



Carnegie-Stout Public Library—Throughout the Ages

by Susan A. Henricks, Ph.D., Library Director

edited by

Rosemary R. Kramer, Secretary, Library Board of Trustees

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The History of Library Service in Dubuque, Iowa

For many of us, one of our fondest memories revolves around getting a library card. Libraries are a quintessential part of how we learn and engage with the local community. Carnegie-Stout has a rich history of meeting its community's educational, recreational, and informational needs. What follows tells the story of Carnegie-Stout.

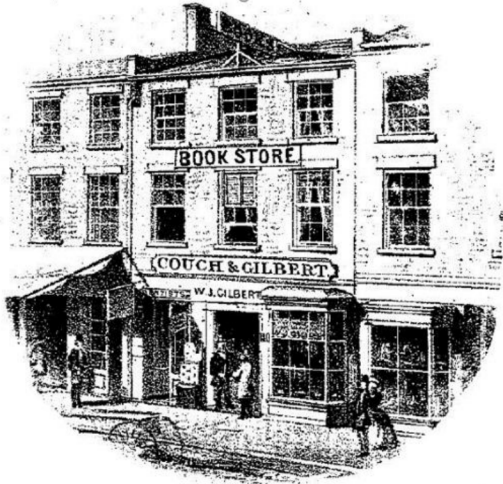
The Young Men's Library Association

In June 1856, a group of young professional men who had moved here from the eastern United States decided to introduce a "course of lectures" for that winter on "literary and scientific subjects, the object being to improve knowledge and improve the public taste of their chosen home."¹ During the second year of lectures a tidy profit was made and it was decided that they should purchase books. The members met with attorney J. S. Blatchley, who had a collection of 150 books that he rented out from his office for \$5.00 per year. Blatchley agreed to turn his books over to the lecture society because it meant the collection could be doubled and his members would enjoy a free reading ticket for a year as part of the deal.

In March of 1859 the organization was incorporated by the "15 young men, who were the leading spirits in all intellectual movements in this progressive Iowa city of about 14,000 inhabitants"² as the Young Men's Literary Association. With the Blatchley donation, the collection totaled around 400 books and was now too large for the attorney's office. The subscription library moved to the back of W. J. Gilbert's Book

¹ Scrapbook. 1901-1924, 0200-003. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

² Ibid.



This daguerreotype is by S. Root for a vignette on a lithograph of Dubuque made by Endicott of New York but published by Gilbert, 1858. Gilbert also published music and provided space in the back of his store for the books of the Young Men's Library Association. This wonderful shop lasted only a few years.

Source: State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

Figure 1 Book Store of W. J. Gilbert.
Source: State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

Store, with the proprietor, W. J. Gilbert, as the first librarian. The library was open a few days a week at designated hours and the annual membership of \$5.00 continued.

Many officers and members of the Young Men's Literary Association served during the Civil War and because of this, records of the subscription library reveal little activity during this time. Although the Association was called a "library," it was not until December 16, 1865 that the name was changed to the Young Men's Library Association (YMLA).

The library was once again outgrowing its allotted space. There was also a degree of discomfort held by patrons as they left the library housed in the back of the bookstore due to the feeling that they should have made a purchase while passing through the bookstore. The directors of the YMLA made the decision to move to a larger facility—into the Julien Building, also known as the Masonic Building, located at the northwest corner of 5th and Locust Streets. Judge O. P. Shiras was the president of the YMLA and Miss Martha Chaddock, librarian.



Figure 2 Julien Building

Source: *Encyclopedia Dubuque* with photo courtesy to Bob Reding.

The YMLA continued with its lectures and during this time many well-known speakers were invited to Dubuque, such as poet and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson; Edwin Percy Whipple, an American essayist and the literary critic for *Graham's Magazine*; P. T. Barnum, a politician, businessman, and the founder of the Barnum & Bailey Circus; and Charles Sumner, a U.S. senator from Massachusetts, who was fiercely opposed to slavery and fought hard for civil and voting rights for freed slaves.

Within ten years the library had grown to 10,000 books and once again had outgrown its space, this time settling in “. . . double apartments in the Façade Building opposite the post office”³ on 9th Street, between Locust and Main Streets. When space became tight here, the YMLA moved to its last location in the Odd Fellows Building (also opposite the post office at 8th and Locust Streets), where a contract was drawn up for the library to occupy the first floor.

³ Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0196-001. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.



Figure 3 Odd Fellows Building
Source: Encyclopedia Dubuque

For nearly forty years, serving men and women alike, YMLA found various ways to fund the subscription library: first by lectures, then by membership dues, fees, and fines, followed by entertainment, and by extending membership to five years for a fee.

The presentation of lectures peaked in the mid 1800s and after the Civil War were no longer popular. Moses M. Ham, in his library recollections, said they had “well nigh passed out of style.”⁴ When these were replaced for entertainment, the YMLA was quite successful, at least until, like the lectures before them, popularity waned. The extended subscriptions fell to the few who could afford such an investment and were not popular. Increasingly, the directors of the YMLA dreamed of building a public library that would be open to all community members free of charge, supported by tax dollars.

⁴ Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0202-004. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

Carnegie-Stout Free Library

About the time of the YMLA's annual meeting of 1899, interest in changing the subscription library to a public library had grown. Many of the other subscription libraries in the state had made this change. The members of the YMLA, however, knew that a tax would have to be voted on and passed and they did not have the confidence that this would happen. They also discussed an endowment, but the requirement of a minimum of \$50,000 (nearly \$1.5 million in today's money) seemed impossible. Discussion turned to making a request of Andrew Carnegie, who was known to endow public libraries. The YMLA Board felt that Carnegie's terms for funding "... were impossible to obtain here, but both the ladies and gentleman on the board thought out plans ...".⁵

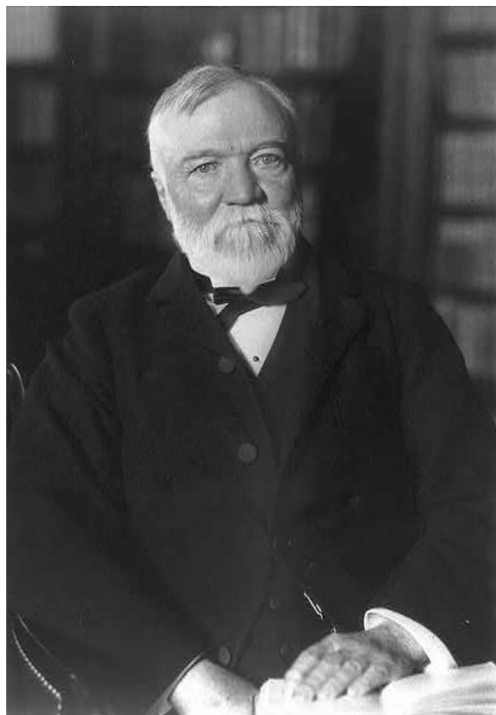


Figure 4 Andrew Carnegie
Source: Library of Congress.

⁵ Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0202-004. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

Andrew Carnegie was a self-made multi-millionaire industrial tycoon. He personally traveled to Dubuque in 1867 to negotiate a contract to build what was to be called the Dunleith and Dubuque Bridge connecting Illinois and Iowa. While Carnegie wasn't the lowest bid, he agreed to meet the lowest bid using wrought iron after convincing funders that it was much stronger than cast iron. It was during this visit that Carnegie met Senator William Boyd Allison and their friendship lasted a lifetime.

The Chicago Chronicle reported that Jacob Rich, president of the YMLA, was also a friend of Andrew Carnegie and he and Senator Allison visited Carnegie in 1900 with a proposal to build a free public library in Dubuque. Recollections of the YMLA and the beginnings of Carnegie-Stout Free Library by Moses M. Ham in a local news article reported that Judge O. P. Shiras accompanied Senator Allison to meet with Andrew Carnegie. In either case, the visit was successful and the men returned with a proposal. Carnegie's proposal included requirements for the local government to:

- demonstrate the need for a public library;
- provide the building site;
- pay staff and maintain the library;
- draw from public funds to run the library—
not use only private donations;
- annually provide ten percent of the cost of the library's construction to support its operation; and,
- provide free service to all.

“In every progressive community the free library is no longer deemed a luxury; it has become a necessity.”

The Dubuque Herald, 7 Oct. 1900.

