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, “Who Is a Progressive?,” *The Outlook* 100 (1912), in *American Progressivism: A Reader*, eds. Ronald J. Pestritto and William J. Atto (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008), 38.

<sup>2</sup> Woodrow Wilson, “What Is Progress?,” excerpt from *The New Freedom*, Chapter 2 (1913), in *American Progressivism*, eds. Pestritto and Atto, 46, 50.

reform impulses. The reformism of the 1890s, which had placed a new degree of social responsibility on government, blossomed into a series of regulatory agencies and expanded public services in the twentieth century. This blossoming tended to strengthen the legitimacy of the public library in North Carolina.

To get a clearer picture of what progressivism means, it is helpful to consult historians who have synthesized the voluminous scholarship on progressivism. What kind of people were progressives? Otis L. Graham noted that progressives “were usually drawn from a narrow segment of society, the upper-middle business and professional classes.”<sup>3</sup> Their “leading concerns” were “misgovernment; the state of life of the urban lower classes, their uncontrolled increase and political instability; economic concentration and all forms of unfair economic advantage.”<sup>4</sup> Above all, progressives feared that the familiar nineteenth-century social order was falling apart. They sought to reinforce a sense of community among Americans by building institutions that taught common values, and by administering programs that ensured a common standard of living. At the local level, in larger cities progressives attempted to simultaneously uplift and control “the urban lower classes” through changes to the environment, such as building parks, recreation halls, and other morally acceptable recreational spaces. The W. Duke & Sons Tobacco Company’s building of churches near its factories in Durham, mentioned in the previous chapter, is an example of this type of environmental reform. Thus, it is possible to see how the progressive concerns with social control and social welfare intertwined.

---

<sup>3</sup> Otis L. Graham, Jr., *The Great Campaigns: Reform and War in America, 1900-1928* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 28.

<sup>4</sup> Graham, Jr., *The Great Campaigns*, 10.

The most extensive progressive reforms, reaching beyond the local level, were achieved through government. Progressives utilized the power of the state to develop institutions and programs that would bring a unity to the American experience. For some progressives, laissez-faire government was no longer acceptable, as it failed to meet the needs of modern society. According to Arthur A. Ekirch, “the United States turned from the individualistic democracy of the past to the institutionalized, social democracy of the future... in which the state consciously intervened to direct the future well-being of the citizenry.”<sup>5</sup> Arthur S. Link described “the creation of an essentially new branch of government composed of administrative boards and agencies” which executed progressive objectives.<sup>6</sup> For example, in 1903 President Roosevelt established a Department of Commerce with powers to investigate corporations, and a decade later President Wilson created the Federal Reserve Board to manage the national money supply and the Federal Trade Commission to ensure a stable economy built on fair competition.<sup>7</sup> The new administrative state was meant to correct misgovernment, stabilize the economy, and create a shared standard of living for most Americans. Thus, it addressed progressives’ main concerns. The state would ensure economic and social unity, at least among the “business and professional classes” who made up the bulk of progressives. Of course, this left out the poorest and most non-whites. The progressive nation was conceived as a socially ordered, economically stable place, where the middle class of whites could live comfortably. To that end, progressives pursued many

---

<sup>5</sup> Arthur A. Ekirch, Jr., *Progressivism in America: A Study of the Era from Theodore Roosevelt to Woodrow Wilson* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1974), 13.

<sup>6</sup> Arthur S. Link and Richard L. McCormick, *Progressivism* (Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1983), 59.

<sup>7</sup> John Milton Cooper, Jr., *Pivotal Decades: The United States, 1900-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 43-47; Graham, Jr., *The Great Campaigns*, 45; Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1910-1917* (New York: Harper and Row, 1954), 44-53.

reforms outside of federal politics too. One of the earliest historians of progressivism, Arthur S. Link, best summed up the motives of reformers, whether at the local, state, or federal level, inside or outside of government bureaucracy:

Early twentieth century social reform flowed from three wellsprings of thought and motivation. One was the urge felt by certain middle- and upper-class men and women to help make urban life more just, tolerable, and decent. ... The second motivation was the drive of trained professionals to apply their knowledge and skills to social problems. The third motivation was the desire of many native-born Americans to use social institutions and the law to restrain and direct the unruly masses, many of whom were foreign-born and black.<sup>8</sup>

Did these same motives hold true in North Carolina and the South? Historian Dewey W. Grantham has answered in the affirmative. As in other regions, the South saw the rise of “a new middle class made up of business and professional elements” who “yearn[ed] for a more orderly and cohesive community.”<sup>9</sup> However, there were characteristics unique to Southern progressivism. The “race question” was key for Southern progressives, who had a narrow “concept of democracy... ‘*Herrenvolk* democracy’—a democratic society for whites only.”<sup>10</sup> Also, more so than in other regions, in the South the drive for economic development was intense. In this, the progressive South was aligned with the goals of the New South. Emphasizing the importance of the economy and industrial development, Grantham stated:

Most southern progressives were convinced that the South’s social distress could be relieved through economic development. ... These objectives led directly to an emphasis on efficiency and

---

<sup>8</sup> Link and McCormick, *Progressivism*, 72.

<sup>9</sup> Dewey W. Grantham, *Southern Progressivism: The Reconciliation of Progress and Tradition* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), xv-xvii.

<sup>10</sup> Grantham, *Southern Progressivism*, xvii.

rationality, not only in the production of goods, but also in such areas as education, the treatment of criminals, race relations, and the prohibition of alcoholic beverages.<sup>11</sup>

Southern progressivism had less patience for the notion of full social equality of disparate elements of society. The one social-justice objective of Southern progressives was to attain at least a rough unity between poor and wealthy whites, while excluding Southern blacks from politics and consigning them to a separate social sphere from whites. Otherwise, Southern progressives focused on an efficient, profitable economy and on equally efficient educational and justice systems. In all areas, including the economy, education, and justice, the “race question” remained central, and segregation and unequal treatment of blacks was assumed. In sum, progressivism in North Carolina and the South shared many of the same goals and principles as progressivism in other regions, but with a more intense focus on preserving racial inequality and developing regional industry.

Thus, in the early 1900s progressivism permeated North Carolina not in spite of the rise of reactionary conservatism, but in harmony with it. Progressivism encompassed both liberal reforms aimed at social and economic equality, and also conservative reforms with illiberal objectives. Conservative progressivism was exemplified by the Democratic white supremacy campaign. The campaign successfully returned the state legislature to Democrats in 1898, after four years of a Populist-Republican (fusionist) majority. State Democratic leader Furnifold M. Simmons confirmed that the party was waging “an aggressive and relentless campaign” to “crush the party of Negro domination” and make North Carolina a “WHITE MAN’S State.”<sup>12</sup> At the same

---

<sup>11</sup> Grantham, *Southern Progressivism*, xviii.

<sup>12</sup> Furnifold M. Simmons, “[Appeal] To the Voters of North Carolina,” *News and Observer*, November 3, 1898, in *North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries*, ed. Hugh T. Lefler (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1934), 398-400.

time, organized white supremacist gangs such as the Red Shirts enacted violence upon African-Americans.<sup>13</sup> The progressive pursuit of efficiency and social control was fulfilled in the passage of the disfranchisement laws of 1900, which made most black citizens ineligible to vote. Disfranchisement and Jim Crow exemplified “the general progressive tendency toward social control, of which Jim Crow was but an extreme expression.”<sup>14</sup> Some historians have characterized the co-existence of oppressive Jim Crow laws and modernizing impulses as a “paradox,” but this assumed that racism is incompatible with modernization.<sup>15</sup> Many of the era’s progressive governors were racist modernizers. For example, lawyers Charles B. Aycock and Locke Craig, who would both serve as governors in the first decades of the century, helped launch Simmons’ white supremacy campaign at an 1898 rally in Laurinburg.<sup>16</sup> As governors, both men would endorse Jim Crow and also raise state funding for education and public works. Both were modernizing policies. Another participant in the white supremacy campaign was Rockingham lawyer Cameron Morrison. As governor from 1921 to 1925, he opposed lynching and authorized large spending campaigns for paved roads and schools.<sup>17</sup> Yet Morrison was a

---

<sup>13</sup> Red Shirts were violent, white-supremacist vigilantes. They were inspired by the demagogue Ben Tillman, a governor and then US Senator for South Carolina in the 1890s. In July 1876, Tillman and a mob of seventy white Democrats had seized and executed six members of a black militia and one Republican constable in the town of Hamburg, South Carolina. Dressed in red clothing, Tillman’s vigilante gang became known as Red Shirts. They were never prosecuted for the Hamburg Massacre. “By 1890,” according to Tillman’s biographer, “the Red-Shirt campaign of 1876 had become the essence of white Democratic virtue.” See Stephen Kantrowitz, *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 64-71, 112-113, 154.

<sup>14</sup> Link and McCormick, *Progressivism*, 99.

<sup>15</sup> William A. Link, *North Carolina: Change and Tradition in a Southern State*, 2nd ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018), 317.

<sup>16</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. “Craig, Locke,” by James Meehan, accessed March 5, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/craig-locke>

<sup>17</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. “Morrison, Cameron,” by Nathaniel F. Macgruder, accessed March 5, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/morrison-cameron>

known Red Shirt leader and supported banning textbooks that mentioned evolution. The reformism of state government in the early to mid-1890s continued in 1898 and after, but excluded black input and was oriented toward industrialists rather than small farmers.<sup>18</sup> However, reformism did not go away with the return of conservative Democratic rule. “The result of a decade of agitation” by Populists and fusionist Republicans, according to one historian, “was a much greater emphasis in the South on popular education and social and economic reform.”<sup>19</sup>

The key progressive belief in environmental reform was the one which most affected North Carolina’s library development. Underlying the general program of environmental reform was a concern that as more and more people moved to cities, the urban setting seemed to produce vice amid anonymity. Therefore, progressives sought to create an environment conducive to their vision of moral behavior and social cohesion.<sup>20</sup> There was an important element of social control too, of the need of middle-class progressives to bring order to the perceived unruliness of the urban working class. Earlier in the nineteenth century, urban reformers had attempted moral uplift through a coercive strategy, which aimed to shame, for example, saloon and brothel patrons by calling them out in public. However, urban reformers failed to “replicate the moral

---

<sup>18</sup> Grantham, *Southern Progressivism*, 76.

<sup>19</sup> Arthur S. Link, “The Progressive Movement in the South, 1870-1914,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 23, no. 2 (1946): 178-179.

<sup>20</sup> The emphasis on environment derived from movements in both science and religion. In the 1880s-90s, social scientists Edward A. Ross and Lester F. Ward critiqued a laissez-faire approach to social organization, and Ward advocated for “a rationally planned collectivistic society” coordinated by government. Religious critics expounded the idea of the Social Gospel, or the social duty of Christians toward their neighbors. Baptist minister Walter Rauschenbusch and Unitarian minister Edward Everett Hale were famous Social Gospel preachers. See Ekirch, Jr., *Progressivism in America*, 23; Link and McCormick, *Progressivism*, 70; and Ronald J. Pestritto and William J. Atto, “Introduction to American Progressivism,” in *American Progressivism*, eds. Pestritto and Atto, 10-12.

order of the village” through coercive tactics.<sup>21</sup> Instead, given the population density of the big city, urban people had an anonymity which made public shaming ineffective.

Eventually, a new generation of progressive reformers adopted the environmental strategy, which aimed to counter the influence of cities’ morally corrupting saloons and brothels with morally uplifting clubs, Sunday schools, parks, and recreation halls. Reformers tried to direct urban people to alternative, moral leisure pursuits. Public libraries were, in part, products of urban reformers’ environmental strategy. A 1913 newsletter of the North Carolina Library Commission quoted a reverend who linked libraries to moral uplift:

There will come a day when the plain people, as Lincoln called them, will no longer be mere hewers of wood and drawers of water for the nation; when... they will feed and thrive on the great books of the world; when the attractions of the gaming table and the public spectacle, the poolroom and saloon will have yielded to the pleasure of taste... when great books shall adorn the mind with beautiful thoughts; as rooms are hung around with beautiful pictures.<sup>22</sup>

Progressives believed “that men and women were creatures of their environment” and, moreover, that government was responsible for creating the kind of environment that would make good, moral citizens.<sup>23</sup> One Christian-centered environmental reform group, the Order of the King’s Daughters and Sons, became involved early on in North Carolina library development.<sup>24</sup> In

---

<sup>21</sup> Paul S. Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), viii, 175-180.

<sup>22</sup> Rev. John Cavanaugh, “There will come a day,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, nos. 1-2 (1912-13): 38.

<sup>23</sup> Link and McCormick, *Progressivism*, 68-71.

<sup>24</sup> The International Order of the King’s Daughters and Sons was founded in New York in 1886 by lay preacher Margaret McDonald Bottome. She had been inspired by Edward Everett Hale, a Unitarian minister and leading proponent of the Social Gospel (see note 20). Chapters of the King’s Daughters existed in many towns and cities across the United States. Members devoted themselves to kind deeds and, in some places, running boarding houses for single women. Durham had a King’s Daughters house, which still stands. It is currently a bed and breakfast establishment. See *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, s.v. “Margaret McDonald Bottome,” accessed October 18, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Margaret-McDonald-Bottome>; Sue Buck, “A Brief History,”

Southern Pines, the King's Daughters organized a public reading room in 1899.<sup>25</sup> When that closed in 1920, town residents formed the Southern Pines Library Association and opened another reading room the next year. In Durham, a junior chapter of the King's Daughters assisted with library storytelling programs in the late 1910s.<sup>26</sup> Libraries were part of progressives' environmental strategy.

However, the two major sets of progressive actors that shaped library development in the early twentieth century were neither politicians nor religious groups, but women's clubs and Northern philanthropies. Women's clubs led public library campaigns in numerous towns across North Carolina, while philanthropic groups such as the General Education Board (GEB) and the Carnegie Corporation funded libraries to varying degrees. Grassroots and philanthropic groups helped build "organizational capacity" in the field of public education generally, by supporting private, local efforts to build up schools and libraries and, later, transferring responsibility for these programs to local and state governments.<sup>27</sup> The present discussion will examine philanthropy first, then the impact of women's clubs. In both cases, it will be seen that the concern with schools and libraries took the progressive mission beyond the city limits to rural areas, whose residents became the next objects of social uplift and control.

---

*International Order of The King's Daughters and Sons*, accessed October 18, 2019, <https://iokds.org/home-2/a-brief-history/>; and "About Edward Everett Hale," *Lend a Hand Society*, accessed December 6, 2019, <http://www.lend-a-hand-society.org/about-edward-everett-hale/>

<sup>25</sup> "Library Building History," in *2019 Library Citizens Academy: Newsletter* (Southern Pines, NC: Town of Southern Pines, 2019), 2.

<sup>26</sup> Betty Irene Young, "Lillian Baker Griggs: Pioneer Librarian," *Durham Record* 1 (Fall 1983): 31.

<sup>27</sup> Joan Malczewski, "Weak State, Stronger Schools: Northern Philanthropy and Organizational Change in the Jim Crow South," *Journal of Southern History* 75, no. 4 (2009): 969-970.

In the field of philanthropy, Patrick M. Valentine has cataloged numerous instances of donations to North Carolina libraries before World War II. He differentiated between native and outside philanthropy to North Carolina libraries.<sup>28</sup> For example, Julian Carr's donation to the Durham Public Library was a case of native philanthropy, since it came from a resident of the state. Another example was the gift of a public library from hotel owner Richard B. Raney to the city of Raleigh in 1901. Again, reflecting the racially exclusive ideas of "community" dominant at the time, the Raleigh library's charter stated that it was available "for the use, without any charge whatsoever, of the White citizens of Raleigh."<sup>29</sup> Raney had pledged to finance a public library for Raleigh as early as 1896, just as Durham's library campaign was gaining publicity, but the city did not receive Raney's gift of a building and book collection until 1901.<sup>30</sup> All of the native philanthropists who contributed to North Carolina libraries, including Raney, built libraries as memorials to prominent, deceased members of their local communities. For example, the Raleigh library was named the Olivia B. Raney Library, after the donor's deceased wife. Unlike the outside philanthropists, native philanthropists donated for very personal reasons. They memorialized loved ones by giving a library to the community in which the deceased individuals had lived. Native philanthropy would become more active in the 1920s, without becoming a robust trend, after grassroots organizations such as the North Carolina Federation of Women's

---

<sup>28</sup> Patrick M. Valentine, "Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco: Philanthropy and Public Libraries in North Carolina, 1900-1940," *Libraries & Culture* 31, no. 2 (1996): 279-281.

<sup>29</sup> R.H. Battle, "The Olivia Raney Library of Raleigh, NC," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 3 (1910): 27, 30; Valentine, "Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco," 273-274.

<sup>30</sup> The establishment of the Durham Public Library was noted in newspapers from the mountains to the coastal plains—in, for example, *The Goldsboro Headlight*, May 7, 1896, and *The Messenger* of Marion, March 19, 1897.

Clubs and the state Library Association led publicity campaigns to rally popular support for libraries.

For outside philanthropy in North Carolina, 1901 was a breakthrough year. That year, in Winston-Salem, a coalition of Northern businessmen formed the Southern Education Board (SEB), which aimed to promote the cause of public education in the South. Also, the state's first Carnegie library grant went to Charlotte in 1901, and Northern philanthropists held the first planning discussions for the GEB (which was chartered the next year). Although they had broad regional missions, the SEB and GEB had early and significant impacts in North Carolina specifically. In its thirteen-year existence, the SEB held two of its annual meetings in North Carolina, at Winston-Salem in 1901 and Pinehurst in 1907. The SEB's purpose was to offer "advice, literature, and some financial backing" to Southern educators and legislators, and to publish "surveys and investigations" as well as "bulletins, circulars, and a weekly publication called *Southern Education*."<sup>31</sup> The GEB was a more powerful philanthropic enterprise, backed directly by Rockefeller money. Its executive board was nearly identical to that of the SEB, but rather than merely publicize the cause of education like the SEB, the GEB worked closely with local and state governments to fund teachers, professors, assistant superintendents, and school buildings. When the GEB dissolved in 1960, one of its officers reflected that the "first aim of the General Education Board... was the improvement of rural elementary schools in the Southern states."<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Grantham, *Southern Progressivism*, 249.

<sup>32</sup> Raymond B. Fosdick, *Adventure in Giving: The Story of the General Education Board, a Foundation Established by John D. Rockefeller* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 26.

To achieve that goal, the GEB coordinated with two existing Northern philanthropies, the Peabody and Slater Funds, and one newer philanthropy, the Jeanes Fund.<sup>33</sup> These Funds had a modest impact on library service for rural black citizens, and they so merit consideration. Founded in 1867, the Peabody Fund helped Southern state governments analyze their educational needs and train teachers for their public schools. Written into the Peabody mission was the goal of equal schools for blacks and whites. Southern educator J.L.M. Curry was for a long time the administrator of both the Peabody and Slater Funds, and held executive positions with the SEB and GEB. The Slater Fund, founded in 1882, focused at first on expanding industrial education for Southern blacks. In the 1910s, under the leadership of J.H. Dillard, the Slater Fund financed county training schools for black teachers, which doubled as the South's first rural high schools for African-Americans. By branding black high schools with the label of a training school, philanthropists tiptoed around Southern white sensitivities to the idea of secondary education for blacks.<sup>34</sup> While the training school curriculum featured industrial education, it also featured classical subjects. Libraries were often a part of training schools, and the school library materials were available to the surrounding black community. Due in part to training school libraries, in 1913 the school superintendent of Wilkes County, North Carolina could proudly report that "our county has an original library in every school district both white and colored and has placed one hundred and thirty-four supplemental libraries."<sup>35</sup> This was the same year that black civic leaders in Durham were planning to open what would be only the

---

<sup>33</sup> Mary S. Hoffschwelle, *The Rosenwald Schools of the American South* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2006), 19-24.

<sup>34</sup> Malczewski, "Weak State, Stronger Schools," 989-990.

<sup>35</sup> C.C. Wright, "Rural Libraries in Wilkes County," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, no. 4 (1913): 37. Wright would go on to serve as North Carolina Library Commission chairman in the late 1910s.

state's second black non-school-affiliated library, after Charlotte's. School libraries like those in Wilkes County were an early means of providing limited library service to the larger African-American community.

One historian of progressive-era educational philanthropy has observed that “philanthropic endeavors in general provide opportunities to create institutions that might test new ideas and promote particular agendas.”<sup>36</sup> This was true not only of the Jeanes program, but also of the library grant programs administered by the Carnegie Corporation in North Carolina in the early twentieth century. Carnegie differed in two fundamental respects from the GEB and its partner Funds, in that he neither sought out grant recipients nor had a special concern with black educational opportunities.<sup>37</sup> Rather, civic clubs and town governments had to write to Carnegie with a specific request for a library grant, and he would reply with an approval or denial. Unlike Rosenwald, Carnegie did not require that grant-receiving institutions provide equal, or any, service to blacks as well as whites. Carnegie made his first library grant to a Southern city, Atlanta, in October 1898, followed by Louisville, Kentucky in November 1899, and cities in Florida, Tennessee, and North Carolina in 1901.<sup>38</sup> The Carnegie grants covered library buildings only, not materials, salaries, or maintenance costs.<sup>39</sup> The town applying for a grant had to provide the land on which to build the building, and had to pledge an annual maintenance fund of no less than ten percent of the grant amount.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Malczewski, “Weak State, Stronger Schools,” 999.

<sup>37</sup> Valentine, “Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco, 275-276.

<sup>38</sup> George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 1969), 209, 212, 222, 225, 238.

<sup>39</sup> George F. Bowerman, “The Public Library of the Twentieth Century in Small and Medium-Sized Towns,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 7 (1917): 63.

<sup>40</sup> Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 40-43.

A Carnegie library grant was truly a chance for Southern states and towns to “test new ideas.” For example, the requirement of an annual maintenance fund necessitated that towns enact a library tax, which was illegal under most state laws, including in North Carolina. Officials in Louisville had to wait two years before they could accept a Carnegie grant, until the Kentucky legislature enabled towns to pass a library tax.<sup>41</sup> Although Carnegie did not generally award library building grants to private or subscription libraries, he did sometimes make small donations to them. For example, the King’s Daughters library in Southern Pines, North Carolina, which maintained a public reading room, received the charitable gift of a “traveling library” from the Carnegie Corporation.<sup>42</sup> Traveling libraries were collections of thirty to sixty books, usually packed into a traveling case fitted with shelves, and loaned or donated by nonprofits or state governments to interested organizations.<sup>43</sup> For these early, semi-public libraries (also called “social libraries”) run by charities or voluntary groups like the King’s Daughters, such philanthropic support was crucial, for it “bridged the gap between the period of the voluntary association and the emergence of tax support by keeping alive social library collections which later were absorbed into the governments of their towns.”<sup>44</sup> For the most part, however, Carnegie’s library philanthropy was limited to town-managed, tax-supported libraries.

The 1901 Carnegie library grant to Charlotte amounted to \$25,000 for the city’s first tax-supported public library. The Charlotte Public Library was established not under the 1897

---

<sup>41</sup> Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 44.

<sup>42</sup> “Library Building History,” in *2019 Library Citizens Academy*, 2.

<sup>43</sup> “Contents of Traveling Libraries,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 12 (1912): 147.

<sup>44</sup> Jesse H. Shera, *Foundations of the Public Library: The Origins of the Public Library Movement in New England, 1629-1855* (1949; Reprint, Hamden, CT: Shoestring Press, 1974), 206.

general enabling law, but under a special “state-granted library charter” with an “unusual feature... that the city also provide public library service to Blacks.”<sup>45</sup> The reason for the special charter was probably because the new public library had not been established directly by the city—a scenario not addressed in the 1897 enabling law and therefore legally questionable. Rather, the Carnegie grant would provide funds for an existing subscription library in Charlotte, which was in the process of being transferred to city control. The transfer was completed in 1901.<sup>46</sup> The charter allowed what were essentially two separate public libraries to be set up, one under the control of an all-white board and one under the control of an all-black board.<sup>47</sup> The “main” white library was built in 1901 and opened in 1903, while the Charlotte Public Library for Colored People was built in 1903 and opened in 1905.<sup>48</sup> Also known as the Brevard Street Library, the latter institution received a \$400 annual appropriation from the city, compared to the \$2,500 received annually by the main library. Beyond basic building operation fees, Brevard Street’s budget left little for staff salaries or books. Its early collections were cobbled together from discarded books donated by other libraries. Along with the black branch of the public Cossitt Library in Memphis, Tennessee, which opened in 1903, Brevard Street was one of the South’s first two public libraries for blacks. In 1905, Charlotte had to refuse a second Carnegie grant when it could not meet the ten-percent maintenance fund requirement. However, the city was able to accept two additional grants awarded in 1911 and 1914, the latter allowing for

---

<sup>45</sup> Valentine, “Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco, 276.

<sup>46</sup> “Library History,” *Charlotte Mecklenburg Library*, accessed March 27, 2020, <https://www.cmlibrary.org/about/library-history>

<sup>47</sup> Eliza Atkins Gleason, *The Southern Negro and the Public Library* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1941), 81.

<sup>48</sup> David M. Battles, *The History of Public Library Access for African Americans in the South or, Leaving Behind the Plow* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), 30.

construction of a main library annex. By 1915, the Charlotte Public Library was serving as a vital community center where “Civic, patriotic, and all study clubs receive gracious assistance,” and “rooms, including the auditorium, are available for committee and public meetings.”<sup>49</sup> That same year, the library counted a total 14,346 visitors to its reading room.

Four other Carnegie Library grants were awarded to North Carolina towns prior to World War I, including Greensboro in 1903, Winston in 1904, Rutherford College in 1907, and Hendersonville in 1911.<sup>50</sup> The two largest went to Greensboro and Winston. Greensboro had requested a grant in 1900 but did not immediately receive one. Meanwhile, the State Library donated \$3,000 and the city aldermen donated space on the third floor of city hall for a public library. Opened in 1902, the library “started bravely on its way with 1,490 books, 32 periodicals, and 3 daily papers,” according to head librarian Bettie D. Caldwell.<sup>51</sup> That same year, the mayor wrote to Carnegie and a grant was approved. Negotiations were tense, for the city received only three-fifths of its original requested amount and a second request made in 1909 was denied.<sup>52</sup> With a grant of \$30,000 plus the required ten-percent annual appropriation by the city, the Carnegie Library of Greensboro was opened to the public in 1906.<sup>53</sup> Appropriately, Caldwell

---

<sup>49</sup> Mrs. William H. Jasspon, “Charlotte’s Public Library,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 2-3 (1916): 20.

<sup>50</sup> Valentine, “Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco, 279.

<sup>51</sup> Miss Bettie D. Caldwell, “The Greensboro Public Library,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 4 (1910): 35-36.

<sup>52</sup> Valentine, “Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco, 276.

<sup>53</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. “Jones, Nellie Rowe (Mrs. William Cecil),” accessed March 5, 2020, <https://ncpedia.org/biography/jones-nellie>

tacked up on the wall a “portrait of Calvin H. Wiley, Guilford County’s honored and beloved son, who gave the free school system to the Old North State.”<sup>54</sup>

In 1905-06, Greensboro almost became the second North Carolina city to open a branch for African-Americans. However, whites’ concern over control and class differences within the black populace prevented the construction of a black branch until 1924.<sup>55</sup> However, Carnegie had offered to fund a black branch at only one-third the amount given to the main library.<sup>56</sup> If a black branch library had been built in Greensboro in 1906, it would have suffered from the same plight of underfunding as the Brevard Street Library in Charlotte. Nevertheless, it would have expanded black educational opportunities in one of the state’s largest cities. Library service therefore remained the exclusive right of Greensboro’s white citizens for nearly two decades. When the city library established “sub-stations” inside six rural post-offices in Guilford County in the early 1910s, a news bulletin reported that “any white resident of the county can secure a book from any sub-station.”<sup>57</sup>

In the case of Winston, Valentine found that civic leaders had corresponded with Carnegie about a grant as early as 1899, but only after a local citizen wrote to Carnegie in 1904 did a grant come through.<sup>58</sup> A building was finished in August 1905, and the reputable librarian Annie Pierce of the Charlotte Public Library was hired in December. The Carnegie Library of Winston opened in February 1906, later expanding its service area after the towns of Winston

---

<sup>54</sup> Caldwell, “The Greensboro Public Library,” 87.

<sup>55</sup> Valentine, “Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco, 277, 291.

<sup>56</sup> “Colored Library for Greensboro,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, no. 3 (1913): 18.

<sup>57</sup> “Library Extension in Guilford,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, no. 10 (1915): 97-98.

<sup>58</sup> Mrs. Mary C. Prather, “Carnegie Public Library of Winston,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 6 (1911): 70-71; Valentine, “Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco, 276.

and Salem consolidated in 1913. A case of a Carnegie grant that was almost awarded, but ultimately withdrawn, happened in Statesville, where a referendum on a public library tax was voted down in May 1912.<sup>59</sup> Thus, the town could not meet the ten-percent annual maintenance fund requirement. Carnegie had offered \$5,000 and a local woman had offered a suitable lot, but the defeat of the referendum brought an end to the dream of a library until 1922, when the Statesville Woman's Club set one up.<sup>60</sup>

Other public libraries in the 1900s-10s were created or supported by grassroots organizations, the most important of which were local affiliates of the North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs and the North Carolina Library Association (NCLA). Both of these groups reflected progressive ideals of moral uplift and social progress. Mary B. Palmer, prominent NCLA member and librarian of the Charlotte Carnegie Library in the early 1910s, wrote in 1911:

The power of books in the work for the uplifting of the human race is recognized at the present day as never before. There is hardly a phase of modern life where the need of the book is not felt. ... The public library has been found to be the best means of supplying that need, and giving expression to that belief. It is regarded today as one of the three institutions essential to the welfare of every community, and is named with the churches and public schools. It is a vital factor in the mental, civic, and social progress of mankind.<sup>61</sup>

While Palmer's words echo Roosevelt's concern with social welfare, the words of NCLA president Louis R. Wilson reflect a concern with, fittingly, the Woodrow Wilsonian ideal of efficient, expert-led administrative agencies removed—in theory—from partisan politics.

---

<sup>59</sup> "Library Progress," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, no. 1-2 (1913): 2.

<sup>60</sup> "Statistics of Public Libraries," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 3 (1922): 55.

<sup>61</sup> Mary B. Palmer, "The Public Library and the State," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 9 (1911): 101-102.

Woodrow Wilson had been an active political scientist and author since the 1880s, and his theories on government were well-known. When in 1906 Louis Wilson began drafting a proposal for a state library commission, he and the drafting committee “demanded that a commission should be a separate organization and that it be administered by professionals and freed from political influence.”<sup>62</sup> The progressive zeal that motivated Wilson and the NCLA came through in their stated mission to advance the profession and ensure “library service for all citizens of the State.”<sup>63</sup> Wilson included blacks as well as whites in his use of “all,” and wrote that North Carolina “must provide better facilities for negro adult education,” including libraries.<sup>64</sup> A progressive zeal was further reflected in a speech given by the director of the Washington, D.C. Public Library, who was invited to address the 1917 NCLA conference at Salisbury. The guest speaker stated that the public library “is an integral part of the system of public education” and “no longer deserves to be thought of as a literary barroom where idle people go to get their fiction tipples, but rather as a public utility, just as important in a community as the police department, the fire department—or... the water-works.”<sup>65</sup>

The NCLA was founded in 1904, after several months of preliminary organizing by Annie Smith Ross. Hired by the Charlotte Carnegie Library in 1902, Ross immediately went to

---

<sup>62</sup> Louis R. Wilson, “The North Carolina Library Association, 1904-1909,” *North Carolina Libraries* 13, no. 1 (1954): 5.

<sup>63</sup> Louis R. Wilson, “North Carolina Library Association, 1904-1943,” *North Carolina Libraries* 2, no. 5 (1943): 1-2.

<sup>64</sup> Louis R. Wilson, “A Ten-Year Library Program for North Carolina,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 9 (1923): 166.

<sup>65</sup> The ordinary library visitor would probably not have thought of a library as a “literary barroom.” It likely reflects Bowerman’s class position and bias against fiction that he would fear that a critic might construe a library as a frivolous place, if it catered to readers’ love of novels and romances. For the quote, see Bowerman, “The Public Library of the Twentieth Century in Small and Medium-Sized Towns,” 59-60.

train with Anne Wallace at the Carnegie Library School of Atlanta before assuming her full-time duties in Charlotte. Back in North Carolina, Ross joined with Annie F. Petty, librarian of the State Normal and Industrial College, and they took out an advertisement in the Greensboro *Daily Record*. The advertisement announced an interest meeting for a professional librarians' association, to take place on May 14, 1904 at the college library. There, Ross and Petty were joined by Louis R. Wilson of the UNC library, J.P. Breedlove of the Trinity College library, Bettie D. Caldwell of the Greensboro Public Library, State Normal president Charles D. McIver, and Greensboro attorney R.D. Douglas. The first annual NCLA meeting took place on November 11-12, 1904 at the Colonial Club of Charlotte, where a total of forty-nine members convened and "enjoyed the full support of the Charlotte Woman's Club and was entertained by the Trustees of the Charlotte Carnegie Library and by the Colonial and Country Clubs at various luncheons and receptions."<sup>66</sup>

An early task of the NCLA was to request the state legislature to create a library commission to promote and coordinate public library growth in North Carolina. As mentioned, Wilson and a drafting committee wrote a proposal bill in 1906. NCLA executive members appointed to the committee Wilson, Alfred M. Scales, E.P. Wharton, and J.F. Wilkes. Official histories of the Association do not give details on Wharton and Wilkes, but Scales was a former Democratic state senator who had been the primary sponsor of the 1897 public library enabling law. Apparently at the order of the legislature, state librarian M.O. Sherrill soon joined these Association appointees on the committee. In 1907-08, Wilkes and Wilson "made two or three visits to Raleigh during the [legislative] session," but the draft bill met with no success.<sup>67</sup> The

---

<sup>66</sup> Wilson, "The North Carolina Library Association, 1904-1909," 2-3.

<sup>67</sup> Wilson, "The North Carolina Library Association, 1904-1909," 6.

following year, however, the bill gained the support of Dr. James R. Gordon, state House member from Guilford County and chair of the House Appropriations Committee.<sup>68</sup> When Dr. Gordon abruptly left Raleigh to return to Greensboro before the session had ended and the bill had been approved, Wilson, who was in Goldsboro, turned to the Goldsboro Woman's Club, which ran a very active Library Extension Committee. The club committee chair used her influence to convince another Greensboro lawyer, D.P. Stern, to see the bill through the session.<sup>69</sup>

On March 8, 1909, the North Carolina Library Commission (NCLC) was established, with an initial \$1,500 appropriation. The NCLC's four-part mandate was to draft library legislation, provide book service to new libraries and rural areas without libraries, offer professional advice to librarians (including how to apply for Carnegie library grants), and to publish biennial reports with detailed statistics, which all public libraries were required by law to send to the Commission annually.<sup>70</sup> Additionally, from 1909 until 1931 the Commission published a newsletter, the *North Carolina Library Bulletin*, which served as the professional journal for North Carolina librarians. In 1942, the NCLA resurrected the journal under the title *North Carolina Libraries*, which is still published by the Association today. The first legislative achievement of the Commission was the Public Library Law of 1911. The necessity for a new law was a result of the major revisal of the state code in 1905, which had invalidated the 1897

---

<sup>68</sup> Cheney, Jr., ed., *North Carolina Government, 1585-1974*, 484-485.

<sup>69</sup> Louis R. Wilson, "The North Carolina Library Commission, 1909-1949," *North Carolina Libraries* 7, no. 2 (1949): 7; Wilson, "The North Carolina Library Association, 1904-1909," 6.

<sup>70</sup> Wilson, "The North Carolina Library Commission, 1909-1949," 8-10.

public library enabling law.<sup>71</sup> The old law was not targeted in particular, but the revision had indiscriminately wiped away many older acts in the name of creating a more efficient state code. The progressive era was, after all, the age of efficiency. The 1911 law “provide[d] that upon the petition of twenty-five per cent of the registered voters of a city or town the question of the establishment of a public library shall be submitted to the voters at the next municipal election.”<sup>72</sup> The progressive era was, too, the age of direct democracy, in which many cities implemented “the initiative (voters could enact laws without going through the legislature); the referendum (voters could vote yes or no on issues that legislators wished to avoid); and the recall (voters could remove officeholders before the expiration of their terms).”<sup>73</sup> By submitting proposed laws raised directly from the people’s vote, according to one historian, “Government was brought closer to the ‘public’ and parties were diminished in power.”<sup>74</sup> The question remains, however, whether voters fully utilized direct democracy mechanisms, or whether these mechanisms were necessarily free from corruption and unfairness.

Besides the NCLA, the most important grassroots organizations promoting libraries were local affiliates of the North Carolina Federation of Women’s Clubs. While the most visible progressive activists may have been men like Roosevelt, Louis Wilson, J.L.M. Curry, Edward A. Ross, Walter Rauschenbusch, or Walter Hines Page, it was arguably women who were doing most of the ground work at the grassroots level to effect reform, in library development and a myriad of other causes. Due largely to women’s exclusion from electoral politics in the era

---

<sup>71</sup> “Scales Library Act,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 2 (1910): 3.

<sup>72</sup> “Shall a Public Library Be Established?,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 6 (1911): 61.

<sup>73</sup> Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1987), 229.

<sup>74</sup> Graham, Jr., *The Great Campaigns*, 31.

before universal women's suffrage, most women could not participate in the structural reform efforts of progressives, which focused on reshaping of the structure of government. On the other hand, the social reform side of progressivism "was distinctive in its focus on issues that usually pertained to the welfare of children, the family, and the neighborhood—issues long identified with the sphere of women."<sup>75</sup> Statewide women's organizations continued to be founded in the new century, with the North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs formed in 1902 and the North Carolina Federation of Colored Women's Clubs established in 1909.<sup>76</sup>

The progressive emphasis on reinforcing the social fabric by improving education, public services, and the physical environment thus offered an entry point for women to become involved in reform. After an education-themed town meeting led by Dr. Charles McIver at the state Normal School in Greensboro in March 1902, a number of inspired attendees formed the Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses (WABPS).<sup>77</sup> The Association sought to improve schoolhouses by beautifying the grounds around schools and ensuring the classrooms had adequate furniture, supplies, and chalkboards. WABPS established chapters in seventy of ninety-seven counties, and "elected five executive officers and five field agents, all of whom worked out of a central office in Greensboro that was financed by funds from the SEB."<sup>78</sup> The chair of the Wake County chapter, Elvira E. Moffitt, went on speaking tours around the state, extending the promotional work of the CPPE. Born in 1836, Moffitt was the daughter of

---

<sup>75</sup> Joseph F. Kett, "Women and the Progressive Impulse in Southern Education," in *The Web of Southern Social Relations: Women, Family, & Education*, eds. Walter J. Fraser, Jr., R. Frank Saunders, Jr., and Jon L. Wakelyn (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1985), 166.

<sup>76</sup> Link, *North Carolina*, 322.

<sup>77</sup> James L. Leloudis, *Schooling the New South: Pedagogy, Self, and Society in North Carolina, 1880-1920* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 154-155.

<sup>78</sup> Leloudis, *Schooling the New South*, 156.

state politician Jonathan Worth, who had served as governor in the tense years 1865-68. Towards the end of her life Moffitt supported the establishment of a public library in her hometown of Asheboro.<sup>79</sup> In 1926, when the Asheboro Woman's Club was soliciting donations to improve the Asheboro High School library, Moffitt, by then age ninety, donated many books and pamphlets to the library. While she did not think that Asheboro was populous enough in 1926 to support a town library, she wrote that she was willing to donate to the high school library and hoped "that Asheboro will grow to such an extent that a public library will become an educational necessity."<sup>80</sup> Like other progressive leaders and groups, Moffitt and the WABPS believed that environment shaped character, and so improving the physical condition of schools was essential. Prior to the WABPS' work, in "625 white communities there were no school buildings of any kind, while another 484 used 'rude log houses' ... [or] 'shabbily built board structures.'"<sup>81</sup> Also, schools were often without adequate water and fuel, and classrooms lacked sufficient blackboards, maps, and books.<sup>82</sup> The Association's work made school a more pleasant environment and more conducive to learning.

In Goldsboro, which had pioneered one of the state's first graded schools in the 1880s, there arose in 1899 one of the first local white women's clubs in the state.<sup>83</sup> The Goldsboro Woman's Club was one of seven original clubs that comprised the statewide Federation of

---

<sup>79</sup> Marjorie Whittington Memory, "A History of the Randolph Public Library, 1935-1967," (Master's Thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1968), 5.

<sup>80</sup> Memory, "A History of the Randolph Public Library, 1935-1967," 5.

<sup>81</sup> Leloudis, *Schooling the New South*, 163.

<sup>82</sup> William A. Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 27.

<sup>83</sup> Leonard Rogoff, *Gertrude Weil: Jewish Progressive in the New South* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 47-49, 76-77.

Women's Clubs in 1902, and among the local club's members were Sarah and Mina Weil, sisters-in-law who had both married into a prosperous German-Jewish merchant family based in Wilson and Goldsboro. The family therefore had a positive view of a New South built on industry, and was predisposed to favor the paternalism that wealthy merchants and industrialists often felt toward the poorer classes. Sarah, Mina, and Mina's daughter Gertrude all became involved in the causes of public libraries and education. Further, upon entering her twenties just at the turn of the century, Gertrude announced her interest, in her own words, in the progressive-sounding pursuit of "municipal housekeeping," which, according to her biographer, "describes metaphorically how women extended their domestic responsibilities from home to city."<sup>84</sup> In true progressive fashion, the Weils and the Goldsboro Woman's Club hosted classes on hygiene, sponsored a parent-teachers association, and promoted gardens and tree-planting around town.

In 1902, Mina served on the Education Committee of the Goldsboro Woman's Club, and Sarah joined its Library Extension Committee. In 1912, Gertrude would be invited by the national Federation of Women's Clubs to serve on its Literature and Library Extension Committee.<sup>85</sup> Of the three women, Sarah Weil took on the most active role in state library development when the state appointed her "vice-chairman" of the newly created North Carolina Library Commission in 1909.<sup>86</sup> Louis Wilson served as chairman, while superintendent James Y. Joyner served as an ex officio member alongside "Mrs. Sol Weil," as the commission reports called Sarah Weil. A Commission newsletter announced: "Mrs. Weil has long been identified

---

<sup>84</sup> Rogoff, *Gertrude Weil*, 73.

<sup>85</sup> Rogoff, *Gertrude Weil*, 83-84.