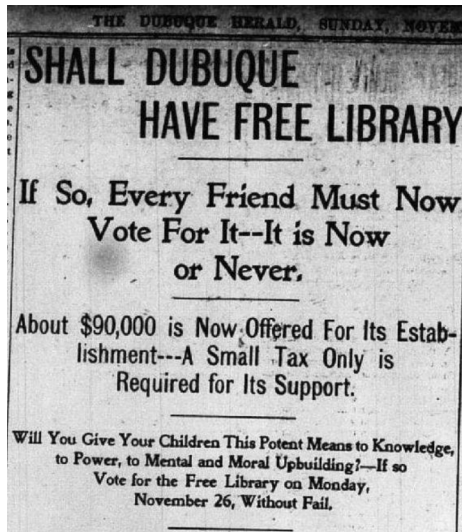


Figure 5 *The Dubuque Herald*, Nov. 25, 1900

The proposal stipulated that the city levy a tax for the library and its ongoing maintenance as well as provide the building site. The special election for voters to approve the tax was held on November 26, 1900. The total vote was 3,820 and was approved by nearly 81% of those who voted. Interestingly, while still two decades from winning the right to vote, Dubuque women

participated in this election and supported the library by 30 to 1! One thousand twenty-seven women voted for the library proposal with only 38 opposed. The *Sunday Herald* reported that this date would “in the history of Dubuque . . . be cherished as the day on which Dubuquers did themselves most proud.”⁶

“It was on August 28, 1900, that the people of Dubuque were first informed of the prize that was within their grasp.”

The Dubuque Herald, Sunday, Sept. 15, 1901.

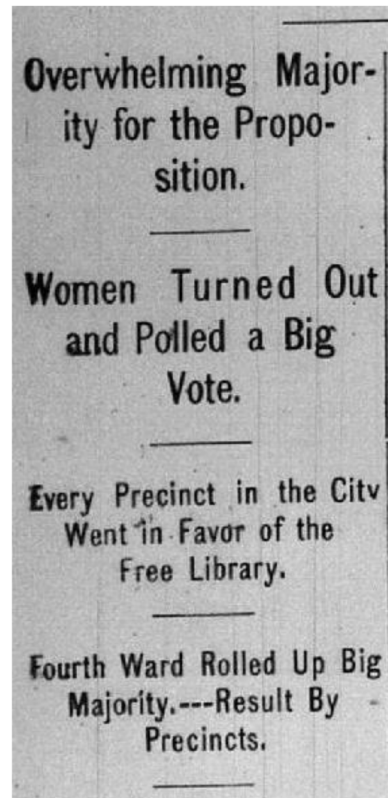


Figure 6 *The Dubuque Herald*, Nov. 27, 1900



⁶ Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0199-02-003. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

The First Library Board of Trustees

Mayor Berg appointed the first Library Board of Trustees on February 7, 1901: Jacob Rich, George B. Burch, Peter Kiene, Peter Klauer, J. R. Lindsay, Judge Benjamin W. Lacey, Mrs. J. S. Lewis, Judge D. J. Lenehan, and John S. Murphy. Jacob Rich became the first president of the Board of Trustees. The first order of business was to secure a site for the new library.

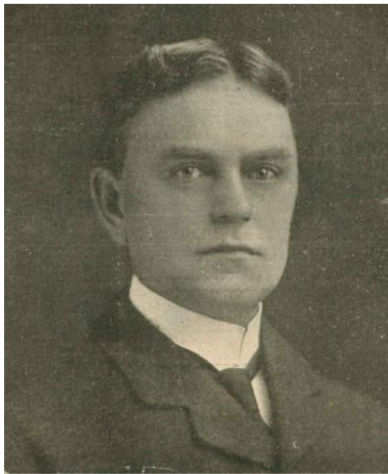


Figure 7 Frank D. Stout
Source: Scrapbook (1901–1924, 0200-003).