<sup>86</sup> North Carolina Library Commission, *First Biennial Report of the North Carolina Library Commission, 1909-1910* (Raleigh, NC: Edwards & Broughton, 1910), 5.

with library extension work in North Carolina, and as chairman of the Library Extension Department of the North Carolina Federation of Women's Clubs, became thoroughly familiar with library conditions in the state."<sup>87</sup> She was eminently qualified to be Commission vice-chairman.

The Goldsboro Woman's Club was not the only such group aiding in the growth of public libraries in North Carolina. Women were powerful, effective forces in founding, promoting, and fundraising for libraries. The pioneering work of Lalla Ruth Carr and the Board of Lady Directors in 1890s Durham had demonstrated as much. Women continued to crusade for libraries throughout the progressive era. A 1921 NCLC bulletin noted:

Practically all of the public libraries of the State owe their existence to the clubwomen, and their assistance after the library is opened is very helpful to the librarians and library boards. . . . Many of the clubs have library extension committees and their cooperation with the librarians can be easily secured. These committees can conduct a weekly or occasional newspaper column about library activities. They can interest residents of suburbs and industrial sections in the library through story hours for children held in those sections. They can work effectively for increased appropriations for the library. Through the library extension committee, the Raleigh Woman's Club recently gave \$300 for the children's alcove of the Olivia Raney Library.<sup>88</sup>

Often, clubs opened privately financed reading rooms or libraries in a town, then worked to convince town councils or commissions to take over the library and fund it with tax revenue. For example, the Sorosis society of Wilmington "had been collecting a library for some time" before it decided to transfer its library to the city in 1906, to be opened as a public institution the following year.<sup>89</sup> In Smithfield in 1915, the Smithfield Woman's Club "got together 500

---

<sup>87</sup> "Annual Meeting of the Library Commission," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 3 (1910): 23.

<sup>88</sup> "Clubwomen and Libraries," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 11 (1921): 145.

<sup>89</sup> E.S. Martin, "The Wilmington Public Library," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 3 (1910): 30.

volumes which were housed over a store on a main business street. It was kept open by volunteer librarians one afternoon each week.”<sup>90</sup> The town council gave a small cash donation to the library in 1917, but the town did not fully fund the library until the 1930s.

Many examples of the work of women’s clubs were reported in the NCLC newsletter throughout the 1910s. A look at some examples will show how remarkable their work really was. An early social library was opened in New Bern in 1890 by “the Whatsoever Circle of women” but “was abandoned about 1902.”<sup>91</sup> In nearby Wilmington, in 1904 the local Sorosis chapter set up a “reading room in the Masonic Temple, which was stocked with one hundred books and magazines.”<sup>92</sup> In 1906, as previously mentioned, the Wilmington Sorosis donated their book collection to the city.<sup>93</sup> In 1911, the Library Extension Department of the NC Federation of Women’s Clubs received the following “donations of books and money for traveling libraries”:

Goldsboro Woman’s Club.....	\$10.00
Greenville, End of the Century Club....	1.90
Henderson, Woman’s Tuesday Club....	9.25
Winston-Salem Sorosis.....	3.00 <sup>94</sup>

In Salisbury in 1909, the Travelers Club organized and joined the state Federation of Women’s Clubs, and the next year formed a Library Association. The Association pledged \$100 for a

---

<sup>90</sup> Mrs. Thomas J. Lassiter, “The Smithfield Public Library,” *North Carolina Libraries* 4, no. 4 (1945): 1.

<sup>91</sup> Patrick M. Valentine, “The Spread of Public Libraries: The Community of the Book in North Carolina,” *North Carolina Libraries* 54, no. 3 (1996): 113.

<sup>92</sup> Heman S. Shaw, “What the Public Library Means to Wilmington,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 2-3 (1916): 23.

<sup>93</sup> Martin, “The Wilmington Public Library,” 30.

<sup>94</sup> “Traveling Libraries,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 6 (1911): 73.

public library, and “Mrs. A.H. Boyden graciously offered as a home, free of charge, the office building, corner of Fisher and Church streets.”<sup>95</sup> In 1912, Mrs. D.M. Ausley, chair of the Library Department of the Women’s Twentieth Century Club of Statesville, secured a Carnegie grant, although it had to be rescinded after a referendum on a local library tax was voted down. Even earlier, in 1904 Ausley and the club had “organized a Reading Room Library in Statesville, placed several hundred volumes for use... A large fire in town eliminated the project in 1906...”<sup>96</sup> In 1916, a bulletin announced that in Swansboro, Onslow County, a “library movement originated in the Woman’s Club,” but gave no further details.<sup>97</sup> In a historic campaign, the Hickory Women’s Club supported an April 1917 referendum on a special local tax for libraries. Hickory became the first town in North Carolina to approve such a tax.<sup>98</sup> During the war, the Goldsboro Public Library cooperated with the Woman’s Club in state-wide book campaign which collected over 20,000 books during the week of March 18-25, 1918.<sup>99</sup> As in the campaigns for temperance and schoolhouse improvement, women took the lead, guiding the movement for more and better public libraries.

However, despite the undoubted good they did, most clubs and associations involved in library work, including the NCLA, were exclusively white organizations. Black citizens in need of library service had to rely on their own grassroots support networks, apart from prominent civic clubs and whites-only professional associations. For example, the town of Washington

---

<sup>95</sup> Mrs. James Moore, “Public Library at Salisbury,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 7 (1911): 75.

<sup>96</sup> “A Decade of Library Work,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, no. 1-2 (1913): 10.

<sup>97</sup> “Candidates for the Honor Roll – Swansboro,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 2-3 (1916): 24.

<sup>98</sup> “North Carolina Libraries and Librarians,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 5-6 (1917): 55.

<sup>99</sup> “Books and Soldiers,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 10 (1918): 109; Mary DeVane, “The Book Campaign in North Carolina,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 10 (1918): 113.

formed a voluntary Library Association in 1911, whose 151 members agreed to finance a library open to the public, but explicitly excluded black townspeople. “According to the constitution adopted by the Association,” read a news report, “the library will be absolutely free to all the white people of Washington.”<sup>100</sup> Southern progressives did not embrace as wide a definition of “community” as progressives in other regions.<sup>101</sup> Only two documented instances of black public libraries formed in the 1910s appear in the published literature. Valentine noted that “Blacks established a library in Laurinburg in 1918 which appears to have faded away in the later 1930s.”<sup>102</sup> Library Commission statistics first reported the Laurinburg Public Library in 1921, classifying it as a “colored” library along with the Charlotte Colored Library and the Durham Colored Library. The “date established” was indeed 1918.<sup>103</sup> In the same statistical report, a table of thirty-seven free public libraries for whites was printed above the separate table for the state’s three public libraries for blacks. The ratio is striking but not surprising, as Jim Crow was by then deeply entrenched in North Carolina society.

The origins of the Durham Colored Library are more fully documented. Dr. Aaron McDuffie Moore founded what became the Durham Colored Library in 1913, “with 799 donated books in the basement of White Rock Baptist Church, where he was superintendent of the Sunday school.”<sup>104</sup> By then, Dr. Moore was one of Durham’s most known and respected

---

<sup>100</sup> “News of North Carolina Libraries – Washington,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 7 (1911): 83.

<sup>101</sup> Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930*, 48.

<sup>102</sup> Valentine also noted that “Whites in Scotland County apparently did not have public library until August 1941.” This is significant because it is the only documented case of a black library being established *before* a white library in a North Carolina town or county. See Valentine, “The Spread of Public Libraries,” 117, 121.

<sup>103</sup> “Statistics of Public Libraries,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 10 (1921): 140.

<sup>104</sup> “The History of the Stanford L. Warren Library: 1913-1939, The Early Years,” *Durham County Library*, accessed March 9, 2020, [http://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/slw/early\\_years.php](http://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/slw/early_years.php)

African-American civic leaders. As a young man in the early 1880s, he had attended the state's first normal schools for African-Americans at Lumberton and Fayetteville, eventually moving on to the Leonard Medical School at Shaw University in Raleigh.<sup>105</sup> Dr. Moore had been interested in politics from an early age. He had participated in the black Republican "rump convention" of 1896, which protested the fusionists' nomination of judge Daniel L. Russell for governor. However, Dr. Moore never became involved in radical civil rights protests, instead exercising an outward calmness and dedication to community self-help. He did become involved in several successful business enterprises, many of them with business partner John Merrick, the "personal barber to Washington Duke and owner of several barbershops."<sup>106</sup> With Merrick and others, Dr. Moore co-founded the North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company in 1898, the Lincoln Hospital for African-Americans in 1901, the Bull City Drug Company in 1908, and the White Rock church library in 1913.<sup>107</sup>

In 1916, Merrick and Dr. Moore chartered the Durham Colored Library and opened up a new book collection housed in a building owned by Merrick, at Fayetteville and Pettigrew Streets in Durham.<sup>108</sup> The facility's first librarian, Hattie B. Wooten, was paid a monthly salary

---

<sup>105</sup> One of the South's first medical schools for blacks, Leonard Medical School had opened in November 1881 under supervision of two white physician-instructors, with tuition covered in part by the Slater Fund. The school operated until 1919, by which time the much larger Meharry and Howard Medical Colleges, in Nashville and Washington, D.C., respectively, had become the leading centers for black medical education in the South. See *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Moore, Aaron McDuffie," by Walter B. Weare, accessed March 9, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/moore-aaron-mcduffie>; and *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, s.v. "Leonard Medical School," by Elizabeth Reid Murray, accessed March 9, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/leonard-medical-school>.

<sup>106</sup> Jessica Harland-Jacobs, "A New Era," in *The History of Public Library Service in Durham, 1897-1997*, accessed March 9, 2020, [https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/dclhistory\\_04.php](https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/dclhistory_04.php)

<sup>107</sup> Jessica Lee Thompson, "Aaron McDuffie Moore (1863-1923)," *North Carolina History Project*, accessed March 9, 2020, <https://northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/aaron-mcduffie-moore-1863-1923/>

<sup>108</sup> Harland-Jacobs, "A New Era."

of forty dollars and given an apartment in the building.<sup>109</sup> Some support did come from white citizens interested in social uplift. James B. Duke donated \$1,000 to the Durham Colored Library in 1916, while the librarian of the “main” white library, Lillian Baker Griggs, donated advice and expertise.<sup>110</sup> As a dutiful city employee since 1911, Griggs may have had a hand in getting the city to appropriate thirty dollars per month for the new library, starting in 1917.<sup>111</sup> Records are unclear. Now that it was partially tax-supported, Dr. Moore’s project became a truly free public library. County funds were added to the budget of the Durham Colored Library in 1918, at twenty dollars per month, bringing total public funding to \$600 per year.<sup>112</sup> The white and black libraries of Durham were two of the first in North Carolina to provide county-wide service. By special legal permission, the white library had gained county funds in 1914 in exchange for providing county-wide service. In 1917, the state legislature passed a law enabling any county commission or board of education to appropriate money toward any municipal library willing to extend its service into the county.<sup>113</sup> The Durham Colored Library remained in the building at Fayetteville and Pettigrew Streets until 1939, when a new building was erected at Umstead and Fayetteville Streets. The NC Mutual Company loaned \$24,000 for the building, while the library’s board president donated \$4,000 for the land.<sup>114</sup> In 1940, the new library officially

---

<sup>109</sup> “The History of the Stanford L. Warren Library: 1913-1939, The Early Years,” *Durham County Library*.

<sup>110</sup> Young, “Lillian Baker Griggs: Pioneer Librarian,” 33, 48.

<sup>111</sup> “North Carolina Libraries and Librarians,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 8 (1917): 84.

<sup>112</sup> “North Carolina Libraries and Librarians,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 11 (1918): 120.

<sup>113</sup> “Library Legislation Enacted by the General Assembly of 1917,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 5-6 (1917): 50; Wilson, “The North Carolina Library Commission, 1909-1949,” 8.

<sup>114</sup> “The History of the Stanford L. Warren Library: 1913-1939, The Early Years,” *Durham County Library*.

opened and was named the Stanford L. Warren Public Library, in honor of the board president.<sup>115</sup> His gift falls under Valentine's category of native philanthropy, showing its importance to library development across the color line. The new building remained an independent library until 1966, when the Durham County Library system absorbed it, with the blessing of the Colored Library board.<sup>116</sup> To the present day, it is known as the Stanford L. Warren branch.

In the actions of grassroots organizations, philanthropic foundations, and government agencies, the importance of progressive ideology to the development of North Carolina public libraries is apparent. The strategic statewide planning of the NCLA, the centralized political authority of the Library Commission, the civic activism of the Federation of Women's Clubs, the library grants of the Carnegie Corporation, and the belief in the moral and social uplift possible through black self-help, could not have co-occurred in any previous period of North Carolina's history. The confluence of these events, underwritten by the ideas of the progressive era, led to the blossoming of the public library movement in the early twentieth century. Indeed, by 1916 the *North Carolina Library Bulletin* ran the caption "A Free Public Library In Every Town in North Carolina by 1920" above its title for several issues. World War I interrupted that campaign, but library growth would continue steadily in the 1920s. One newspaper reported that by 1925 twenty-one percent of North Carolinians lived within the service area of a public library, and two years later that percentage climbed to over thirty percent.<sup>117</sup> This would be slow yet upward growth. Still, it would end with a surge of library boosterism in the late 1920s, as a

---

<sup>115</sup> Young, "Lillian Baker Griggs: Pioneer Librarian," 48.

<sup>116</sup> Jessica Harland-Jacobs, "A Horse-and-Buggy Library in a Jet Age," in *The History of Public Library Service in Durham, 1897-1997*, accessed March 9, 2020, [https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/dclhistory\\_07.php](https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/dclhistory_07.php)

<sup>117</sup> "Hardly Started Yet," *University of North Carolina News Letter* (Chapel Hill, NC), November 23, 1927.

highly organized Citizens' Library Movement emerged and the Rosenwald Fund offered to pay for two "county library demonstrations" in North Carolina.

### CHAPTER THREE: SLOW BUT STEADY GROWTH, AND LIBRARIES' NEW SENSE OF MISSION IN THE WARTIME AND BUSINESS-PROGRESSIVE STATE, 1917-1929

The previous chapter showed how progressivism informed library development in the early twentieth century. Government, grassroots organizations, and philanthropists believed in the progressive idea that the physical environment determined individual character, and that an institution like a public library could serve to create moral, disciplined, and productive citizens. Political, economic, and social changes during and after World War I shifted progressives' attention away from concern with the masses and toward the growth of a robust domestic economy. Historians George B. Tindall and Arthur S. Link have described a shift from traditional progressivism to "business progressivism." Business progressivism applied the principles of conformity, standardization, and efficiency to a business-friendly political economy, rather than the improvement of social welfare. Business progressivism gained legitimacy during the mobilization for war, and thereafter flourished in 1920s American culture. In wartime, Congress enforced conformity to a strict doctrine of American identity, which defined Americans as English-speaking individuals who believed in democracy, capitalism, and Anglo-Saxon supremacy.<sup>1</sup> Also during the war, business interests "captured" the "essentially

---

<sup>1</sup> To combat "un-American" pacifism and pro-German/Russian sentiment, Congress limited free speech and open communication. The Espionage Act of May 1917 imposed fines and prison terms on people found guilty of "vaguely defined acts, including public criticism that could be construed as detrimental to the military." A year later, the Sedition Act outlawed any speech or printed matter that the government deemed disloyal, while other laws limited trade with Germany and allowed suspected radicals to be deported. See John Milton Cooper, Jr., *Pivotal Decades: The United States, 1900-1920* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 298. Further, the Bolshevik Revolution aroused fears that communists and other radicals would infiltrate American government. The fears appeared justified. In the 1917 municipal elections in New York and Chicago, anti-war Socialist candidates gained a respectable share of votes. In several states anti-draft protests occurred. The anti-war Green Corn Rebellion in Oklahoma, for example, ended with the arrest and conviction of 150 protesting tenant farmers. See Cooper, Jr., *Pivotal Decades*, 269-270, and William E. Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity, 1914-32*, 2nd ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 42.

new branch of government... composed of administrative boards and agencies” that early progressives had set up.<sup>2</sup> Administrative government had been set up to regulate business and advance social equality, but now it was reoriented to serve business interests and ensure predictable profits in American industry. Since industry had mobilized quickly in support of the war effort, it was above reproach as a patriotic, wholly positive force in the nation.<sup>3</sup> Thus, in the post-war nation, public enthusiasm for environmental reform, moral uplift, and, indeed, public libraries, waned. Although the late 1910s and 1920s were not boom years for North Carolina public libraries, some new libraries were established, existing ones expanded service, and the first libraries centralized under county, rather than municipal, authority emerged. The present chapter starts with a focus on government relations with libraries, before moving on to the themes of grassroots organizing and philanthropy.

Overall, during and after World War I, North Carolina public libraries gained a new cultural legitimacy but remained under-funded. Relatively few new public libraries were

---

<sup>2</sup> For the character of early progressive government, see Arthur S. Link and Richard L. McCormick, *Progressivism* (Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1983), 59-61. During the war, businessmen entered progressive federal government through the War Industries Board (WIB) and the Council of National Defense (CND), which were responsible for coordinating war mobilization efforts. President Wilson needed the expertise and resources of business leaders to mobilize industry and government for total war. Wilson recruited Wall Street financier Bernard Baruch to head the WIB, and Walter S. Gifford of the American Telephone and Telegraph Company to head the CND. Businessmen also staffed the War Finance Corporation and the Fuel Administration, agencies which had the power, respectively, to allocate a billion dollars of public money to industries converting to wartime production and to ration coal and oil. See Otis L. Graham, Jr., *The Great Campaigns: Reform and War in America, 1900-1928* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 103, and Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity*, 34-35. See also Greg Bradsher, “The Council of National Defense: Now a Little Known or Appreciated World War I Federal Agency,” *The Text Message* (blog), August 15, 2017, National Archives, Washington, DC, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2017/08/15/the-council-of-national-defense-now-a-little-known-or-appreciated-world-war-i-federal-agency/>.

<sup>3</sup> The wartime “‘entente’ between big business and government” transformed the attitude of business toward government and vice versa. No longer did corporate executives fear regulatory agencies, as they had under President Roosevelt. During the war, federal authority placed the nation’s industries under the centralized control of the WIB and its associated agencies, with future lessons for business. Steel, lumber, oil, and copper companies saw double-digit percentages on returns of investment, while net profits of national banks reached a forty-year high. Centralization became a keyword of business after the war, and businessmen sought to shape federal regulatory policy rather than fight it. See Graham, Jr., *The Great Campaigns*, 104-105.

established in the 1920s. The North Carolina Library Commission reported that thirty-five counties contained a public library in 1920, forty-six counties in 1927, and fifty-two counties in 1930.<sup>4</sup> Ironically, the expansion of municipal and county governments in the 1920s thinned out the available revenue for all but a few core projects, including public schools, good roads, and public health. The Commission reported in 1920 that the “constantly enlarging expense of municipal government has made it almost impossible for the town authorities to provide adequately for all municipal departments, and public library service has suffered probably more than any other town activity.”<sup>5</sup> This would remain true throughout the decade. While most public libraries did not see significantly expanded budgets, they did gain a secondhand benefit from the increased government spending on schools, roads, and health. By investing in these three areas, the “business progressive” state hoped to grow the economy, which had taken a downturn after the war. State and local governments took on unprecedented levels of bonded debt and passed new taxes, such as the gasoline tax, but public spending was concentrated in areas other than libraries. Still, librarians found ways to benefit indirectly from the investment. From public school administrators, the library community borrowed the idea of the county as the central administrative unit and primary area of service. The good roads movement provided thousands of miles of paved roads on which to operate “book trucks,” and justified asking for donations to purchase one. The expansion of public health and welfare agencies gave libraries an opportunity to serve the state by distributing health information and delivering books to hospital patients.

---

<sup>4</sup> North Carolina Library Commission, *Sixth Biennial Report of the North Carolina Library Commission: 1919-1920* (Raleigh, NC: Edwards and Broughton, 1921), 22-23; “Hardly Started Yet,” *UNC News Letter*, November 23, 1927; Patrick M. Valentine, “The Spread of Public Libraries: The Community of the Book in North Carolina,” *North Carolina Libraries* 54, no. 3 (1996): 116.

<sup>5</sup> North Carolina Library Commission, *Sixth Biennial Report*, 9.

Librarians and libraries therefore gained a new cultural relevance by endorsing or participating in the agenda of the business progressive state.

Grassroots activity and philanthropy continued in the 1920s, but at a reduced level. Across the state, women's clubs continued to fundraise, establish libraries, and try to pass ownership to municipal governments. However, few municipalities were willing or able to redirect or increase local taxes to maintain a public library. As passionate supporters of public libraries, women's clubs grew frustrated at the reluctance of city officials and voters to support a valuable community institution. A disappointing aspect of club work at this time was the failure of clubwomen to combine their work in the post-war interracial movement with library activity. It seems that black and white clubwomen did not collaborate to expand library service for African-Americans in this era. At the same time as clubwomen, the North Carolina Library Association (NCLA) grew frustrated at the lack of public enthusiasm for libraries. In 1927, the NCLA launched the Citizens Library Movement, a publicity campaign which encouraged citizens to organize libraries and vote for ongoing tax support. The movement had limited success in the 1920s, but members introduced a bill for state aid to libraries in the late 1930s, which passed in 1941. Library philanthropy did not flourish in the 1920s, as the Carnegie Corporation discontinued its library grants and few local philanthropists donated to libraries. There were a few exceptions. Citizens donated money for book trucks for the Greensboro, Durham, and Davidson County public libraries, and four wealthy families paid for new library buildings in Edenton, Rocky Mount, Henderson, and Greenville. At the end of the decade, the Rosenwald Fund initiated a muddled, largely ineffective grant program, which yielded no long-lasting benefit. While philanthropy was active in the 1920s, it did not constitute a widespread trend.

How can we characterize librarians' professional activities at the start of the period under discussion, in wartime? Librarians were defenders neither of intellectual freedom nor political dissidence as wartime laws infringed on civil liberties, industrialists and financiers captured government, and the dominant culture encouraged conformity.<sup>6</sup> Rather, like members of other middle-class professions which had matured during the progressive era, librarians found "a clear identity and a clear set of professional goals" in supporting the war effort.<sup>7</sup> Under pressure in a climate of conformity, many progressives reverted to the language of moral absolutes, which they had once repudiated in favor of dispassionate scientific analysis. In part, moral absolutism had always been a part of the reform impulse. Early progressive reforms had been led by elites "dispensing national discipline" in a "drive for enforced conformity...."<sup>8</sup> Campaigns for prohibition, restricted immigration, sexual temperance, and even literacy and libraries projected a specific vision of the ideal American citizen: sober, Anglo-Saxon, non-promiscuous, and literate in the European literary canon. Wartime mobilization brought out absolutist tendencies in full force. The decision to wage war could not be scientifically, dispassionately analyzed. It could not be challenged. One was either for or against the United States. Practically, moral absolutism empowered progressives. Their professional expertise was legitimized through its application to the war effort. Everywhere, the "war opened new opportunities in government for professors,

---

<sup>6</sup> In wartime, librarians discovered an elevated sense of purpose by making public libraries model patriotic institutions. In the South, the St. Louis Public Library put a Liberty Loan brochure in every book, while one Maryland library gladly distributed literature from the Committee on Public Information, a federal war propaganda agency. Examples from North Carolina will follow in the main body of this paper. See Wayne A. Wiegand, *"An Active Instrument for Propaganda": The American Public Library During World War I* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), 53, 60.

<sup>7</sup> Wiegand, *"An Active Instrument for Propaganda,"* 5-6, 31.

<sup>8</sup> Graham, Jr., *The Great Campaigns*, 153-154.

social workers, and other university-trained men and women.”<sup>9</sup> By participating fully in wartime mobilization activities and embracing moral absolutism, progressives found a renewed purpose, greater cultural relevance, and often more government support. Librarians were no exception.

In North Carolina, librarians participated in book drives coordinated by the American Library Association (ALA) and food conservation campaigns overseen by the US Food Administration (USFA). The president of the North Carolina Library Association (NCLA) even volunteered to serve as a librarian at US Army camps in Louisiana and Germany. Through these three major wartime activities, North Carolina librarians advanced their own importance in service to the state. The first activity, the ALA book drive for soldiers, was conducted in March 1918. The drive was operated through a nationwide network of local library “captains” who collected books in their immediate communities.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, each state had its own coordinating director. The purpose of the drive was to supply reading material for soldiers stationed at military camps at home and abroad. The state director for North Carolina was Mary F. DeVane, librarian at the Goldsboro Public Library, whose connection to the state’s Women’s Clubs enabled her to coordinate local book drives “not only in towns having public libraries but also in many towns without libraries.”<sup>11</sup> Donated books were to be sent to Camp Greene, near Charlotte, which at one point housed about 65,000 National Guard and Army personnel.<sup>12</sup> To encourage civilians to donate, the state Library Commission circulated a quote from an unnamed general, probably taken from ALA promotional literature. “There is no form of recreation more

---

<sup>9</sup> Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity*, 35.

<sup>10</sup> Wiegand, “*An Active Instrument for Propaganda*,” 63.

<sup>11</sup> “The Book Campaign,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 10 (1918): 97.

<sup>12</sup> William A. Link, *North Carolina: Change and Tradition in a Southern State*, 2nd ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018), 344.

beneficial,” stated the general, “or more diverting to the members of this command than the reading of properly selected books, magazines, etc....”<sup>13</sup> A Chapel Hill newspaper specified what kind of books to donate: detective novels, engineering books, science textbooks, history and biography, dictionaries, but not “worn-out books” and “books that appeal especially to women.”<sup>14</sup> Assessing the book drive’s outcome in June, DeVane pronounced it a success, with 20,598 books collected and sent to Camp Greene, except for 2,225 books split between the US Naval Base at Wilmington and Fort Caswell on Oak Island.<sup>15</sup> Forty towns had contributed to the drive, with Asheville by far the most generous contributor. Residents of the mountain city had donated over 3,000 books, and “the local fire department volunteered to pack books collected into crates for shipping to camp libraries.”<sup>16</sup> Nothing could be more patriotic than the provision of supplies directly to soldiers. Through the book drive, North Carolina librarians proved their patriotism and value to society.

Librarians’ participation in the federal food conservation and war garden programs similarly reinforced their professional value. The USFA managed the food conservation program, which used volunteers and existing institutions to carry out a national campaign. The goal was to divert much of the commercially produced food in the United States to European allies suffering from food shortages. Libraries were one institution used to promote the food conservation campaign.<sup>17</sup> In late 1917, Boston librarian Edith Guerrier was appointed head of the

---

<sup>13</sup> “Books and Soldiers,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 11 (1918): 110.

<sup>14</sup> “Two Million Books Needed for Soldiers and Sailors,” *The Tar Heel*, March 16, 1918.

<sup>15</sup> Mary DeVane, “The Book Campaign in North Carolina,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 11 (1918): 113.

<sup>16</sup> Wiegand, “*An Active Instrument for Propaganda*,” 67.

<sup>17</sup> Wiegand, “*An Active Instrument for Propaganda*,” 71-72.

USFA Library Section, which encouraged public libraries to distribute economical recipes, host lectures on food conservation, and create book displays of food conservation literature.

Concurrent with the USFA campaign, the National War Garden Commission promoted “war gardens” (after the war, known as victory gardens). Americans were encouraged to grow and eat from their own fruit and vegetable gardens at home, thus freeing up food on the open market for export to the allied nations overseas.<sup>18</sup> Hundreds of public libraries hosted demonstration gardens on their property. Together, the USFA and Garden Commission programs helped the United States nourish its allies and win the war. Again, librarians demonstrated their value to American society.

North Carolina librarians embraced the food conservation and war garden campaigns. The state Library Commission provided libraries with a “list of books on Vegetable Gardening” and another on “foods, food values, and food conservation.”<sup>19</sup> The Gastonia Public Library, which had just opened as a free public library in March 1917, established a definite purpose in its community by creating a “patriotic room” filled with flags, soldiers’ pictures, and “Food Administration bulletins and posters...”<sup>20</sup> The Carnegie Library of Charlotte set up a book display in its lobby on the theme of “War-time Economy in the Home,” while the Durham Public Library “placed in a conspicuous place all the pamphlets for free distribution suggested by the Food Administration.”<sup>21</sup> Pamphlets being printed by the Department of Agriculture, and circulated through agencies like the USFA, included “The Home Garden in the South” and “The

---

<sup>18</sup> Wiegand, “*An Active Instrument for Propaganda*,” 80.

<sup>19</sup> “The Library Commission and the War,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 7 (1917): 57.

<sup>20</sup> Mrs. J.Y. Miller, “The Gastonia Public Library,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 11 (1918): 119.

<sup>21</sup> “North Carolina Libraries and Food Conservation,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 9 (1917): 89.

Small Vegetable Garden.”<sup>22</sup> Tar Heel librarians also sought out new techniques of advertising the food conservation campaign. At a 1918 district meeting of the NCLA, held in Winston-Salem, the USFA’s Edith Guerrier spoke about using bulletin boards to promote food conservation.<sup>23</sup> The eight librarians in attendance took the bulletin board idea with them back to their libraries. Participation in the food conservation effort further solidified libraries’ status as an essential feature of North Carolina towns. They provided an invaluable public service.

One North Carolina librarian not only participated in book drives and food conservation efforts but also volunteered to serve as a US Army librarian. In September 1918, Lillian Baker Griggs of the Durham Public Library, also NCLA president that year, was appointed supervisor of camp libraries in New Orleans.<sup>24</sup> These camp libraries were administered by the ALA on behalf of the War Department. The ALA selected Griggs on account of her demonstrated leadership at the Durham Public Library, where she had cataloged the once-disorderly book collection and continuously increased the annual budget. At the war’s end, Griggs received another assignment, this time to Germany. “She spent the year of 1919,” according to her biographer, “stationed with the Third Army in Coblenz, Germany, where she handled mail order requests and traveled ‘into villages up and down the rivers’ to supply hospitals in the area with books and periodicals.”<sup>25</sup> Although Griggs reported a shortage of books due to war-damaged transportation networks, she expressed overall enthusiasm for her job and pleasure at receiving

---

<sup>22</sup> “Why Big Gardens Must Be Grown,” *Polk County News*, March 1, 1918.

<sup>23</sup> “The District Meetings – Second District,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 11 (1918): 111-112.

<sup>24</sup> Mrs. A.F. Griggs, “The United War Work Campaign,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 12 (1918): 123.

<sup>25</sup> Betty Irene Young, “Lillian Baker Griggs: Pioneer Librarian,” *The Durham Record* 1 (1983): 34.

24,000 new books in one unusually busy week.<sup>26</sup> She returned to Durham in December 1919. In the next few years, she would remain busy, securing a new \$40,000 Carnegie library building in 1921 and a Kiwanis Club-donated bookmobile in 1923.<sup>27</sup> The patriotic war work of Griggs and other North Carolina librarians no doubt bolstered their credibility in the dominant post-war culture of conformity, and likely encouraged Carnegie's unusually large grant and the Kiwanis Club's expensive gift.

After the war, the state Library Commission heralded the emergence of "the new library" with an elevated place in American society. America had been changed by the war, and the public library would serve the new needs of the nation's people. In the post-war nation, with its growing public education system and adoption of maximum daily work hours across most industries, people would have more time for "self-development." The public library would be an essential resource in the self-development of an American citizenry changed by war and by modern patterns of work, leisure, and education. The Commission's newsletter stated:

To visualize the tremendous changes which will take place in our educational, economic and social life during the next ten years almost staggers the imagination. ... The big lesson, the big professional lesson which the war has taught librarians, is the necessity for adaptability; that it is not for the library to change the people but to adapt itself to meet the demands and needs of the people. The old library, old in spirit, adopted the defensive attitude and fought hard to maintain its sacred traditions and well-beloved regulations. The new library, leagued with the forces of freedom and progress, makes war against the forces of ignorance, indifference, obstruction and selfishness. This new library will occupy a far more influential position in the new world in which we are now living and it must prepare to discharge its obligations and to make the most of its opportunities.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> "Mrs. Griggs in Coblenz," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 2-3 (1919): 22; "Extracts from Mrs. Griggs' Letters," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 4 (1919): 38.

<sup>27</sup> "North Carolina Libraries and Librarians," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 7 (1920): 91; "North Carolina Libraries and Librarians," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 10 (1921): 141; Young, "Lillian Baker Griggs," 36-37.

<sup>28</sup> "The New Library," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 1 (1918): 1.

This sentiment reflected familiar progressive rhetoric by identifying a supposedly unmet need in society and declaring that only a specific type of professional—instead of one’s family or neighbors—could fill that need. In the New Library idea, librarians articulated a firm purpose for themselves as developers of the modern, educated individual. Of course, it would be up to the professionals to define what was acceptable in modern Americans’ behaviors and beliefs.

North Carolina librarians backed post-war Americanization efforts, for example, which aimed to reshape immigrants into acceptable Americans. The push for Americanization arose out of native-born white Americans’ heightened uneasiness about foreigners, as a result of the war. In 1919, the Library Commission articulated the role of public libraries in the push:

North Carolina has only a small foreign population, it is true, but librarians should remember that Americanization in its broadest sense means not only the training of foreigners but of all citizens in the ideals of American government, of American life and of American institutions. And every library should be able to meet the demand for books along these lines.<sup>29</sup>

It was librarians’ duty to advance the culture of conformity, even among native-born citizens.

Yet the main focus was on immigrants, especially in light of the 1919 Red Scare. An Alamance County newspaper reported how librarians sought “to carry the message of American ideals and traditions” to the “fifteen millions of foreign born in the United States,” of whom “six millions do not read or speak the English language.”<sup>30</sup> When the ALA launched its “Books for Everybody” movement in 1920, immigrants were foremost among the intended beneficiaries. An

---

<sup>29</sup> Mary S. Yates, “After the War, What?,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 2-3 (1919): 19.

<sup>30</sup> “Librarians Join Fight on Unrest,” *Alamance Gleaner*, February 20, 1920.

editorial in the *Raleigh Times*, reprinted in other newspapers, lauded the potential effect of the movement on immigrants to North Carolina:

In view of the rapid industrial development which is bringing into North Carolina an increasing number of new Americans from Foreign shores, who must depend upon public libraries to give them their education in American language, institutions, and ideals, the general need for library facilities throughout the State is declared to present a serious situation.<sup>31</sup>

Public libraries' role in Americanization efforts elevated their status in the fabric of American society, while reinforcing their decidedly conservative character in the 1920s.

The new senses of mission and of institutional power expressed in the New Library rhetoric show how North Carolina librarians shared in the rising "contentment of the urban middle classes," as a generation of middle-class professionals sought to solidify their social status in post-war society.<sup>32</sup> Instead of seeking to correct misgovernment or reform business practices, many progressives accepted the status quo. They sought greater credibility for their professions in the dominant conservative culture, as well as increased political influence. As progressives' activities turned inward toward self-advancement, they less often challenged prevailing political policy and the unfair treatment of society's underclass.<sup>33</sup> The pre-war enthusiasm for progressive crusades that addressed social welfare diminished. Business interests were ascendant and people were ready for a return to "normalcy," a condition that Senator Warren G. Harding of Ohio promised would prevail if voters elected him President in 1920,

---

<sup>31</sup> "'Books for Everybody Movement' Launched," *Dunn Dispatch*, May 11, 1920.

<sup>32</sup> Arthur S. Link, "What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920's?," *American Historical Review* 64, no. 4 (1959): 843.

<sup>33</sup> Michael E. Parrish, *Anxious Decades: America in Prosperity and Depression, 1920-1941* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1992), 114-115; Link, "What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920's?," 844; Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity*, 124.

which they did.<sup>34</sup> As the New Library pursued a “more influential position” in society, Tar Heel librarians found ways to “make the most of” the increased presence of the state in three areas vastly expanded by business-progressive policies: education, health, and transportation.<sup>35</sup> Librarians accepted that “progress” in public policy now “carried the meaning of efficiency and development rather than reform.”<sup>36</sup> Librarians, like other professionals, stood to benefit by joining in the state’s aims to apply “scientific knowledge, expertise, and effective administration in the public arena” and to become an efficient “provider of vital new services.”<sup>37</sup> In this era, a range of technical professionals, including librarians, teachers, health care workers, and road-building contractors, wanted to prove themselves critical partners—and financial and political beneficiaries—of the state, by providing “vital new services” like libraries, health departments, consolidated schools, and good roads.

One way to explore how North Carolina librarians sought to expand the role of their institutions is to show how they borrowed ideas from, worked in partnership with, or benefitted indirectly from the state-sponsored growth of the public school, health care, and road systems. Starting with the connection to schools, North Carolina public libraries followed the trends set by the public school system in the 1920s, in terms of adopting the county as the ideal unit of service, serving as a means of socialization into a particular version of American-ness, and accomplishing the extension and centralization of state and local government. Of course, the

---

<sup>34</sup> Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity*, 89; Parrish, *Anxious Decades*, 7-8.

<sup>35</sup> George B. Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 284.

<sup>36</sup> Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, 223, 233.

<sup>37</sup> Dewey W. Grantham, “The Contours of Southern Progressivism,” *American Historical Review* 86, no. 5 (1981): 1049.

growth of libraries did not match the growth of schools, since few public concerns surpassed the money and planning effort spent on public education. Nevertheless, public schools and libraries continued to follow parallel tracks of development through the 1920s, in terms of educational goals and administrative structure, even if the number of libraries remained far fewer than the number of schools. In 1920, the state Library Commission counted thirty-six free public libraries, while the state Department of Public Instruction counted 455 two-year or four-year high schools.<sup>38</sup> In some respects, the growth of public libraries and high schools should be comparable, since both systems started to really build up in the first decade of the twentieth century. It is not expected that the number of public libraries would equal the number of high schools, of course. But it should be expected that in 1920, when every county had multiple high schools (although of varying quality), that every county should also have at least one central public library. However, this was not the case. While the growth in numbers between the two institutions was not proportionate, it is true that both shared the goals of citizen socialization, administrative centralization, and county-level governance.

The centralization of the North Carolina public schools provided a model for public library centralization. State superintendent James Y. Joyner started the process under Governor Aycock. Small school districts were consolidated into larger units. The standard school term was increased to five months in 1913, to six months in 1919.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, taxpayers were taking on public education as a valid expense. By 1915, voters had approved local school taxes in one-fourth of North Carolina's school districts, and "local taxes made up almost a third of the

---

<sup>38</sup> Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., *Eugene Clyde Brooks: Educator and Public Servant* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1960), 160; "Statistics of Public Libraries," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 7 (1920): 95.

<sup>39</sup> Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, 260.

[state's] total school expenditures from public sources.”<sup>40</sup> Eugene C. Brooks, Joyner's successor after 1919, established a statewide school budget system, made counties the local unit of school administration (rather than sub-county districts), and lobbied for the creation of a State Division of Negro Education headed by a GEB-funded agent. One exemplary result of smarter school budgeting, alongside a state-funded system of paved roads, was that the number of school buses in the state increased from six in 1915 to 247 in 1919.<sup>41</sup> At the same time, more teacher training schools were built for both blacks and whites, including county training schools that also served as high schools for rural black students. Thus, in the 1910s-20s the state's public school system expanded under centralized state and county control, modern accounting techniques, and improved bussing for rural students.

Public libraries in North Carolina aspired to the same goals of centralization and expansion of service as public schools did. However, they would have a more difficult time achieving it. In the decade after the war, the main concern of library boosters and the Library Commission was county-wide library service. They wanted libraries to serve the entire rural population of the state. Ideally, libraries would follow the public school system in making the county the unit of public library administration. The *UNC News Letter* made the connection explicit: “The most strategic position in the rural public library, similar to the consolidated school in education, is the county library which is steadily gaining ground as a large unit type of service.”<sup>42</sup> At the 1919 NCLA meeting, Commission director Minnie L. Blanton, in her last

---

<sup>40</sup> Dewey W. Grantham, *Southern Progressivism: The Reconciliation of Progress and Tradition* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), 251.

<sup>41</sup> Gatewood, Jr., *Eugene Clyde Brooks*, 156-157.

<sup>42</sup> “State Government Expenditures - Again Guilford Leads,” *UNC News Letter*, May 11, 1927.

speech before retiring as director, stressed the need for county service. Up to then, almost all of the state's public libraries had been part of municipal governments, with some county commissions contracting with the city for countywide service. "I think the county library is better adapted to North Carolina's needs," Blanton stated, "Hence, whenever I think of the library millennium in North Carolina I visualize a wonderful county system consisting of a strong public library in each of her one hundred counties."<sup>43</sup>

In starker language, UNC librarian Louis R. Wilson argued for county-wide service at the 1923 NCLA conference: "North Carolina is primarily an agricultural state with a few large cities. Consequently, the county must be made the unit for book distribution."<sup>44</sup> However, Wilson had to report that as of 1923, only "Greensboro, Durham, and very recently Winston" had established county-wide library service.<sup>45</sup> In 1924, UNC's Extension Division highlighted the need to provide free reading material to rural North Carolinians through county libraries. An Extension newsletter summarized a survey of "1000 farm homes in three typical areas of the state," which showed that only 20.3 percent subscribed to daily newspapers, 26.8 percent received farm newspapers, 19 percent had magazine subscriptions, 1.5 percent received "children's papers," and 47.5 percent took in no papers or magazines at all.<sup>46</sup> A county library would furnish reading material for rural families who could not afford newspaper or magazine subscriptions.

---

<sup>43</sup> Minnie L. Blanton, "Library Needs of North Carolina," *North Carolina Library Bulletin*, 4, no. 5 (1919): 45.

<sup>44</sup> Louis R. Wilson, "A Ten-Year Library Program for North Carolina," *North Carolina Library Bulletin*, 5, no. 9 (1923): 162.

<sup>45</sup> Louis R. Wilson, "Library Development in North Carolina," *Library Journal* 48, no. 1 (1923): 22.

<sup>46</sup> E.D. Apple, "County Library Service - What a Survey Shows," *UNC News Letter*, May 7, 1924.

Furthermore, county libraries could mail books to households without a car or other means of transportation.