Frank D. Stout was a director of the YMLA at this time. He presented an offer to the city of Dubuque saying, “For the consideration of one dollar and to perpetuate the memory of my father Henry L. Stout, deceased, I Frank D. Stout and my wife, Clara Wales Stout, hereby convey to the City of Dubuque...” and the “splendid and spacious site with an area of 158 feet on Bluff and 76 feet on Eleventh Street” became the site of the Carnegie-Stout Free Library.⁷

The library trustees “were overjoyed over Mr. Stout’s public spirit and generosity.”⁸ Unfortunately, it turned out that the lots were not large enough. The Board of Trustees decided to try to acquire the property just south of the lots, which was owned by the Provost family. Frank Stout once again offered help and said that he would contribute the funds for this acquisition. The owner, Mrs. Provost, was out of town for the summer and the board worked through her agent, who accepted this offer. Later it was learned

⁷ Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0198-002. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

⁸ Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. News clippings taped to p. 1.

that the gentleman accepting the offer for the land lacked the authority to make the deal and Mrs. Provost, dismayed to learn this upon her return to Dubuque, refused to sign the offer. She explained it was not the money, but the home was sentimental and had been in the family for many years. Although Mrs. Provost was 83 years old, and no longer enjoyed good health, she was “loathe of leave it.”⁹ As she considered the offer, Mrs. Provost also recognized that she did not want to stand in the way and be the possible cause of the library not being built. Soon, she agreed to sell the property and did so for \$10,000, which Frank Stout bought bringing his total gift of land to the city of Dubuque to \$17,000.

During their second Board of Trustees’ meeting on February 19, 1901, the minutes stated, “The President suggested that in view of the donations of Mess. Carnegie and Stout, it would be graceful and fitting recognition thereof, to give the library the name of the Carnegie-Stout Free Library”¹⁰ and with a motion made by Mr. Burch and seconded by Mr. Kiene, the name was unanimously approved.

Also at this meeting, trustees Burch and Lindsay were appointed to a committee to “investigate the qualifications of architects and to recommend to the Board the employment of one, in their opinion, most qualified to draw the plans and supervise the erection of a modern library building.”¹¹ The committee moved quickly and on March 4, 1901 the board voted unanimously to contract with W. G. Williamson of Chicago, and John Spencer of Dubuque and the committee was told to “urge the speedy preparation of plans for the new Library.”¹²

⁹ Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. News clippings taped to p. 1.

¹⁰ Minutes of the Carnegie-Stout Library Board of Trustees, Feb. 19, 1901.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. Mar. 4, 1901, p. 4.

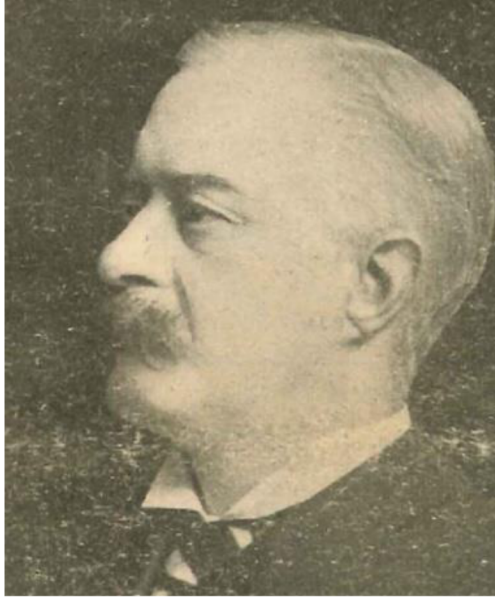


Figure 8 Dubuque architect, John Spencer
Source: Scrapbook, (1901–1924, 0195-001).

Williamson and Spencer, who had worked together on several other major projects in the past dozen years, were up to the task, submitting drawings by May 31 of 1901, which the board approved, directing the architects to move on to the working plans, specifications, and to follow with securing bids. This was completed in early September 1901, and John Field, a contractor from Omaha, was awarded the construction project coming in with the lowest bid at \$72,711 (nearly \$2 million in today's money).