The call for county libraries in North Carolina was also influenced by the examples of libraries in other states, which were often cited in ALA publications. California, Maryland, and Ohio were the pioneers in using the county, rather than city, as the unit of library service. An early hero of county service was Mary L. Titcomb, librarian of Hagerstown in Washington County, Maryland. Her personal testimony was reprinted and circulated by the North Carolina Library Commission. Titcomb gave a clear picture of countywide service:

After the central library was established in Hagerstown [in 1900], seventy-five deposit stations were created over the county: some in country stores, some in creameries, others at the toll-gates, the postoffice, or maybe in a private house. Fifty to sixty books covering a wide range of subjects and fiction were sent from the central library. They were exchanged every sixty or ninety days. From these deposit stations the books were lent throughout the neighborhood... [by] the storekeeper, the postmaster, or the collector at the toll-gate. Many of these stations were so far from trolley or railway that it was necessary to use a Concord wagon to transport the boxes of books from the central library to the stations. This gave rise to the idea that a wagon fitted with book shelves going over the mountain roads, stopping at each house, would be a splendid way to take the library to the people.<sup>47</sup>

Eventually, the deposit stations were discontinued and the wagon replaced with a motorized truck, but the principle of countywide service remained the same. In California, as of July 1918, forty-two of fifty-eight counties had county libraries managed by trained librarians.<sup>48</sup>

The idea of a county-wide service unit was further promoted by a campaign launched by the ALA in 1920, dubbed the Enlarged Program or the “Books for Everybody” movement. One

---

<sup>47</sup> Mary L. Titcomb, “The Washington County Free Library,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 11 (1921): 149.

<sup>48</sup> E.D. Apple, “County Library Service - In Other States,” *UNC News Letter*, May 7, 1924.

of the “cardinal points” of the Enlarged Program was “the extension of the county library system.”<sup>49</sup> In North Carolina, Annie F. Petty, chair of the Library Commission and librarian at the state College for Women, coordinated state participation in the program, which involved fundraising and publicity for libraries.<sup>50</sup> The program targeted several constituencies, including veterans, active-duty military, farmers, and immigrants. Appealing to lingering wartime patriotism, the Commission reminded citizens that “many North Carolina ex-service men,” coast guard officers, and lighthouse keepers were still without the “technical books” that expanded library service could provide.<sup>51</sup> Highlighting another group addressed by the program, the ALA published letters from farmers. Letters revealed that “the farmer is asking for books,” and he “wanted to know if he could make fuel alcohol from frozen potatoes and spoiled fruits, and if he could, were there any books on the subject. The requests run the whole range of farm operations.”<sup>52</sup> Books on fuel production, hog raising, and crop rotation were among requests that the ALA was able to fulfill. By implementing county-wide service, libraries could be useful to more people. Books could be delivered by mail to rural residents or to book deposit stations.

Until the late 1920s, the state Library Commission remained the primary provider of library service to rural county residents, who could request books by mail from Raleigh. The Scales Library Act of 1897 and the revised version of 1911 had only allowed municipalities to establish libraries. A 1917 amendment allowed county governments to contract with municipal libraries to extend service out into the county. In the early 1920s, the counties of Durham and

---

<sup>49</sup> “Librarians Join Fight on Unrest,” *Alamance Gleaner*, February 20, 1920.

<sup>50</sup> “Enlarged Program of the A.L.A.,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin*, 4, no. 6 (1920): 61.

<sup>51</sup> “Books for Everybody,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 7 (1920): 81.

<sup>52</sup> “Farm Dwellers Ask for Books,” *Brevard News*, May 7, 1920.

Guilford contracted with the cities of Durham and Greensboro, respectively. In 1927, state law finally enabled counties to create and directly operate public libraries.<sup>53</sup> One of the first to do so was Davidson County. Before 1928, neither of Davidson County's two largest cities, Lexington and Thomasville, had public libraries. In May of that year, county commissioners approved an annual appropriation of \$5,000 for a county library, and Lexington and Thomasville added appropriations of \$1,500 each.<sup>54</sup> The county, empowered by the new law and backed by two city councils, opened the Davidson County Library in October 1928. Nearly a decade after Minnie L. Blanton's NCLA address on the need for countywide service, the state's first county library had been founded. By 1930, eighteen counties would have county-wide service, either through contracts with cities or via county-managed libraries.<sup>55</sup> Eighteen out of one hundred counties was a start, but it fell far short of librarians' hopes. The foundations had been set for a statewide system of public libraries with the county as the basic service unit, but it would take a few decades for that system to fully emerge. The introduction of state aid in the 1940s and federal aid in the 1950s would prove to be crucial. Until then, most rural residents would remain without local library service.

The second major concern that benefitted from business-progressive government was roads. Just as paved roads bolstered schools by easing the way for school buses, so they bolstered libraries by making them accessible to an increasingly commonplace mode of transportation—the automobile. In 1917, North Carolina established its first Highway Commission, one of the

---

<sup>53</sup> Valentine, "The Spread of Public Libraries," 115; North Carolina Library Commission, ed., *Handbook of the Citizens' Library Movement* (Charlotte, NC: North Carolina Library Association, 1928), 27-29.

<sup>54</sup> Thornton W. Mitchell, *The State Library and Library Development in North Carolina* (Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1983), 30, 37.

<sup>55</sup> Valentine, "The Spread of Public Libraries," 116.

last Southern states to do so. The Federal Aid Road Act of 1916 was a catalyst, as it offered matching federal grants to state highway commissions to build roads. The Act also “gave the auto industry a larger government subsidy than railroads received in their entire history.”<sup>56</sup> Although road projects were sidelined by the war, they resumed in full force afterwards. North Carolina officials were more than willing to spend, and “by 1920 some eighty counties... had borrowed a total of \$84.5 million to build and improve roads.”<sup>57</sup> In 1921, Governor Cameron Morrison approved a \$50 million bond for highways and a one-cent-per-gallon tax on gasoline.<sup>58</sup> The gasoline tax generated \$1,427,390 in revenue in 1922-23, and \$3,979,855.50 in 1923-24.<sup>59</sup> The number of cars in need of good roads rose quickly too. In 1921, there were 148,627 automobiles registered in North Carolina, which increased to 246,812 in 1923 and to 430,499 in 1927.<sup>60</sup> In 1923, Louis R. Wilson complained that the total number of books in all of the state’s public libraries, at 231,262, was comparable to the total number of registered automobiles, when it should be much more.<sup>61</sup> Perhaps Wilson should not have been so discouraged, since the resulting investment in paved roads benefitted bookmobiles.

The idea of a motorized bookmobile was preceded by the horse-drawn book wagon, as described in Mary Titcomb’s description of rural library service in Maryland circa 1900. In 1921,

---

<sup>56</sup> Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity*, 184.

<sup>57</sup> Link, *North Carolina*, 350.

<sup>58</sup> Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, 226.

<sup>59</sup> “Tax on Autos and Gas Make Large Amount,” *Watauga Democrat*, January 15, 1925.

<sup>60</sup> North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development, *North Carolina Resources and Industries* (report), reprinted in *North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries*, ed. Hugh T. Lefler (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1934), 418.

<sup>61</sup> Wilson, “A Ten-Year Library Program for North Carolina,” 162.

the editors of the *UNC News Letter*—one of them was Wilson—promoted traveling book wagons as an exciting tool of the county library. “A book wagon or automobile,” the editors wrote, “can be run on a regular fortnightly schedule, and can serve every local station” around the county.<sup>62</sup> The first book truck in North Carolina belonged to the Durham Public Library. It was paid for by the local Kiwanis Club, at the request of head librarian Lillian Griggs and county school superintendent R.L. Baldwin, who was a Kiwanis member.<sup>63</sup> Named *Miss Kiwanis*, the truck was fitted with shelving for 600 books and made its first trip on October 17, 1923. Three years later, the Greensboro Public Library debuted its own book truck. The truck visited eight towns in rural Guilford County over four days, lending 566 books and registering 400 new library users. Assistant librarian Patsy Donnell was in charge of the book truck.<sup>64</sup> One newspaper noted the “glass-covered shelves on each side of the truck and a desk formed by letting down the back,” while another noted that, in its first six months, the Greensboro book truck loaned 28,000 volumes to 3,400 patrons, for an average of 150 books loaned per day from the truck.<sup>65</sup> Head librarian Nellie Rowe put a human face on the book truck’s success story when she recounted how, at one designated rural stop, a “small school-boy waited from 7 o’clock until 11 for fear of missing his books.”<sup>66</sup> Making less of a press sensation was the Davidson County Library’s book

---

<sup>62</sup> “County Library a Success - Distinctive Advantages,” *UNC News Letter*, August 3, 1921.

<sup>63</sup> Jessica Harland-Jacobs, “A New Era,” in *The History of Public Library Service in Durham, 1897-1997*, accessed March 9, 2020, [https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/dclhistory\\_04.php](https://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/dclhistory/dclhistory_04.php)

<sup>64</sup> “Book Truck Service Started by Library in Guilford County,” *High Life*, November 11, 1926.

<sup>65</sup> “State Government Expenditures - Again Guilford Leads,” *UNC News Letter*, May 11, 1927; “Books and Dogs,” *UNC News Letter*, June 1, 1927.

<sup>66</sup> Nellie M. Rowe, “The Guilford County Book Truck,” *UNC Extension Bulletin* 7, no. 13 (1928): 70.

truck, donated in 1928 by furniture manufacturer Charles F. Finch of Thomasville.<sup>67</sup> The truck would prove invaluable as the library sought to expand its service out to rural districts in the late 1920s and 1930s.

Following the success of Durham and Greensboro, the NCLA campaigned in 1927 to raise money for a book truck which could be loaned out, through the Library Commission, to libraries around the state for short periods. Goldsboro librarian Mary F. DeVane worked with the state Federation of Women's Clubs to raise some of the first funds for the campaign.<sup>68</sup> More donations came in from around the state, from as far afield as Jackson County, where the librarian of the Cullowhee State Normal School collected money from the local Community Life Club.<sup>69</sup> Although the NCLA accumulated a sizable fund, the Library Commission could not accept the money. The state legislature would not approve an increase in the Commission's budget, which was needed to maintain a book truck once it was purchased.<sup>70</sup> The Commission had to wait until 1936 before it could accept the money, buy a truck, and loan it to counties which did not have their own book trucks.

The third area, besides schools and roads, that transformed under the control of the business-progressive state was public health. As in public education, philanthropies financed experimental programs that were later fully turned over to state and county government. For

---

<sup>67</sup> North Carolina Library Commission, ed., *Handbook of the Citizens' Library Movement*, 16, 26; Mitchell, *The State Library and Library Development in North Carolina*, 30; M. Jewell Sink, *Davidson County: Economic and Social* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Department of Rural-Social Economics, 1925), 36; *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Finch, Thomas Austin, Sr.," by M. Jewell Sink, accessed March 27, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/finch-thomas-austin-sr>

<sup>68</sup> "Miss DeVane Is to Attend Meet," *Goldsboro News*, May 1, 1927.

<sup>69</sup> "Cullowhee News," *Jackson County Journal*, July 13, 1927.

<sup>70</sup> Mitchell, *The State Library and Library Development in North Carolina*, 32.

example, in 1909 the Rockefeller Foundation financed the Sanitary Commission for the Eradication of Hookworm, which aimed to research the prevalence of hookworm infection in the South and to cure the infected.<sup>71</sup> In the next two years, the State Board of Health hired its first full-time director and its first official in charge of eradicating hookworm.<sup>72</sup> By the time the Sanitary Commission dissolved in 1915, the state had authorized counties to operate health departments, thus expanding local government bureaucracy in the name of modernizing, progressive reform. After the Mississippi River flood of 1927 brought famine and a pellagra epidemic to multiple Southern states, Rockefeller partnered with the US Public Health Service to fund county boards of health across the South.<sup>73</sup> Philanthropy and federal aid bolstered North Carolina's public health system. The system encompassed social welfare, too, which came under greater state responsibility. In 1917, the North Carolina Board of Charities was enlarged to encompass Public Welfare too, becoming one the South's first state social welfare agencies.<sup>74</sup> Under the leadership of Kate Burr Johnson, ex-president of the state Federation of Women's Clubs, the Welfare Board enacted a number of significant reforms through the 1920s, including separate penal institutions for juvenile offenders, amendments to child labor laws, and the establishment of a farm colony for female convicts.<sup>75</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> Mandy Foss, "Hookworms," *NCpedia* (database), accessed March 14, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/history/health/hookworms>

<sup>72</sup> *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, s.v. "Public Health, Part 1," by J. Mazzocchi, accessed March 14, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/public-health>; *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Ferrell, John Atkinson," by Claiborne T. Smith, Jr., accessed March 14, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/ferrell-john-atkinson>

<sup>73</sup> Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, 280-281.

<sup>74</sup> Link, *North Carolina*, 356.

<sup>75</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Johnson, Kate Ancrum Burr," by Mollie C. Davis, accessed March 14, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/johnson-kate>

Libraries joined in the cause of public health by distributing health literature and catering to the infirm in various institutions. For example, the ALA Enlarged Program had endorsed hospital library service for “former service men,” of whom “8,000 are in Public Health Service hospitals.”<sup>76</sup> North Carolina heeded the call in 1920, when the Library Commission distributed a portion of 6,000 books provided by the ALA to “hospitals having former service men as patients.”<sup>77</sup> Two years later, Lillian Griggs organized a library at the Watts Hospital in Durham, while over in Asheville the US Veterans’ Bureau took over administration of the Veterans’ Hospital Library and expanded its staff and physical facilities.<sup>78</sup> In 1927, the Greensboro Public Library began a service at the Wesley Long Hospital, wheeling books to patients via a hand-cart.<sup>79</sup> In addition to serving hospital patients, librarians took part in distributing health information. For example, in 1919 the Winston-Salem Public Library participated in a sex education campaign led by the US Public Health Service, to get the “right kind of books dealing with sex problems” to readers.<sup>80</sup> Libraries compiled curated lists of the “right kind of books” and distributed free pamphlets provided by the State Board of Health. In a separate statewide campaign led by the Board of Health and Department of Agriculture in 1922, libraries circulated books and pamphlets on home gardening, with the aim of ameliorating both the economy and

---

<sup>76</sup> “Books Bring Aid to Soldier Sick,” *Alamance Gleaner*, June 3, 1920.

<sup>77</sup> “Distribution of A.L.A. Books,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 6 (1920): 61.

<sup>78</sup> “North Carolina Libraries and Librarians,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 2 (1922): 18; Helen Harris, “The Oteen Library and Its New Building,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 8 (1923): 149.

<sup>79</sup> “Patients at Wesley Long Hospital reading books provided by the public library,” Photograph, 1927, Greensboro, NC: Greensboro Public Library, from State Archives of North Carolina, *Transforming the Tar Heel State: The Legacy of Public Libraries in North Carolina* (collection), accessed March 20, 2020, <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/digital/collection/p249901coll36/id/140>

<sup>80</sup> “Libraries and Sex Education,” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 5 (1919): 42.

citizens' health.<sup>81</sup> Finally, at the end of the decade, Kate Burr Johnson identified libraries as one of several key "agencies which work toward healthy social conditions," not only by sharing health information but also by providing spaces where citizens could socialize.<sup>82</sup> In supporting the state's concern with public health and welfare, public libraries engaged in one more area that reinforced their importance in society.

Thus far, the investigation has shown examples of how North Carolina public libraries embraced opportunities for institutional advancement by participating in the state's business-progressive agenda. The next theme to explore is grassroots organizing in the post-war 1910s-20s, including discussions of women's clubs, the NCLA, and interracial organizing. Women's clubs continued to organize public libraries intending to hand them over to town councils or commissions. Town officials did not always accept, usually because they were wary of making the necessary appropriations and tax increases. Meanwhile, the NCLA's single largest initiative was the Citizens' Library Movement, a publicity campaign begun in 1927. A missed opportunity in grassroots organizing was the failure of state's post-war interracial movement to expand library service to African-Americans. The Commission on Interracial Cooperation was present, if not active, in every Southern state. It drew the participation of both black and white women's clubs. Therefore, one might expect the interracial movement to have pushed the cause of black libraries onto the agenda of women's clubs. However, it did not.

Overall, despite grassroots efforts, tax support for libraries hardly increased in the 1920s, even where moral support was constant. Few towns could gain the consent of their citizens for a library tax, and therefore few new libraries were established. While some towns made token

---

<sup>81</sup> "North Carolina's Garden Campaign," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 2 (1922): 1.

<sup>82</sup> "Highways and Public Welfare," *The Goldsboro News*, January 8, 1928.

appropriations for privately run libraries, few towns passed new taxes for public library support. With taxes already on the rise, to pay for increasing state expenses on schools, roads, and health, there was resistance to enact additional taxes for projects outside of these three areas. Meanwhile, existing libraries sought to expand their services and clientele but struggled to do so. One indicator of slow library development in the 1920s was that by 1930, the much-promoted idea of county-wide service had been implemented in only eighteen North Carolina counties.<sup>83</sup> While public libraries gained a new cultural legitimacy in the 1920s, that gain came without significantly greater public funding. Other public projects took higher priority. A boost to library funding came from philanthropy, both native and outside, but there were too few recipients of philanthropy to constitute a significant trend.

All over the state, women's clubs sustained their role as extraordinary library boosters. Two robust campaigns were led by the Woman's Clubs of High Point and Elizabeth City. In October 1922, the Woman's Club of High Point hosted a meeting on the possibility of a public library for the city.<sup>84</sup> Mary B. Palmer, director of the state Library Commission, was invited to give a talk on how to set up and finance a library. Club members and interested citizens formed a Library Association. At a Woman's Club meeting in November 1923, "representatives of the various civic organizations and fraternal orders" agreed to request that the city provide a librarian's salary and a temporary space for books.<sup>85</sup> By then, the city had already donated a lot for a proposed permanent library building. The library campaign peaked in January 1926, when the Library Association announced: "The Guilford county board of commissioners have

---

<sup>83</sup> Valentine, "The Spread of Public Libraries," 116.

<sup>84</sup> "N.C. Libraries and Librarians," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 5 (1922): 94.

<sup>85</sup> "North Carolina Libraries and Librarians," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 9 (1923): 180.

appropriated \$100 per month for the High Point library...<sup>86</sup> In a few years, the Woman's Club had secured public interest, a permanent site, and city and county funds.

With equal energy but ultimately less success, the Woman's Club of Elizabeth City led a campaign for a library about the same time. The club started a public library fund in 1925 and raised money by hosting concerts and plays, including one comedy humorously entitled "The Flapper Grandmother."<sup>87</sup> One newspaper reported that the money raised was "invested in the local building and loan association and the club expects to keep working until a public library becomes a reality here."<sup>88</sup> The question of whether to pass a library tax became a major issue in the 1927 municipal elections, with most candidates refusing to endorse new taxes. One month after the elections, the Woman's Club and local First Methodist Church opened a library in the church building, which supplied 900 books for free circulation to the public.<sup>89</sup> A city-funded library was not established in Elizabeth City in the 1920s.

The success of women's clubs in convincing municipalities to finance public libraries depended on the politics of local office-holders, as the above examples show. In an era before either state or federal funding programs for public libraries, local funding was crucial. Most local library campaigns had disappointing or, at best, mixed results. In December 1921, for example, the Wilson Woman's Club opened a library which was not tax-supported, but it did receive a \$360 appropriation from the city to cover part of a librarian's salary.<sup>90</sup> In another example, voters

---

<sup>86</sup> "Doings in the Tar Heel State – High Point," *Alamance Gleaner*, January 14, 1926.

<sup>87</sup> "Letting Mary Do It," *Daily Advance* (Elizabeth City, NC), February 11, 1925; "Musical Comedy Pleases with Fun and Choruses," *Daily Advance*, April 29, 1925.

<sup>88</sup> "Curtain to Rise Tonight at Eight," *Daily Advance* (Elizabeth City, NC), February 2, 1925.

<sup>89</sup> "Women Demand Statements of All Candidates," *Daily Advance* (Elizabeth City, NC), April 26, 1927; "Methodist Church Library Is Opened," *Daily Advance*, June 9, 1927.

<sup>90</sup> "North Carolina Libraries and Librarians," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 3 (1922): 57.

and officials in Williamston, near Greenville, were apparently reluctant to support a public library. Although the president of the local Woman's Club consulted with a Library Commission agent in early 1928, no town library was established in Williamston before the end of the decade.<sup>91</sup> In September 1929, a leading local newspaper printed two pro-library items. One was an editorial, the other a sermon by a Baptist preacher, both of which imply that townspeople were wary of how much a library would cost taxpayers. The writers reassured citizens that no great expense need be incurred, at least not immediately. Rather than construct a "commodious building, with filled shelves of books, and everything ideally appointed," the town might rally behind a low-cost "reading room in a small corner of the Woman's Clubrooms in the Masonic building..."<sup>92</sup> This would be a public reading room financed by private subscription, which could later be expanded into a tax-supported service, if citizens found the reading room a worthwhile resource. Thus, in many localities, city officials and voters were reluctant to approve funding for public libraries. As perennial library boosters, Women's Clubs were frustrated at North Carolinians' lack of support for new public libraries. By 1928, the state Federation of Women's Clubs had announced a two-year Educational Campaign, which included the goal of establishing at least one public library in every North Carolina county.<sup>93</sup> That goal was not to be realized.

The NCLA was just as frustrated as the Federation of Women's Clubs, and worked in parallel through its own Citizens Library Movement, launched in 1927.<sup>94</sup> The need to renew

---

<sup>91</sup> "May Establish a County Library in Williamston," *The Enterprise* (Williamston, NC), February 7, 1928.

<sup>92</sup> "On Beginning a Public Library," *The Enterprise* (Williamston, NC), September 3, 1929; Rev. C.H. Dickey, "Starting a Public Library," *The Enterprise*, September 3, 1929.