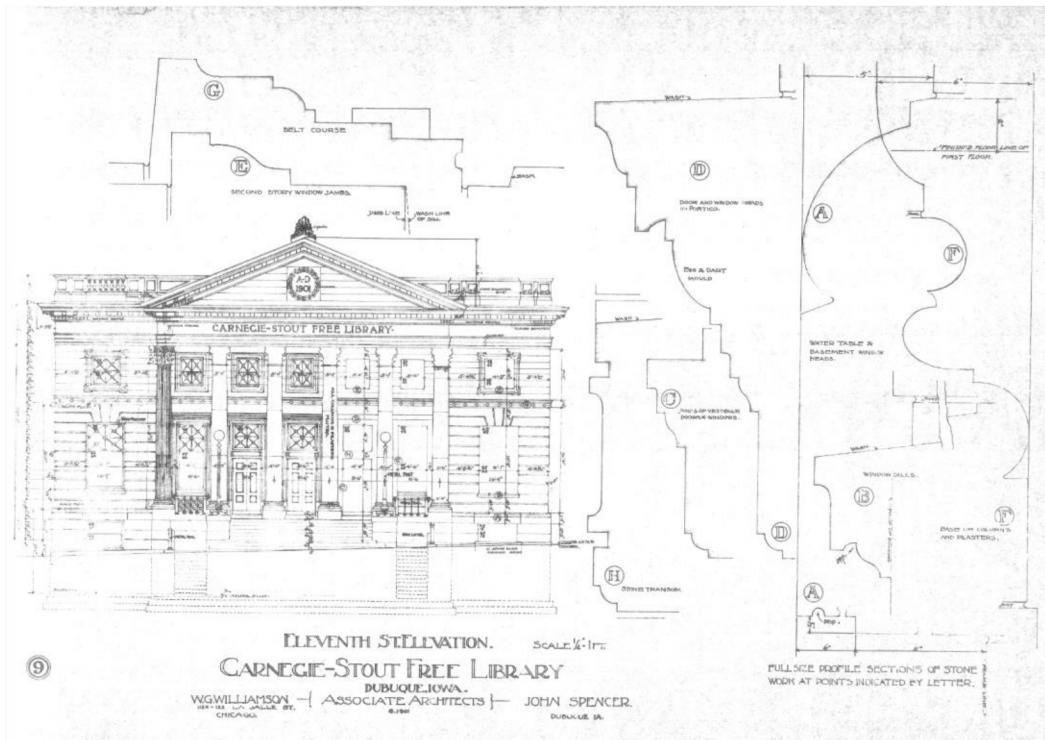


Figure 9 Original plans for Carnegie-Stout Public Library—north side exterior. Source: Carnegie-Stout Public Library archives.

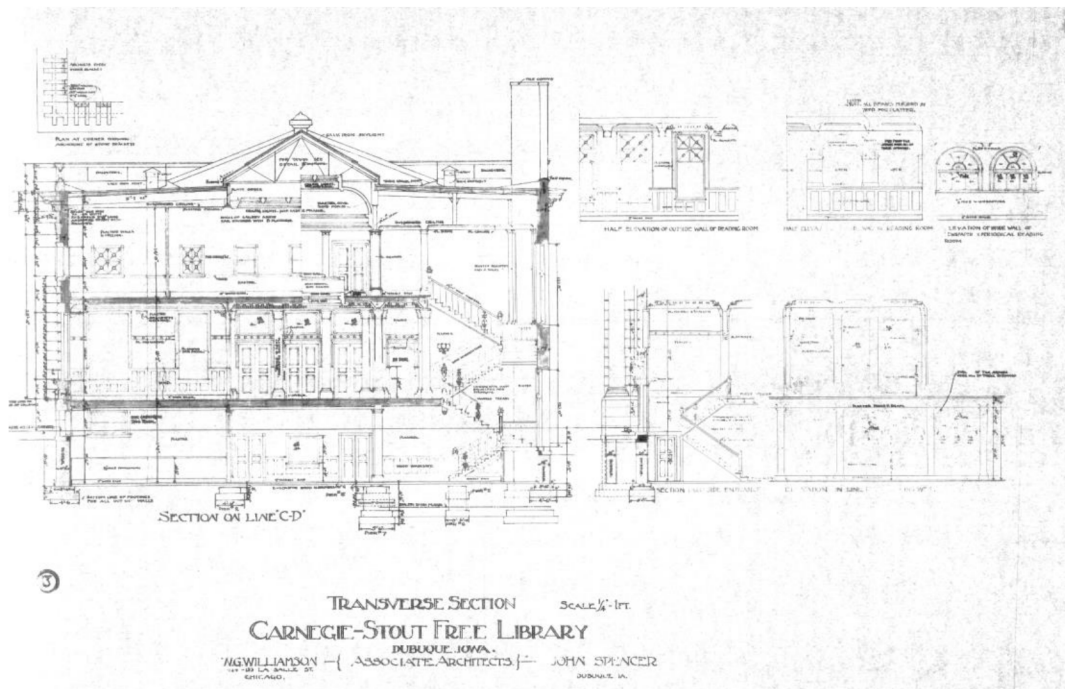


Figure 10 Cutaway of the south side of Carnegie-Stout Public Library, facing north. Source: Carnegie-Stout Public Library archives.

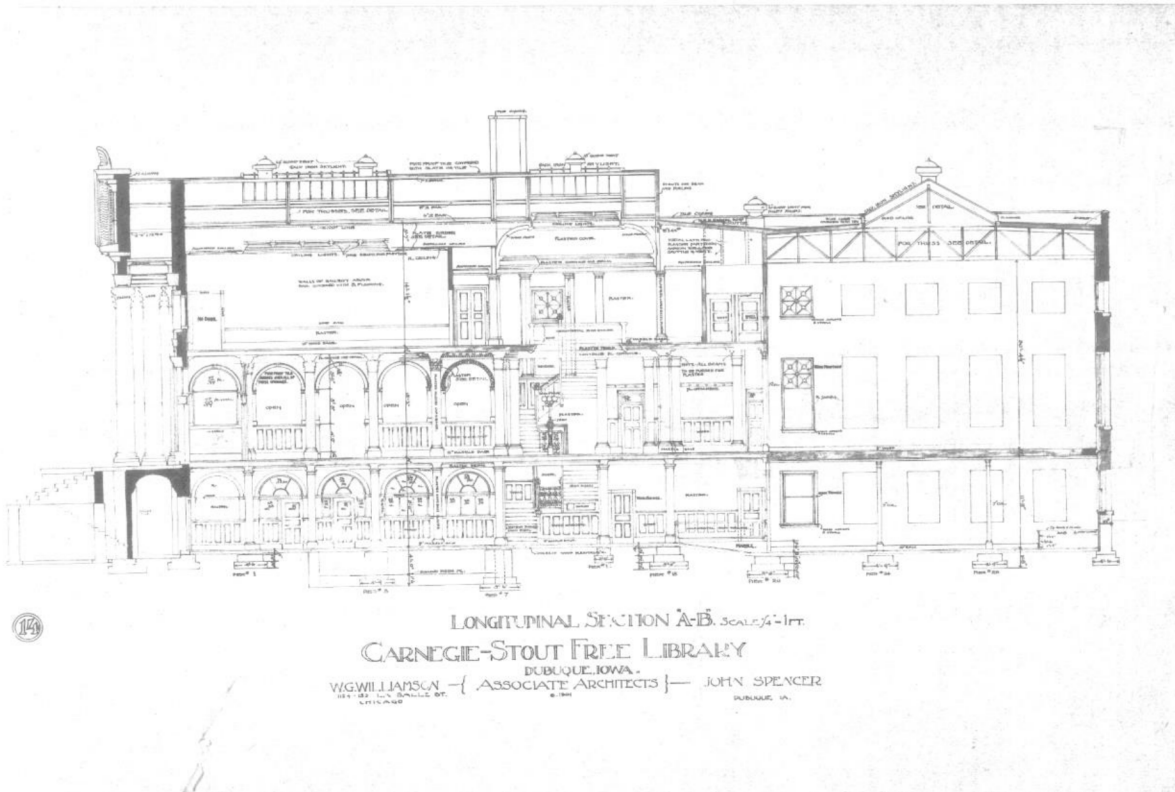


Figure 11 West side of Carnegie-Stout Public Library, facing east
Source: Carnegie-Stout Public Library archives.