<sup>93</sup> "May Establish a County Library in Williamston," *The Enterprise*, February 7, 1928.

<sup>94</sup> Elizabeth House Hughey, "Public Libraries in North Carolina," *North Carolina Libraries* 13, no. 1 (1954): 14.

enthusiasm for libraries was dearly felt. One North Carolina newspaper gave sobering statistics for 1928: “At present there are forty-six counties without libraries, and two hundred thousand adult illiterates. North Carolina is first in good roads, second in textiles, but last in library facilities. Eighty percent of the criminals come from homes where there is an absolute disregard for good reading.”<sup>95</sup> The last point, while sensationalist, accurately reflected the anguish of library professionals and boosters who were dissatisfied with the absence of pro-library missionary spirit in the age of business progressivism.

The idea to initiate a statewide library movement seems to have come from two UNC faculty, head librarian Louis R. Wilson and history professor Frank P. Graham.<sup>96</sup> A research report by a sociology student whom Wilson supervised found that only one-third of North Carolina families subscribed to a newspaper, and that the state’s ratio of total population to total number of books in public libraries was eleven to one. Put simply, there was only one library book for every eleven North Carolinians, while Northeastern states had ratios of one to one or higher. Wilson also read ALA statistics for 1926 showing that, in North Carolina, sixty-eight percent of people did not have access to a public library, only thirty tax-supported public libraries existed, and forty-six counties had no library service of any kind, either tax- or subscription-funded. In November 1927, Graham addressed the NCLA at its annual conference, stating the need for numerous local campaigns to establish a public library in every county.

In the first few months of 1928, Frank Graham conducted a speaking tour around the state to rouse support for public libraries, while other NCLA members formed a committee,

---

<sup>95</sup> “May Establish a County Library in Williamston,” *The Enterprise*, February 7, 1928.

<sup>96</sup> William S. Powell, “Citizens’ Library Movement in North Carolina,” *North Carolina Libraries* 13, no. 1 (1954): 33; *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. “Graham, Frank Porter,” by J. Carlyle Sitterson, accessed March 20, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/graham-frank-porter>

compiled a list of known pro-library citizens, and mailed out a thousand letters to potential enlistees in the campaign.<sup>97</sup> The Citizens Library Movement was formally launched in November 1928, and the NCLA issued an official handbook. The movement operated somewhat like a statewide civic club, with individual members around the state pledging to raise support for libraries among their locality's elected officials and citizens. At the top level of the organization were Finance, Publicity, and Organization Committees, as well as a Speakers' Bureau.<sup>98</sup> The handbook announced the aim was to conduct "a people's movement for more and better libraries in North Carolina."<sup>99</sup> To that end, members were urged to hold meetings in the main towns of their counties, to invite club leaders, professionals, city and county commissioners, and school board officials, and to create a local Library Association. The Association would finance an initial public library, which could then be handed off to the commissioners and made a tax-supported institution. As the work of women's clubs had proved, not every town was ready to tax itself for a library. But the Citizens Library Movement believed it could foster positive sentiment toward a library tax if local campaigns were run well.

The movement drew the participation of several well-known North Carolinians whose opinions held credibility with the public. Well-known members included Frank Graham and Anne Pierce, head of the Charlotte Carnegie Library, who served on the thirty-two-member Organization Committee along with professors, judges, politicians, as well as less prominent women and men. Notable library directors including Louis Wilson, Lillian Griggs, and Nellie Rowe served on the Publicity Committee. The Finance Committee was chaired by banker Robert

---

<sup>97</sup> Powell, "Citizens' Library Movement in North Carolina," 34.

<sup>98</sup> North Carolina Library Commission, ed., *Handbook of the Citizens' Library Movement*, 1-3.

<sup>99</sup> North Carolina Library Commission, ed., *Handbook of the Citizens' Library Movement*, 7.

M. Hanes of Winston-Salem, also a 1928 candidate for one of Forsyth County's three seats in the state House of Representatives.<sup>100</sup> His chairmanship was good publicity during the 1928 election season, and he indeed won a House seat. Lastly, the Speakers' Bureau offered the oratory skills of distinguished roster of figures. Two of them were Wake Forest College president William L. Poteat, who had recently defended the teaching of evolution in public schools, and Clyde R. Hoey, a prominent lawyer and former member of the US House of Representatives.<sup>101</sup> Hoey's brother-in-law, newly elected governor O. Max Gardner, praised the Citizens Library Movement in an address at the 1929 NCLA meeting. Echoing the New Library idea articulated by the Library Commission, Gardner proclaimed:

Our civilization has reached the stage of social, economic, and cultural development where it has needs which are distinctly above and beyond the bread and butter line of bare necessities. ... Man does not live by bread alone and I see in this Citizens' Library Movement a profoundly significant step in the direction of supplying the higher cultural and spiritual needs of our people.<sup>102</sup>

Aligned with the New Library concept, Gardner saw the public library as an institution aiding in personal self-development in a prosperous era, when basic needs were no longer a concern. The Great Depression would soon render that sense of prosperity obsolete. The Depression would

---

<sup>100</sup> John L. Cheney, Jr., *North Carolina Government, 1585-1974: A Narrative and Statistical History* (Winston-Salem, NC: Hunter Publishing Co., 1975), 505; *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Hanes, Robert March," by T. Harry Gattton, accessed March 20, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/hanes-robert-march>

<sup>101</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Hoey, Clyde Roark," by T. Harry Gattton, accessed March 20, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/hoey-clyde-roark>; *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Poteat, William Louis," by John R. Woodward, accessed March 20, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/poteat-william-louis>

<sup>102</sup> O. Max Gardner, *The Significance of the Citizens' Library Movement* (North Carolina Library Association, 1929), 4.

also slow the progress of the Citizens' Library Movement. But even before the Depression, the movement elicited more lip service than material support toward libraries.

A few examples of library openings during the first years of the Citizens Library Movement will show its immediate but limited impact. Few new tax-supported libraries were created, although existing libraries saw a boost in usage. Thus, the effects of the movement were not what its members hoped for—the creation of new, town-operated, tax-supported public libraries. In the far-west mountain town of Sylva, Jackson County, the privately supported Harris Public Library opened in April 1928. The library was named for C.J. Harris, an industrialist who operated several mining, lumber, and hydroelectric companies in the county.<sup>103</sup> Harris paid the library's rent and electricity bills, and other costs were covered by the local Library Association and Junior Study Club. Government support was not forthcoming. Harris Library also faced management problems. When the Library Association failed to elect new officers at the end of 1929, it dissolved and the Sylva Woman's Club took over management of the library.<sup>104</sup> Ideally, the city would have taken over instead. Sylva's library was off to a rocky start. Further east, but still in the mountains, the Woman's Club of Forest City had better luck obtaining at least some government support, in the form of a space in city hall. In March 1929, the mayor granted the Woman's Club the use of a room in a brand-new city hall building. "Book showers" were organized, where citizens were encouraged to donate books.<sup>105</sup> But the mayor's political platform

---

<sup>103</sup> "Give Financial Statement of Harris Library," *Jackson County Journal*, May 30, 1929; *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Harris, Charles Joseph," by John L. Bell, Jr., accessed March 20, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/harris-charles-joseph>

<sup>104</sup> "Woman's Club Takes Charge of Library," *Jackson County Journal*, January 30, 1930.

<sup>105</sup> "Forest City's Public Library," *Forest City Courier*, March 7, 1929; "A Statement by Mayor Flack," *Forest City Courier*, April 25, 1929.

included minimal taxes, and therefore the library did not become a government department.

Without the security of tax support, the library could operate only two days per week, three hours each day.<sup>106</sup>

In its first years, the Citizens Library Movement had greater impact in bolstering existing public, tax-supported libraries than in establishing new ones. The Charlotte Carnegie Library reported a thirty-percent increase in book circulation from 1928 and 1929, and “the seven largest libraries in the state reported an increase of more than 400,000 in circulation.”<sup>107</sup> In the end, officials and voters in most localities did not, it seems, share Governor Gardner’s passion for libraries. Furthermore, the advent of the Great Depression would make additional taxes in most towns impracticable. The library movement would remain ineffective until it could overcome the problem of inadequate local taxes. Not until 1941 did the state legislature finally create a state library fund—thanks to the efforts of the Citizens Library Movement and the NCLA—which gave grants for library development to every county. If only partially successful, the early Citizens Library Movement at least had a strong presence, and it pushed on despite the Great Depression and voters’ resistance to increased taxes.

In contrast, a grassroots movement that never materialized at all was a statewide movement for more black libraries, or for integrated libraries. North Carolina was one of six states in the South with an active interracial committee in the 1920s.<sup>108</sup> The state committees were overseen by the regional Commission on Interracial Cooperation (CIC). Edwin Mims of

---

<sup>106</sup> “Public Library Will Open Today,” *Forest City Courier*, April 11, 1929.

<sup>107</sup> Powell, “Citizens’ Library Movement in North Carolina,” 35.

<sup>108</sup> The other five states were Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. The remaining Southern states had nominal but inactive interracial committees. See Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930*, 256.

Vanderbilt University, a CIC member and a Durham Public Library co-founder, described the CIC in 1926:

Atlanta... is the headquarters of the Southern Interracial Commission, composed of representative men and women of both races from all the Southern States. Organized immediately after the Armistice to meet the conditions produced by the return of Negro soldiers, it has gradually undertaken a comprehensive programme that has been extended into fourteen states and eight hundred counties. Definite efforts in the direction of improved labour conditions, educational opportunities, justice in the courts, and recreational facilities, have not been more noteworthy than the good-will that has been engendered by the members of both races meeting for the candid discussion of mutual problems and for mutual helpfulness in improving difficult situations.<sup>109</sup>

Mims's rosy description did not fully capture the context in which the Commission emerged. It grew out of a partnership between white and black educators and ministers who were concerned at the pervasive racial violence occurring in the post-war South.

Violence was prompted by two events, the Great Migration of black workers from Southern to Northern states and the return of black military veterans from Europe. During the war, hundreds of thousands of Southern blacks had migrated north to escape Jim Crow and to fill industrial jobs vacated by white army draftees.<sup>110</sup> Northern whites expressed discomfort with the influx of blacks to Northern cities, while Southern whites decried the outmigration of cheap black agricultural laborers. Some Northern labor recruiters became targets of violence by Southern white farmers and lawmen.<sup>111</sup> Secondly, after the war, returning black veterans expected full protection of their citizenship rights, even in the Jim Crow South where blacks' rights were legally circumscribed. Further, by the mid-1920s, sociologists had identified a

---

<sup>109</sup> Mims, *The Advancing South*, 258-259.

<sup>110</sup> Leuchtenburg, *The Perils of Prosperity*, 37.

<sup>111</sup> Cooper, Jr., *Pivotal Decades*, 79-80, 309; Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, 147-148.

generation of “New Negroes” who had absorbed middle-class standards of education, openly aspired to achieve in the arts and sciences, and created robust “group economies” in the ghettos of America’s cities.<sup>112</sup> White backlash against blacks demanding political and social equality was fierce. In the “Red Summer” of 1919, at least twenty-five race riots broke out across the nation, and ten black army veterans were lynched.<sup>113</sup> Ultimately, the white-led CIC limited its objectives, seeking to eliminate interracial violence without addressing segregation or equal rights.<sup>114</sup> In its initial years, the CIC achieved few practical results.<sup>115</sup>

Southern women became involved in the Commission in October 1920, when an interdenominational and interracial group of women met at a conference in Memphis. The conference recommended that “each local community form a Woman’s Inter-Racial Committee which may include representatives from all religious, civic and social service bodies working in the community.”<sup>116</sup> No local women’s interracial committees appeared to connect with the pro-library activities of North Carolina’s women’s clubs, as might be expected. There was a precedent of cooperation between black and white women in other areas of activity, including promoting temperance, ministering to soldiers, and conducting farm home demonstrations. Since

---

<sup>112</sup> Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, 157.

<sup>113</sup> Cooper, Jr., *Pivotal Decades*, 287, 330-331; Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, 152.

<sup>114</sup> Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, 182.

<sup>115</sup> The CIC’s chief campaign was its anti-lynching campaign, which had mixed results. Lynching declined in the 1920s—before rising again in the 1930s—but efforts to pass a federal anti-lynching law failed. In 1919, after the NAACP published a report detailing thirty years of lynchings, Congressman J.C. Dyer of St. Louis introduced a bill to make lynching a federal offense. The Dyer bill passed in the House “but was defeated in the Senate by a filibuster of Southern senators.” President Harding did not try to salvage the bill. For the Dyer bill debate, see Tindall, *The Emergence of the New South*, 173-174. For President Harding’s response, see Parrish, *Anxious Decades*, 26-27.

<sup>116</sup> Commission on Interracial Cooperation, *Southern Women and Race Cooperation: A Story of the Memphis Conference, October 6-7, 1920* (Commission on Interracial Cooperation, 1921), 5-6.

the 1880s, black and white women had participated in separate but linked branches of the North Carolina Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), whose purpose was to discourage alcohol consumption and sexual promiscuity.<sup>117</sup> The separate branches shared a common state-level governance, making the WCTU "the first postbellum statewide biracial voluntary organization in North Carolina."<sup>118</sup> Additionally, interracial cooperation between black and white branches of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) brought the temperance crusade to Camp Greene during World War I.<sup>119</sup> The YWCA women had set up "social comfort stations" where they socialized with soldiers and urged the men to avoid the prostitutes who regularly solicited in the camp. Cooperation was stymied somewhat by the hostility between black and white male soldiers, thus causing the women to maintain strictly segregated comfort stations. Nevertheless, behind the scenes, women supported one another across the color line. Cooperation also characterized the state-run farm home demonstration program. The coordinator of the state program was Jane S. McKimmon, who secured public funding for a "Colored Assistant" and "Colored District Agents" to help administer the home demonstration program among the state's black population.<sup>120</sup> Often, white and black district agents worked together, traveling to black churches and homes to show people how to prepare food, prevent disease, mend clothing, and plan healthy meals. Despite the precedent of women's interracial cooperation

---

<sup>117</sup> Link, *North Carolina*, 324.

<sup>118</sup> According to Glenda E. Gilmore, this instance of interracial cooperation could only have happened among women, since it "required courage and a vision of the future that differed from the white male perspective." See Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender & Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920*, 2nd ed. (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019), 48-49.

<sup>119</sup> Gilmore, *Gender & Jim Crow*, 196.

<sup>120</sup> Gilmore, *Gender & Jim Crow*, 197-198.

in the areas of temperance, camp ministry, and farm home demonstrations, women did not join together in the 1920s to increase public library service for African-Americans.

Lack of cooperation on integrated libraries is not a surprise, since the interracial movement generally did not support integration. But lack of cooperation on separate black libraries is more difficult to explain. One reason may be that white women were reluctant to split a limited pool of public money between both a black and a white library in their towns. In general, towns were already reluctant to provide money for white public libraries, much less for a second system of black public libraries, and white women were unlikely to support a black library before a town had one for whites. Furthermore, the generous government spending packages enacted during wartime—which had temporarily eliminated the need to compete for funds for various programs, and had thus encouraged interracial cooperation—were largely discontinued.<sup>121</sup> Blacks and whites were once again in competition for any available funds that might pay for public projects, like libraries, that demanded separate facilities for the two races. For white women's clubs, the white facility would take precedence. Besides competition for limited funding, another reason for women's lack of interracial cooperation on the libraries issue may have stemmed from the sexual taboos enforced by the dominant white male culture. White women may have been reluctant to support an institution that served black men as well as women, to avoid suggesting, in sensitive white men's minds, white female affection for black males. Such a suggestion might invoke violence from white men. A widely reported court trial of 1923 had resulted in a black man, Mr. John Gause, being "sentenced to death by electrocution"

---

<sup>121</sup> Gilmore, *Gender & Jim Crow*, 198.

for “attacking a white woman” in the town of Spruce Pine.<sup>122</sup> In the Jim Crow South, white men’s standards of sexual behavior had zero tolerance for any infraction of the taboo on close relations between black men and white women. The protection of white women from black men was also a motive that drove a resurgent Ku Klux Klan, which “returned” to six North Carolina towns in 1921, including Durham, Raleigh, Oxford, Henderson, Wilson, and Rocky Mount.<sup>123</sup> Nevertheless, in Durham, one white woman’s club, the Twentieth Century Club, donated \$100 to the Durham Colored Library in 1923.<sup>124</sup> Durham was home to an unusually prosperous black middle class, whose most prominent men included John Merrick and Dr. Aaron Moore, co-founders of the Colored Library. A gift to these men from the Twentieth Century Club could hardly be seen as scandalous by the city’s leading white men, such as Julian Carr and James B. Duke, who also donated to the Colored Library in 1923. Whatever their motives, white and black women did not come together to support libraries for African-Americans in the 1920s.

The third and last theme to address in the present chapter is philanthropy, including native and outside philanthropy. A few instances of philanthropy have been noted already, such as the Kiwanis Club’s donation of a bookmobile to the Durham Public Library and the ongoing Carnegie grants. Additionally, in the 1920s, the Rosenwald Fund offered grants to two North Carolina libraries, and four affluent Tar Heel families donated money either to improve or start libraries in their home towns. Philanthropy was a source of much-needed funding for public libraries in the 1920s. Nevertheless, it could not make up for lack of local tax support. In fact, the

---

<sup>122</sup> “Negro John Gause Is Convicted at Once,” *Mt. Airy News*, October 25, 1923; “Goss Granted Respite by Governor of State,” *Concord Daily Tribune*, November 30, 1923.

<sup>123</sup> “‘Fiery Cross’ Is Once More Raised in Durham,” *Mt. Airy News*, January 6, 1921.

<sup>124</sup> “Gifts to N.C. Libraries,” *UNC News Letter*, April 4, 1923.

Rosenwald Fund withdrew its grants temporarily when municipalities failed to meet their required percentage of shared library costs. Furthermore, in 1923 Louis Wilson noted that the Carnegie Corporation was ending its library grants, and thus local philanthropy would be increasingly important in the next decade.<sup>125</sup> However, there were only four cases of native philanthropy in the 1920s. Cases involved wealthy families wishing to do something positive for their home towns, while also memorializing deceased loved ones by having public institutions named after them. Also, in each case, the high social status of the donors, and of those whom they memorialized, seems to have convinced town leaders that these particular libraries were worthy of public funding. Elsewhere, the library philanthropy of the 1920s-30s has been examined by Dr. Patrick M. Valentine. Therefore, the following runs briefly through his scholarship, but adds context from a few unique sources.

Gifts from North Carolina families to establish or improve public libraries were given by the Grahams and Prudens of Edenton in 1921, the Braswells of Rocky Mount in 1923, the Leslies of Henderson in 1924, and the Sheppards of Greenville in 1925.<sup>126</sup> The first, Shepard-Pruden Memorial Library, opened in February 1921, in Edenton's historic Cupola House.<sup>127</sup> The founding donors were Ann Cameron Shepard and the family of the late William Dossey Pruden. An active town citizen, Ann Shepard was the daughter of Mildred C. Cameron, of the Cameron plantation dynasty of Durham, and William B. Shepard, owner of a local cotton mill, peanut

---

<sup>125</sup> Wilson, "A Ten-Year Library Program for North Carolina," 167.

<sup>126</sup> Patrick M. Valentine, "Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco: Philanthropy and Public Libraries in North Carolina, 1900-1940," *Libraries & Culture* 31, no. 2 (1996): 281.

<sup>127</sup> "North Carolina Libraries and Librarians," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 10 (1921): 142.

company, and bank.<sup>128</sup> William Pruden, a lawyer and Confederate veteran, had served as mayor of Edenton in the 1870s and thereafter as legal counsel to the Chowan County Board of Commissioners.<sup>129</sup> The two donors' gifts were the result of a campaign to save a local historic landmark. Sometime before Pruden's death in March 1918, Ann Shepard gathered a group of citizens together in the lawyer's office, to organize the Cupola House Library and Museum. The purpose of the organization was to raise money to buy back historic woodwork and furniture which the private owners of the historic Cupola House had sold to the Brooklyn Museum in New York.<sup>130</sup> Built in 1758-59, the house was (and still is) one of the oldest surviving structures in the state.<sup>131</sup> Its name derived from the distinctive cupola rising from the center of the roof. Determined to preserve the one-of-a-kind home, the Cupola House Library and Museum not only saved much of the woodwork and furniture but also bought the house itself. In 1921, Shepard and the Prudens donated \$5,000 each toward "the library and tea room on the first floor," in memory of the deceased William B. Shepard and William D. Pruden.<sup>132</sup> The town Board of Aldermen committed an annual appropriation for the librarian's salary and maintenance costs, thus making the library a government function, and it remained in the Cupola House until 1963.

---

<sup>128</sup> J. Smith, "William B. Shepard Papers, 1768-1913, 1868-1913, Manuscript Collection #448" (finding aid), *East Carolina University Libraries*, accessed March 27, 2020, <https://digital.lib.ecu.edu/special/ead/findingaids/0448>

<sup>129</sup> *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Pruden, William Dossey," by Elizabeth H. Copeland, accessed March 27, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/pruden-william-dossey>

<sup>130</sup> "Cupola House Association," *Cupola House Association*, accessed March 27, 2020, <http://cupolahouse.org/association.php>

<sup>131</sup> *Encyclopedia of North Carolina*, s.v. "Cupola House," by Robert G. Anthony, Jr., accessed March 20, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/cupola-house>

<sup>132</sup> Mary B. Palmer, "The Shepard-Pruden Memorial Library," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 8 (1920): 99-100.