The “Temple of Knowledge”¹³ and “Mecca for all Seeking Knowledge”¹⁴ as the Carnegie-Stout Free Library was also called, boasted its Bedford (Indiana) limestone construction, and “large and handsome flight of stone steps, guarded on either side with massive stone parapets surmounted by bronze lamps, leading to a six column portico.”¹⁵ The columns measured 2.6 feet in diameter and 25.4 feet high. The proportion of the columns was “carefully studied in accordance with the best examples of ancient Rome, such as found in the Pantheon erected by Agrippa and finished in the year 27 B.C.” [and, which was] “the most perfect of ancient examples now existing and

¹³ Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0195-001, Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

¹⁴ Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0358-043, Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

¹⁵ Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0195-001, Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

in use.”¹⁶ The style of architecture was regarded as “the grandest of the classical period . . . and is the same that has been adopted in most of the best public libraries of this country, of Paris, Berlin, London, and other great centers of art and industry.”¹⁷ Additionally, “it is the style which was most freely used in the great White City produced at Jackson Park for the world’s fair at Chicago; it is the style of architecture which has endured the test of time for over 2000 years.”¹⁸

The building was constructed “both externally and internally . . . fireproof”¹⁹ by not using wood; instead, using brick, stone, terra cotta, with steel beams and iron columns. The library did, however, include a “large reading room for men, where reading and smoking could be enjoyed together.”²⁰ Access to materials in the stacks was controlled by a desk where delivery clerks sat. Upon request, the clerks would enter the bookshelves through turnstiles on either side of the desk to retrieve the requested book. The plans called for room to house 20,000 books with the ability to grow to 80,000 titles.

Within two months of making the motion to name the library, joining the building committee, and recommending an architect, George Burch died. The Board of Trustees mourned the “irreparable” loss and wrote a resolution in his memory, which outlined his many fine qualities and noted

He met the call for the upbuilding of the free public library in this city with the same broad-mindedness, the same liberal spirit that he ever manifested in similar matters. This board has relied greatly in the work it thus far has accomplished upon his energy, his wisdom, his practical instincts, his sincerity, and

¹⁶ Scrapbook.1901–1924, 0195-001. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Scrapbook.1901–1924, 0196-001. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

unselfishness. It felt certain also, that in any emergency it could depend surely upon his liberal purpose and open hand. . . . we feel intensely the loss of his helpful and hopeful spirit, and his sagacious, and stimulating counsel.”²¹

In March of 1902, the board felt another loss “like a crushing blow upon our hearts” when board member John Murphy died. Murphy was, “an enthusiastic friend of all forms of popular education. Mr. Murphy naturally became one of the strongest pillars of the free public library movement, and a potent power in securing the needed vote for financial support. To all the meetings of the board he brought a cheery spirit, a courteous greeting, and an eye brightened by enthusiasm in the work.”²² John Murphy was 55 years old when he died of an apparent heart attack while working at his desk. He was the editor of the *Dubuque Telegraph-Herald* and was also well-known and highly regarded statewide. Judge Oliver Perry Shiras was appointed to fill the vacancy



Figure 12 O. P. Shiras
Source: *encyclopediadubuque.org*.

on the board left by Murphy’s death. Shiras was a lifelong library advocate. He was a member of the YMLA as early as the mid-1800s and served as its president. Shiras was actively involved in the establishment of Carnegie-Stout, who with Senator William B. Allison, made the first contact with Andrew Carnegie.

The new Carnegie-Stout Free Public Library was again the beneficiary of the YMLA when the Association resolved in April 1901 to turn over all of their assets to the trustees of the public library. These assets totaled \$25,000, which included their entire

²¹ *Dubuque Daily Telegraph*, May 12, 1901; p. 3.

²² Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. Mar. 25, 1902; p. 11.

collection, a \$7,000 endowment fund, and \$8,000 in property interests that were left to the Association in wills. Andrew Carnegie added to his original donation another \$10,000 in December of 1901.