The Braswell Memorial Library had less unusual origins, coming out of the work of the Woman's Club of Rocky Mount. In 1921, the club began a library "in a room loaned by the Chamber of Commerce," whose "assistant secretary will act as librarian."<sup>133</sup> The city initiated a generous \$1,200 annual appropriation and the club provided a \$200 book fund.<sup>134</sup> Thus, the Rocky Mount Public Library was opened. Nell Gupton Battle, the widow of a Superior Court judge, served as its first librarian. She took the role seriously, and attended a 1922 summer institute in librarianship at the University of Georgia.<sup>135</sup> At that time, having a trained librarian on staff gave a library prestige. By the end of the year, the well-funded and professionally staffed library had caught the attention of Dr. Mark R. Braswell, who came from one of Edgecombe County's wealthiest landowning families. He had given up medicine mid-career, choosing instead to farm and manage the successful Planters National Bank with his brother James.<sup>136</sup> To memorialize a son who had died in 1907, Dr. Braswell donated \$15,000 for a new public library building. Four other donors, including his banker brother, gave \$1,000 each toward a book fund.<sup>137</sup> The mayor and the director of the Library Commission spoke at a formal opening ceremony for the Thomas H. Braswell Memorial Library in November 1923.<sup>138</sup> Nell Battle

---

<sup>133</sup> "North Carolina Libraries and Librarians," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 10 (1921): 141.

<sup>134</sup> "North Carolina Libraries and Librarians," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 3 (1922): 58.

<sup>135</sup> "Nell Gupton Battle," *Twin County Museum and Hall of Fame*, accessed March 27, 2020, <http://www.tchhof.org/nell-battle/>; *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Battle, Jacob," by Dorothy B. Wilkinson, accessed March 27, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/battle-jacob>

<sup>136</sup> "Stroke Is Fatal To Dr. Braswell," *Rocky Mount Herald*, November 19, 1937; B.H. Bunn, "James Craig Braswell," in *Biographical History of North Carolina: From Colonial Times to the Present*, vol. 6, ed. Samuel A. Ashe (Greensboro, NC: Charles L. van Noppen, 1906), 55-58; *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, s.v. "Braswell, James Craig," by Hugh B. Johnston, Jr., accessed March 27, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/biography/braswell-james-craig>

<sup>137</sup> "N.C. Libraries and Librarians," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 5 (1922): 92-93.

<sup>138</sup> "North Carolina Libraries and Librarians," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 9 (1923): 179.

would continue as head librarian until 1943. The library remains open to this day and still bears Braswell's name. The early development of the Rocky Mount library demonstrated ideal cooperation among municipal government, local philanthropy, and a woman's club.

Government, philanthropy, and clubwomen came together in the town of Henderson, too, in 1924. That year, the surviving parents and widow of Henry Leslie Perry gave \$40,000 toward a public library in the deceased man's memory. Perry, a lawyer and former mayor of Henderson, had died the previous year at age thirty-six. His family's donation paid for the site and building, while local government approved annual appropriations for maintenance and operational costs. Annual sums of \$3,000 would come from the city, \$1,000 from the county, and \$1,000 from the Board of Education. The Henderson Woman's Club gave "500 books and a large table for the reference room."<sup>139</sup> The H. Leslie Perry Memorial Library was dedicated in September 1924, with the mayor and the Library Commission director in attendance at the opening ceremony.

The fourth instance of native philanthropy in 1920s North Carolina occurred in Greenville. A privately supported library had been founded in 1921 by a coalition of the Greenville Woman's Club, the Chamber of Commerce, the school board, and several civic organizations. Known as the Greenville Public Library, one of its co-founders framed its purpose in old-style progressive language, stating that the library "powerfully lessens the influence of the demagogue and agitator, diminishes crime and adds to the health and happiness of the community."<sup>140</sup> The noble mission was not enough to convince city officials to fund the library. Citizens then formed a library association, which secured funding by voluntary private

---

<sup>139</sup> Mrs. W.T. Bost, "H. Leslie Perry Memorial Library," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 12 (1924): 230-232.

<sup>140</sup> Thomas F. Parker, "The Greenville Public Library," *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 2 (1922): 4.

subscription. Although the group aimed to make the library tax-supported by January 1923, that would not happen until 1929.<sup>141</sup> In the meantime, private sources sustained the library. A tragic fire occurred in the mid-1920s, but rather than accept defeat, library supporters took it as an opportunity to solicit philanthropy. According to Valentine: “After the Greenville library building burned,” a local woman wrote to her prosperous uncle in Pennsylvania, “a native of Greenville” who donated “\$50,000 as a memorial to his father.”<sup>142</sup> The donation saved the library, and in October 1930, the Sheppard Memorial Library opened, backed by city funding.<sup>143</sup>

In an era when municipalities were reluctant to approve tax increases to fund public libraries, philanthropy became a potentially vital source of funding. But the Carnegie Corporation had discontinued its library grants by the early 1920s, and few North Carolinians had large sums of money to give for new libraries. The four cases of native philanthropy in Edenton, Rocky Mount, Henderson, and Greenville were unusual. These donations came from families who had exceptional wealth derived mostly from industrial and banking investments. Few citizens had such considerable wealth to give away. In each case, donors had the new library buildings named after a deceased family member they wished to honor. Unlike the Durham industrialists and oligarchs who contributed money to the Durham Public Library in 1896, the native philanthropists of the 1920s seem less motivated by a desire for social control or the need to advertise their own benevolence to the public. While these motivations may have existed to a degree, the 1920s native philanthropists appear to have been driven by civic pride and a wish to memorialize deceased loved ones. Yet these few native donors could not make up for the general

---

<sup>141</sup> Powell, “Citizens’ Library Movement in North Carolina,” 35.

<sup>142</sup> Valentine, “Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco,” 294.

<sup>143</sup> “SML’s History,” *Sheppard Memorial Library*, accessed March 27, 2020, <http://sheppardlibrary.org/home/about>

reluctance of towns to establish new, tax-supported public libraries. A strong surge in library growth would have to wait until after the Great Depression. It would also have to wait until after 1941, when the Citizens Library Movement pushed a state aid bill through the legislature, which would bring state money to cash-poor localities.

Outside philanthropy was equally scarce in the 1920s. The Carnegie Corporation had stopped giving out library grants in 1917, although it continued to pay out grants promised before then.<sup>144</sup> The last Carnegie grant given in North Carolina went to the Greensboro Public Library in 1922, under an “intriguing” set of circumstances.<sup>145</sup> Since 1905, Carnegie had talked with library trustees and community members about a branch library for African-Americans, but no one could agree on the governance structure for the branch. Disagreements caused the grant offer to be canceled at one point, but it was renewed in 1922. It remains “the only renewal on record,” according to one historian of the Carnegie Corporation’s library philanthropy—but because costs had risen since the date of the original building proposal, “the \$10,000 Carnegie gift had to be supplemented by \$4575 from the Negro board of education, \$250 from the city, and \$250 from private sources.”<sup>146</sup> This amount exceeded the usual ten percent match that local sources typically had to supply. The black branch opened in 1924, making it one of the few black libraries in the state. Summarizing black library development in the 1920s, Valentine noted that by the end of the decade, Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, and Laurinburg were joined by Asheville, Henderson, Wilmington, and Winston-Salem in providing some form of public library

---

<sup>144</sup> George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 1969), 159-160.

<sup>145</sup> Valentine, “Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco,” 276-277.

<sup>146</sup> Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 82.

service to African-Americans.<sup>147</sup> Therefore, although it was disbursed late and under tense circumstances, the 1922 Carnegie grant to the Greensboro Public Library funded a rare instance of public library service to blacks.

At the very end of the 1920s, the Rosenwald Fund decided to enter the field of library philanthropy, with an optimism that overlooked how reluctant many localities were to redirect or increase taxes for public libraries. Louis Wilson and sociologist Edward A. Wight have co-authored a definitive study of the Rosenwald county library demonstrations. Therefore, the details of the program will not be repeated here. It remains only to assess how the demonstration libraries fit into the sporadic pattern of library development in the 1920s. The purpose of the Rosenwald grants was motivate more counties in the South to establish public libraries. By funding “demonstration libraries” in eleven different counties across the South, Rosenwald hoped to prove the value of county-wide service. He imposed three challenging eligibility conditions on the participating counties. Counties had to “serve all elements of the population, rural and urban, white and Negro,” to budget “not less than fifty cents per capita for the population to be served,” and to set up a countywide “system under one head, who shall be a trained librarian.”<sup>148</sup>

Counties had to apply to the Julius Rosenwald Foundation for the chance to participate, and only five North Carolina counties applied.<sup>149</sup> Of the Tar Heel applicants, Davidson and Mecklenburg Counties were chosen. They were odd choices, given that one goal of the program

---

<sup>147</sup> Valentine, “The Spread of Public Libraries,” 116.

<sup>148</sup> Tommie Dora Barker, *Libraries of the South: A Report on Developments, 1930-1935* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1936), 34.

<sup>149</sup> Valentine, “Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco,” 283, 296.

was to increase service to rural and black residents. Davidson County contained two mid-size towns, one more than most counties, and only eleven percent of the county population was black.<sup>150</sup> Mecklenburg County contained one of North Carolina's largest cities, and Charlotte had already established a black branch library. By the late 1920s, the commissioners of both counties were already funding county-wide service, without outside aid. While both counties easily met Rosenwald's first condition, the second and third conditions were challenging. The requirement to fund the library at fifty cents per capita was burdensome, when the statewide average was only four cents per capita.<sup>151</sup> Lastly, a trained librarian would be difficult to find. Before 1931, when UNC opened its School of Library Science under Louis Wilson, there were only two ALA-accredited schools of librarianship in the South, the whites-only Carnegie Library School of Atlanta, and the blacks-only Hampton Institute Library School in Virginia.<sup>152</sup> Yet both Davidson and Mecklenburg Counties eventually met Rosenwald's three conditions. Unfortunately, when changes in the make-up of the county commissions resulted in budget and personnel cuts at the two county libraries, Rosenwald withdrew the grants. The withdrawal would prove temporary in Davidson, permanent in Mecklenburg, but neither demonstration effected a long-term, statewide trend in county library growth. In the end, neither native nor outside philanthropy spurred a significant rise in library growth in municipalities or counties in the 1920s.

World War I and the post-war business-progressive state provided new opportunities for North Carolina public libraries to raise their position in the dominant culture of conformity. By participating in wartime book drives and food conservation campaigns, librarians gained the

---

<sup>150</sup> Louis R. Wilson and Edward A. Wight, *County Library Service in the South: A Study of the Rosenwald County Library Demonstration* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1935), 36.

<sup>151</sup> Valentine, "The Spread of Public Libraries," 115.

<sup>152</sup> Barker, *Libraries of the South*, 58.

backing of the state and the approval of the white middle-class majority. After the war, libraries found ways to benefit from state investment in public schools, good roads, and public health. Library boosters envisioned a centralized library administration in every county, modeled on the new public school administrations that were overseen by centralized county school boards. Boosters also tried to get more book trucks on the state's emerging system of paved public roads, which were the result of the robust Good Roads movement, although only a few counties ultimately obtained book trucks. Lastly, librarians took up the state's interest in public health and welfare by participating in health education campaigns and providing hospital library service in the larger cities. All of these activities imbued public libraries with a new cultural legitimacy and relevance to modern concerns. However, no significant increase in material support came with the new status. Women's clubs and the NCLA continued to push for more public libraries, but only one to two new libraries per year, on average, were established in North Carolina during the 1920s. Voters and officials were reluctant to direct public money toward libraries. While state and city governments in North Carolina enacted new taxes and issued bonds to lavish amounts, the increased revenue was rarely for public libraries. Only a few towns approved more funding for local libraries. To a degree, native and outside philanthropy made up for stagnant public funding. However, philanthropy was limited to just a few locales, and therefore did not constitute a statewide surge of new library openings. Nevertheless, there was positive development overall, a slow but steady growth that would continue into mid-century. In the 1940s, state aid to libraries was initiated, providing annual state appropriations toward establishing library service in every county. Also, multi-county or regional libraries were authorized, so that two or more counties could combine resources. Under the regional plan, one library board would oversee service to multiple counties. A federal aid program for public libraries would come in the 1950s, with

revisions made during the second half of the century. The state and federal aid programs would finally make the vision of a public library in every North Carolina county a reality. However, the basis of the statewide system of public libraries was established in the progressive era.

## CONCLUSION: NORTH CAROLINA PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA AND TODAY

North Carolina's system of public libraries emerged in the progressive era and was shaped by progressive ideology. The state's first library, in Durham, was originally proposed by Edwin Mims and Lalla Ruth Carr of the literary Canterbury Club, and they aimed to share that club's celebration of literature with the whole city. Both were young progressives who would spend their lives supporting the causes of civic improvement, social uplift, and public welfare. Their progressive idealism initially drove the library project in Durham, which led to a new state law allowing any North Carolina town to establish a library. For different reasons, Julian S. Carr and other prominent industrialists supported the Durham library too, envisioning it as a tool of social control. As an institution administered by the city's leading employers and their close friends, the public library would allow the social elites to define and direct, in part, the culture of the city. They sought to prevent the working class from developing its own independent, uncontrollable culture, as well as inspire a sense of grateful loyalty in workers by offering "gifts" such as a public library. Thus, progressivism and New South patriarchalism overlapped in their concerns with private citizens' social lives, and the two ideologies came together in support of the Durham Public Library.

North Carolina's Public Library Act was passed as progressive ideology was gaining traction in broader American society, and the influence of progressivism was a boon to library development. Progressivism transformed formerly private hardships into public concerns, thus making it the duty of government and voluntary organizations to intervene aggressively in economic and social affairs at every level of society. The ostensible goal was to improve the

ordinary citizen's economic and social welfare. After the turn of the century, philanthropists, civic clubs, and government officials increasingly supported public libraries as an instrument of intervention. Philanthropist Andrew Carnegie financed several North Carolina libraries, and local chapters of the state Federation of Women's Clubs fundraised for new libraries. Eventually, the state began to manage library growth through the state Library Commission after 1909. Each of these groups sought to improve the quality of urban life by encouraging literacy and learning through libraries, while they also sought to impose social discipline on a populace transitioning to a more industrialized, wage-based economy built around urban communities. Thus, libraries operated at the intersection of freedom and control. They had a mixed function in society, opening up a literal library of ideas and information to citizens but also censoring books that elite trustees or librarians rejected from their collections. The physical space of the library itself became a tool of social control—for example, libraries reinforced the existing social order by observing racial segregation. Always, it was understood that the beneficiaries of white-dominated library work were to be white citizens, and racial exclusion was often written into libraries' founding documents. Thus, progressivism legitimized public libraries as useful, modern institutions that expanded educational opportunities for white citizens, while also reinforcing a conservative social order centered around racial segregation and class subjugation.

In the post-World War I era, the conservative function of libraries became more pronounced, as a new "business progressivism" replaced traditional progressivism. The key progressive principles of centralization, efficiency, and state responsibility for social welfare remained important, but the earlier emphasis on social welfare was overtaken by an emphasis on creating a stable, efficient economy, even at the cost of social welfare and civil liberties. In the business progressive era, characterized by a culture of conformity, North Carolina public

libraries benefitted by following, rather than challenging, the dominant culture. For example, libraries advanced their cultural legitimacy by participating in wartime mobilization programs, such as book drives and food conservation programs. Libraries also adopted ideas originated at the highest levels of the business-progressive state, such as the public school system's administrative centralization, which used the county as the base unit of administration. Libraries also adopted the county as the ideal basic unit of service. Thus, the mission of libraries evolved by following the agenda set by the business-progressive state.

Despite public libraries' new cultural legitimacy and their demonstrated ability to bring books to urban and rural folk alike, public funding was not significantly increased in the 1920s. Most towns were still reluctant to allocate tax revenue to libraries, even as they poured money into paved roads, county health boards, and the public school system. Perhaps because these other priorities were so expensive, it kept public funds from going toward libraries. Taxpayers were not willing to be taxed for every last public project proposed by different interest groups, including library boosters. Women's clubs and philanthropists continued to privately finance libraries in some towns, until local governments could be persuaded to take them over. That did not always happen. At the end of the 1920s, library boosters were frustrated by the slow development of library service in the state. To counter apathy toward libraries, both the North Carolina Library Association (NCLA) and the State Federation of Women's Clubs launched campaigns to place a public library in every county in North Carolina by the end of the decade. The campaigns did not fulfill their ambitious goal. However, the NCLA had launched the Citizens Library Movement which, by 1941, would convince the state legislature to enact a state aid package for all public libraries.

While progressivism served to increase library service to more North Carolinians, by creating efficiently-run institutions that aimed to cover a wide service area, the system still did not adequately cover much of rural North Carolina or serve most of the state's African-American residents. The beginnings of a robust statewide system of public libraries was in place, but the system had a long way to go before it would provide equitable service to the state's entire population. In the twenty-first century, the state's libraries are still working towards the ideal of adequate, equitable service to all demographics. Funding is still an issue in many places. Resources such as books, databases, periodicals, and the latest media technology become increasingly expensive as technology advances and the number of multinational conglomerates in control of publishing companies and digital platforms diminishes. Staffing can be an issue too. The South had two ALA-accredited schools of library science by the end of the 1920s, and though it has many more today, the number remains at about a modest twenty (it depends on which states are included).

North Carolina is well-positioned in that it has four such schools, more than any other state in the country except New York. Anecdotally, this author has heard from front-line workers that library managers often lack sufficient training in business and personnel management. The ALA-approved curriculum may need to be updated, as accounting and human relations become more complex in an age of sophisticated budgeting software, social media, and workers' expectations of greater personal fulfillment in their professional roles. There is some comfort in the fact that funding, staffing, and other issues that seem like recent phenomena are simply current iterations of problems that the first North Carolina libraries faced too. One of the uses of history is to show that people in every era, to some extent, decide what aspects of the human experience are problematic and also how to address those problems constructively. Progressives,

who were concerned about illiteracy and social disorder, were moderately successful in extending library service across North Carolina. They advanced their cause by deploying the dominant rhetoric of social control, moral uplift, and civilizational development. The cause was admirable and the results mostly laudable. But some citizens were left out, including African-Americans and some rural whites. The program of the leading library boosters, then, did not serve all citizens adequately. In the present, the agenda of North Carolina's library leaders includes, among other points, the NC Cardinal initiative, a greater emphasis on providing e-books and online resources, and flexible online degrees in librarianship. These are all good things, it seems. Whether the current agenda is resulting in adequate, equitable library service to a diverse population of various ages, cultural backgrounds, genders, and abilities, only close investigation and, perhaps, historical analysis in a hundred years' time will tell.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- “A Decade of Library Work.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, no. 1-2 (1913): 10.
- “About Edward Everett Hale.” *Lend a Hand Society*. Accessed December 6, 2019,  
<http://www.lend-a-hand-society.org/about-edward-everett-hale/>
- “About Us.” *Evergreen Integrated Library System*. Accessed April 3, 2020, <https://evergreen-ils.org/about-us/>
- Anderson, Jean Bradley. *Durham County: A History of Durham County, North Carolina*. 2nd ed. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.
- Andrews, R. McCants. *John Merrick: A Biographical Sketch*. Durham, NC: Seeman Printery, 1920.
- “Annual Meeting of the Library Commission.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 3 (1910): 23.
- Ashe, Samuel A. “Lewis Albert Carr.” In *Biographical History of North Carolina: From Colonial Times to the Present*. Vol. 5, edited by Samuel A. Ashe. Greensboro, NC: Charles L. van Noppen, 1906.
- Barker, Tommie Dora. *Libraries of the South: A Report on Developments, 1930-1935*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1936.
- Bassett, John Spencer. “James Haywood Southgate.” In *Biographical History of North Carolina: From Colonial Times to the Present*. Vol. 2, edited by Samuel A. Ashe. Greensboro, NC: Charles L. van Noppen, 1905.
- Battle, R.H. “The Olivia Raney Library of Raleigh, NC.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 3 (1910): 27, 30.

- Battles, David M. *The History of Public Library Access for African Americans in the South or, Leaving Behind the Plow*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009.
- “Benjamin N. Duke.” *Duke University Libraries*. Accessed March 18, 2020, <https://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/collections/creators/people/bnduke>
- Blanton, Minnie L. “Library Needs of North Carolina.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin*, 4, no. 5 (1919): 42-46.
- Bobinski, George S. *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development*. Chicago, IL: American Library Association, 1969.
- “Books and Soldiers.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 10 (1918): 109-110.
- “Books for Everybody.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 7 (1920): 81.
- Borders, T.K. *Report of Superintendent, the Colored Orphanage of North Carolina, February 1, 1937 to June 30, 1940*. Oxford, NC: Colored Orphanage of North Carolina, 1940.
- Bost, W.T., Mrs. “H. Leslie Perry Memorial Library.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 12 (1924): 230-232.
- Bowerman, George F. “The Public Library of the Twentieth Century in Small and Medium-Sized Towns.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 7 (1917): 59-66.
- Boyer, Paul S. *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978.
- Bradsher, Greg. “The Council of National Defense: Now a Little Known or Appreciated World War I Federal Agency.” *The Text Message* (blog), August 15, 2017. National Archives, Washington, DC. Accessed March 18, 2020, <https://text-message.blogs.archives.gov/2017/08/15/the-council-of-national-defense-now-a-little-known-or-appreciated-world-war-i-federal-agency/>

- Briggs, Benjamin. "An Iconic Mansion with a Tabloid Past Opens for One-Time Tour." *Preservation Greensboro* (blog), May 11, 2015. Accessed March 9, 2020, <https://preservationgreensboro.org/an-iconic-mansion-with-a-tabloid-past-opens-for-one-time-tour/>
- Brown, Leslie. *Upbuilding Black Durham: Gender, Class, and Black Community Development in the Jim Crow South*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.
- Buck, Sue. "A Brief History." *International Order of The King's Daughters and Sons*. Accessed October 18, 2019, <https://iokds.org/home-2/a-brief-history/>
- Bunn, B.H. "James Craig Braswell." In *Biographical History of North Carolina: From Colonial Times to the Present*. Vol. 6, edited by Samuel A. Ashe. Greensboro, NC: Charles L. van Noppen, 1906.
- Caldwell, Bettie D., Miss. "The Greensboro Public Library." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 4 (1910): 35-38.
- "Candidates for the Honor Roll – Swansboro." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 2-3 (1916): 24.
- Carr, Julian S. *Address of General Julian S. Carr: 'The Confederate Soldier.'* Richmond, VA: 1915.
- . "Unveiling of Confederate Monument at University." Speech, June 2, 1913. Page 9-B, Scan #104 (digitized), Folder 26, Julian Shakespeare Carr Papers #141, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Accessed March 18, 2020, <https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/00141/>
- Carr, W.F. Speech, Lincoln Hospital, Durham, NC, June 1, 1939. In *Thirty-Eighth Annual Report: 1938*. Durham, NC: Lincoln Hospital, 1939.

Cavanaugh, John, Rev. "There will come a day." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, nos. 1-2 (1912-13): 38.

Cheney, John L., Jr. *North Carolina Government, 1585-1974: A Narrative and Statistical History*. Winston-Salem, NC: Hunter Publishing Co., 1975.

"Clara Louise Watts Carr." *Find-a-grave* (database). Accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/47966283/clara-louise-carr>

"Clubwomen and Libraries." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 11 (1921): 145-146.

"Colored Library for Greensboro." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, no. 3 (1913): 18.

Commission on Interracial Cooperation. *Southern Women and Race Cooperation: A Story of the Memphis Conference, October 6-7, 1920*. Commission on Interracial Cooperation, 1921.

Connor, R.D.W., ed. *A Manual of North Carolina: Issued by the North Carolina Historical Commission for the Use of Members of the General Assembly Session 1913*. Raleigh, NC: E.M. Uzzell and Co., 1913.

"Contents of Traveling Libraries." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 12 (1912): 147-148.

Cooper, John Milton, Jr. *Pivotal Decades: The United States, 1900-1920*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1990.

"Cupola House Association." *Cupola House Association*. Accessed March 27, 2020, <http://cupolahouse.org/association.php>

DeVane, Mary. "The Book Campaign in North Carolina." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 10 (1918): 113.

"Distribution of A.L.A. Books." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 6 (1920): 61-62.

Domby, Adam H. *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory*. Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 2020.

- “Duke, Brodie Leonidas.” *OpenDurham* (database). Accessed March 18, 2020,  
<http://www.opendurham.org/people/duke-brodie-leonidas>
- Edwards, Pamela C. “In Good Faith: The Rise and Fall of a Company Union in the Durham Hosiery Mills.” *North Carolina Historical Review* 81, no. 4 (2004): 365-392.
- Ekirch, Arthur A., Jr. *Progressivism in America: A Study of the Era from Theodore Roosevelt to Woodrow Wilson*. New York: New Viewpoints, 1974.
- “Enlarged Program of the A.L.A.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin*, 4, no. 6 (1920): 61.
- “Extracts from Mrs. Griggs’ Letters.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 4 (1919): 38.
- Fosdick, Raymond B. *Adventure in Giving: The Story of the General Education Board, a Foundation Established by John D. Rockefeller*. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.
- Foss, Mandy. “Hookworms.” *NCpedia* (database). Accessed March 14, 2020,  
<https://www.ncpedia.org/history/health/hookworms>
- Gardner, O. Max. *The Significance of the Citizens’ Library Movement*. North Carolina Library Association, 1929.
- Gatewood, Willard B., Jr. *Eugene Clyde Brooks: Educator and Public Servant*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1960.
- Gilmore, Glenda Elizabeth. *Gender & Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920*. 2nd ed. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2019.
- Glasson, W.H. “Edwin Mims.” In *Biographical History of North Carolina: From Colonial Times to the Present*. Vol. 7, edited by Samuel A. Ashe and Stephen B. Weeks. Greensboro, NC: Charles L. van Noppen, 1908.

- Gleason, Eliza Atkins. *The Southern Negro and the Public Library*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1941.
- Grady, Henry. "The New South." Speech, New England Society, New York, December 22, 1886. In *ANCHOR: A North Carolina History Online Resource*. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. Accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/anchor/henry-grady-and-new-south>
- Graham, Otis L., Jr. *The Great Campaigns: Reform and War in America, 1900-1928*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971.
- Grantham, Dewey W. *Southern Progressivism: The Reconciliation of Progress and Tradition*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1983.
- . "The Contours of Southern Progressivism." *American Historical Review* 86, no. 5 (1981): 1035-1059.
- "Grants to States." *Institute of Museum and Library Services*. Accessed April 3, 2020, <https://www.imls.gov/grants/grant-programs/grants-states>
- Griggs, A.F., Mrs. "The United War Work Campaign." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 12 (1918): 123.
- "Hackney Hiram Markham." *Find-a-grave* (database). Accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/111963289/hackney-hiram-markham>
- Handbook of Durham, North Carolina*. Durham, NC: The Educator Company, 1895.
- Harland-Jacobs, Jessica. *The History of Public Library Service in Durham, 1897-1997*. Durham, NC: Durham County Library, 1998.
- Harris, Helen. "The Oteen Library and Its New Building." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 8 (1923): 149-150.

*History of North Carolina*. Vol. 4, *North Carolina Biography*. Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Co., 1919.

*History of North Carolina*. Vol. 5, *North Carolina Biography*. Chicago, IL: Lewis Publishing Co., 1919.

Hoffschwelle, Mary S. *The Rosenwald Schools of the American South*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2006.

Hughey, Elizabeth House. "Public Libraries in North Carolina." *North Carolina Libraries* 13, no. 1 (1954): 11-16.

Hunt, James L. "Law and Society in a New South Community: Durham County, North Carolina, 1898-1899." *North Carolina Historical Review* 68, no. 4 (1991): 427-460.

Jasspon, William H., Mrs. "Charlotte's Public Library." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 2-3 (1916): 20-21.

Kantrowitz, Stephen. *Ben Tillman and the Reconstruction of White Supremacy*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.

Kett, Joseph F. "Women and the Progressive Impulse in Southern Education." In *The Web of Southern Social Relations: Women, Family, & Education*, edited by Walter J. Fraser, Jr., R. Frank Saunders, Jr., and Jon L. Wakelyn, 166-180. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1985.

Klein, Jennifer. *For All These Rights: Business, Labor, and the Shaping of America's Public-Private Welfare State*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003.

Lassiter, Thomas J., Mrs. "The Smithfield Public Library." *North Carolina Libraries* 4, no. 4 (1945): 1-3.

- Leloudis, James L. *Schooling the New South: Pedagogy, Self, and Society in North Carolina, 1880-1920*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Leuchtenburg, William E. *The Perils of Prosperity, 1914-32*. 2nd ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1993.
- Leutze, James. Oral History Interview with George Watts Hill, January 30, 1986. Excerpt 4953, Interview C-0047, Southern Oral History Program Collection #4007, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Accessed March 18, 2020, [https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/C-0047/excerpts/excerpt\\_4953.html](https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/C-0047/excerpts/excerpt_4953.html)
- . Oral History Interview with George Watts Hill, January 30, 1986. Excerpt 4954, Interview C-0047, Southern Oral History Program Collection #4007, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Accessed March 18, 2020, [https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/C-0047/excerpts/excerpt\\_4954.html](https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/C-0047/excerpts/excerpt_4954.html)
- “Libraries and Sex Education.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 5 (1919): 42.
- “Library Building History.” In *2019 Library Citizens Academy: Newsletter*. Southern Pines, NC: Town of Southern Pines, 2019.
- “Library Extension in Guilford.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, no. 10 (1915): 97-98.
- “Library History.” *Charlotte Mecklenburg Library*. Accessed March 27, 2020, <https://www.cmlibrary.org/about/library-history>
- “Library Legislation Enacted by the General Assembly of 1917.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 5-6 (1917): 50.
- “Library Progress.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, no. 1-2 (1913): 2.
- Link, Arthur S. “The Progressive Movement in the South, 1870-1914.” *North Carolina Historical Review* 23, no. 2 (1946): 172-195.

- . “What Happened to the Progressive Movement in the 1920’s?” *American Historical Review* 64, no. 4 (1959): 833-851.
- . *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1910-1917*. New York: Harper and Row, 1954.
- Link, Arthur S. and Richard L. McCormick. *Progressivism*. Arlington Heights, IL: Harlan Davidson, 1983.
- Link, William A. *North Carolina: Change and Tradition in a Southern State*. 2nd ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018.
- . *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism, 1880-1930*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.
- Malczewski, Joan. “Weak State, Stronger Schools: Northern Philanthropy and Organizational Change in the Jim Crow South.” *Journal of Southern History* 75, no. 4 (2009): 963-1000.
- Mangum’s Directory of Durham and Suburbs*. Durham, NC: The Educator Company, 1897.
- “Mary Agnes ‘Minnie’ Woodward May.” *Find-a-grave* (database). Accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/69047668/mary-agnes-may>
- Martin, E.S. “The Wilmington Public Library.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 3 (1910): 30-31.
- Memory, Marjorie Whittington. “A History of the Randolph Public Library, 1935-1967.” Master’s Thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1968.
- Miller, J.Y., Mrs. “The Gastonia Public Library.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 11 (1918): 119-120.
- Mims, Edwin. *The Advancing South: Stories of Progress and Reaction*. New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1926.

Mitchell, Thornton W. *The State Library and Library Development in North Carolina*. Raleigh, NC: North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, 1983.

Moore, James, Mrs. "Public Library at Salisbury." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 7 (1911): 75.

Morehead, John M., III. *The Morehead Family of North Carolina and Virginia*. New York: John M. Morehead III, 1921.

"Mrs. Griggs in Coblenz." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 2-3 (1919): 22.

"NC Cardinal." *State Library of North Carolina*. Accessed April 3, 2020,  
<https://statelibrary.ncdcr.gov/ld/nc-cardinal>

"N.C. Libraries and Librarians." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 5 (1922): 92-94.

"Nell Gupton Battle." *Twin County Museum and Hall of Fame*. Accessed March 27, 2020,  
<http://www.tchhof.org/nell-battle/>

"News of North Carolina Libraries – Washington." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 7 (1911): 83-86.

North Carolina Board of Agriculture. *North Carolina and Its Resources*. Winston, NC: M.I. and J.C. Stewart, 1896.

North Carolina Department of Conservation and Development. *North Carolina Resources and Industries* (report). Reprinted in *North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries*, edited by Hugh T. Lefler, 415-420. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1934.

North Carolina General Assembly. An Act to Establish a Graded School in the Town of Durham (March 9, 1881). 1881 Public Laws, Chapter 231. *Public Laws of the State of North Carolina Passed in 1881*, 433-435. Accessed November 29, 2019,

[https://www.carolana.com/NC/Education/1881\\_03\\_09\\_Act\\_to\\_Establish\\_a\\_Graded\\_School\\_in\\_Durham.html](https://www.carolana.com/NC/Education/1881_03_09_Act_to_Establish_a_Graded_School_in_Durham.html).

North Carolina General Assembly. *Journal of the House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina at Its Session of 1897*. Winston, NC: M.I. and J.C. Stewart, 1897.

—. *Journal of the Senate of the General Assembly of the State of North Carolina at Its Session of 1897*. Winston, NC: M.I. and J.C. Stewart, 1897.

—. *Private Laws of the State of North Carolina Passed by the General Assembly at Its Session of 1897*. Winston, NC: M.I. and J.C. Stewart, 1897.

—. *Public Laws and Resolutions of the State of North Carolina Passed by the General Assembly at Its Session of 1897*. Winston, NC: M.I. and J.C. Stewart, 1897.

“North Carolina Libraries and Food Conservation.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 9 (1917): 89-90.

“North Carolina Libraries and Librarians.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 5-6 (1917): 55-56.

“North Carolina Libraries and Librarians.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 8 (1917): 84.

“North Carolina Libraries and Librarians.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 11 (1918): 120.

“North Carolina Libraries and Librarians.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 7 (1920): 90-92.

“North Carolina Libraries and Librarians.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 10 (1921): 141-143.

“North Carolina Libraries and Librarians.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 2 (1922): 17-19.

“North Carolina Libraries and Librarians.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 3 (1922): 56-58.

“North Carolina Libraries and Librarians.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 9 (1923): 179-180.

North Carolina Library Commission. *First Biennial Report of the North Carolina Library Commission, 1909-1910*. Raleigh, NC: Edwards & Broughton, 1910.

—, ed. *Handbook of the Citizens' Library Movement*. Charlotte, NC: North Carolina Library Association, 1928.

—. *Sixth Biennial Report of the North Carolina Library Commission: 1919-1920*. Raleigh, NC: Edwards and Broughton, 1921.

—. *Tenth Report of the North Carolina Library Commission*. Raleigh, NC, 1928.

“North Carolina’s Garden Campaign.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 2 (1922): 1.

Page, Walter Hines. *The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths*. New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1902.

Painter, Nell Irvin. *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1987.

Palmer, Mary B. “The Public Library and the State.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 9 (1911): 101-105.

—. “The Shepard-Pruden Memorial Library.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 8 (1920): 99-100.

- Parker, Thomas F. "The Greenville Public Library." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 2 (1922): 2-5.
- Parrish, Michael E. *Anxious Decades: America in Prosperity and Depression, 1920-1941*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1992.
- "Patients at Wesley Long Hospital reading books provided by the public library," Photograph, 1927, Greensboro, NC: Greensboro Public Library, from State Archives of North Carolina, *Transforming the Tar Heel State: The Legacy of Public Libraries in North Carolina* (collection), accessed March 20, 2020, <https://digital.ncdcr.gov/digital/collection/p249901coll36/id/140>
- Pestritto, Ronald J. and William J. Atto. "Introduction to American Progressivism." In *American Progressivism: A Reader*, edited by Ronald J. Pestritto and William J. Atto, 1-34. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008.
- Poland, C. Beauregard. *North Carolina's Glorious Victory, 1898: Sketches of Able Democratic Leaders and Statesmen*. Raleigh, NC: C.B. Poland, 1898.
- Porter, Earl W. *Trinity and Duke, 1892-1924: Foundations of Duke University*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1964.
- Powell, William S. "Citizens' Library Movement in North Carolina." *North Carolina Libraries* 13, no. 1 (1954): 33-39.
- Prather, Mary C., Mrs. "Carnegie Public Library of Winston." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 6 (1911): 70-72.
- Rogoff, Leonard. *Gertrude Weil: Jewish Progressive in the New South*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

- Roosevelt, Theodore. "Who Is a Progressive? [1912]." In *American Progressivism: A Reader*, edited by Ronald J. Pestritto and William J. Atto, 35-44. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008.
- Rowe, Nellie M. "The Guilford County Book Truck." *UNC Extension Bulletin* 7, no. 13 (1928): 68-70.
- "Scales Library Act." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 2 (1910): 3.
- "Shall a Public Library Be Established?" *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 6 (1911): 61-62.
- Shaw, Heman S. "What the Public Library Means to Wilmington." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 2-3 (1916): 22-24.
- Shera, Jesse H. *Foundations of the Public Library: The Origins of the Public Library Movement in New England, 1629-1855*. 1949; Reprint, Hamden, CT: Shoestring Press, 1974.
- Shubert, Joseph F. "The Impact of the Federal Library Services and Construction Act." *Library Trends* 24, no. 1 (1975): 27-44.
- Simmons, Furnifold M. "[Appeal] To the Voters of North Carolina." *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC), November 3, 1898. Reprinted in *North Carolina History Told by Contemporaries*, edited by Hugh T. Lefler, 398-400. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1934.
- Simpson, A.C. and W.C. Dula. *Durham and Her People: Combining History and Who's Who in Durham of 1949 and 1950*. Durham, NC: Citizen's Press, 1951.
- Sink, M. Jewell. *Davidson County: Economic and Social*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Department of Rural-Social Economics, 1925.

- Smith, J. "William B. Shepard Papers, 1768-1913, 1868-1913, Manuscript Collection #448" (finding aid). *East Carolina University Libraries*. Accessed March 27, 2020, <https://digital.lib.ecu.edu/special/ead/findingaids/0448>
- "SML's History." *Sheppard Memorial Library*. Accessed March 27, 2020, <http://sheppardlibrary.org/home/about>
- Snow, Helen and Tim Cole. "Greensboro." *State Library of North Carolina*, accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.ncpedia.org/greensboro-0>
- "Statistics of Public Libraries." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 7 (1920): 95-96.
- "Statistics of Public Libraries." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 10 (1921): 140-141.
- "Statistics of Public Libraries." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 3 (1922): 54-55.
- "The Book Campaign." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 10 (1918): 97.
- "The District Meetings – Second District." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 11 (1918): 111-112.
- "The History of the Stanford L. Warren Library: 1913-1939, The Early Years." *Durham County Library*. Accessed March 9, 2020, [http://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/slw/early\\_years.php](http://durhamcountylibrary.org/exhibits/slw/early_years.php)
- "The Library Commission and the War." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 3, no. 7 (1917): 57-58.
- "The New Library." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 1 (1918): 1.
- Thompson, Holland. *From the Cotton Field to the Cotton Mill: A Study of the Industrial Transition in North Carolina*. New York: Macmillan, 1906.
- Thompson, Jessica Lee. "Aaron McDuffie Moore (1863-1923)." *North Carolina History Project*. Accessed March 9, 2020, <https://northcarolinahistory.org/encyclopedia/aaron-mcduffie-moore-1863-1923/>

- Tindall, George B. *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1967
- Titcomb, Mary L. "The Washington County Free Library." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 11 (1921): 149-151.
- "Traveling Libraries." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 1, no. 6 (1911): 73.
- UNC University Libraries. "Collection Overview." *Alfred Moore Scales Papers, 1872; 1874; 1906-1932* (finding aid). Accessed March 9, 2020, <https://finding-aids.lib.unc.edu/04037/>
- Valentine, Patrick M. "Steel, Cotton, and Tobacco: Philanthropy and Public Libraries in North Carolina, 1900-1940." *Libraries & Culture* 31, no. 2 (1996): 272-298.
- . "The Spread of Public Libraries: The Community of the Book in North Carolina." *North Carolina Libraries* 54, no. 3 (1996): 113-121.
- Van Noppen, Charles L. *In Memoriam: George Washington Watts*. Greensboro, NC: Charles L. van Noppen, 1922.
- Vann, Sarah K. *Training for Librarianship Before 1923: Education for Librarianship Prior to the Publication of Williamson's Report on Training for Library Service*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1961.
- Wallace, Anne. "The Southern Library Movement." *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 1, no. 4 (1907): 62-67.
- Weare, Walter. Oral History Interview with Viola Turner, April 17, 1979. Excerpt 9340, Interview C-0016, Southern Oral History Program Collection #4007, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Accessed March 18, 2020, [https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/C-0016/excerpts/excerpt\\_9340.html](https://docsouth.unc.edu/sohp/C-0016/excerpts/excerpt_9340.html)

- Webb, Mena. *Jule Carr: General without an Army*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.
- Wiegand, Wayne A. *'An Active Instrument for Propaganda': The American Public Library During World War I*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1989.
- “William Matthew Barbee.” *Find-a-grave* (database). Accessed March 18, 2020, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/127127836/william-matthew-barbee>
- Wilson, Louis R. “A Ten-Year Library Program for North Carolina.” *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 5, no. 9 (1923): 162-168.
- . “Library Development in North Carolina.” *Library Journal* 48, no. 1 (1923): 21-25.
- . “North Carolina Library Association, 1904-1943.” *North Carolina Libraries* 2, no. 5 (1943): 1-3.
- . “The North Carolina Library Association, 1904-1909.” *North Carolina Libraries* 13, no. 1 (1954): 2-7.
- . “The North Carolina Library Commission, 1909-1949.” *North Carolina Libraries* 7, no. 2 (1949): 7-10.
- Wilson, Louis R. and Edward A. Wight. *County Library Service in the South: A Study of the Rosenwald County Library Demonstration*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1935.
- Wilson, Woodrow. “What Is Progress?: From *The New Freedom*, Chapter 2 [1913].” In *American Progressivism: A Reader*, edited by Ronald J. Pestritto and William J. Atto, 45-54. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2008.
- Wood, Phillip J. *Southern Capitalism: The Political Economy of North Carolina, 1880-1980*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1986.

Wright, C.C. "Rural Libraries in Wilkes County." *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 2, no. 4 (1913): 37-38.

Yates, Mary S. "After the War, What?" *North Carolina Library Bulletin* 4, no. 2-3 (1919): 18-19.

Young, Betty Irene. "Lillian Baker Griggs: Pioneer Librarian." *The Durham Record* 1 (1983): 26-52.