The Library Board of Trustees oversaw the entire project from authorizing the construction of a cistern to hold two hundred barrels of water and deciding to add electric light fixtures to the purchase of “tables, chairs, shades, floor coverings, and any other articles deemed necessary for the furnishing of the library rooms . . . not to exceed \$1,000.”²³ They wrangled over “the question to ‘have or have not’ a telephone” until Judge Lacy made a motion to refer this matter to “the House Committee with power.”²⁴

During this meeting a book committee received approval to spend \$1,500 (around \$40,000 in today’s money) for an opening day collection. Policies needed to be drafted and approved. The first rules of the library were approved on July 19, 1902 and included hours of operation, which were 9:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. The library was closed on Sundays except for the reading room, which opened between 2:00 and 5:00 p.m. Library patrons were limited to borrowing two books, only one of which could be fiction. Typically, books could be kept for two weeks and only nonfiction books could be renewed. Fines were set at two cents a day with the strict rule that no additional books could be checked out until the fine was paid. Nonfiction books could be reserved if the patron paid the fee of two cents for postcard notification; works of fiction could not be reserved. If a person wanted a particular item added to the collection, he or she could request this but must include a “reason why it is desired.”²⁵ And lastly, “Books cannot be

²³ Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. Aug. 15, 1902; p. 18.

²⁴ Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. Sep. 25, 1902; p. 22.

²⁵ Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. Jul. 19, 1902; p. 15.

received from any house where there has been a case of any contagious disease at the time the library books were in the house.”²⁶

A librarian was needed to manage and direct the new library. Board President Jacob Rich drafted a letter to the Iowa Library Commission, of which Johnson Brigham was both the President of the Commission and the State Librarian, asking about Miss Bessie Sargeant Smith from whom he had received a letter. Brigham’s secretary, Miss Alice Tyler, responded to Rich and recommended Smith for the job of librarian. Smith, at that time was residing in Wellesley, MA. Her credentials included graduation from the New York State Library School and work experience as a librarian at the Harlem Library in New York City.

Tyler’s recommendation of Smith included her opinion on the merits of hiring a female:

I have learned through some source that you at one time thought you wished to secure a young man as librarian. This I think is a difficult thing to do, unless you are able to pay a pretty large salary, as the larger proportion of the trained librarians are young women and the men who are in the profession are usually men of literary tastes who have passed middle life and bring administrative ability, which demands a high salary.²⁷

Tyler went on to describe Smith:

Miss Smith would bring to the position native ability, education and the advantages of travel and study abroad, which with youth and energy and the training for her special profession causes me to believe that you would make no mistake in securing her.²⁸

If any doubt remained, Miss Tyler concluded in a handwritten postscript that “Mr. Brigham joins with me in recommending Miss Smith to your favorable consideration.”²⁹

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Scrapbook. dc-04_01_1902-correspondence-staff-first-librarian-0172.0. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

This letter of recommendation was evidently sufficient as library records reveal the next piece of correspondence was dated just over two weeks later on April 17, 1902 and was written by Bessie Sargeant Smith, addressed to the Honorable Jacob Rich.

After consideration I have decided to accept your proposition. That is to say I am willing to accept the position of Librarian at the Carnegie-Stout Public Library for \$1,000 per year.³⁰

Miss Smith's salary of \$1,000 is estimated to be around \$30,000 in today's money; by 1905 Miss Smith's salary had increased to \$1,080 annually.

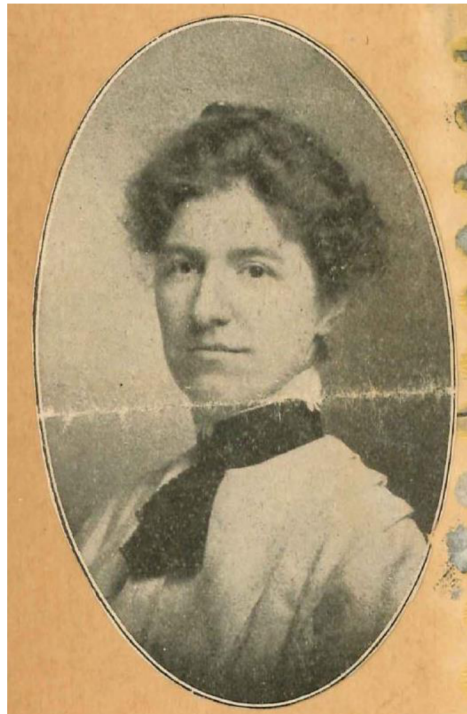


Figure 13 Bessie Sargeant Smith, first director of Carnegie-Stout Free Library
Source: Scrapbook, 1901–1924, 0197.002.

³⁰ Scrapbook. dc-04_17_1902-correspondence-staff-first-librarian-0173. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.



Figure 14 First library staff members. Library assistants, left to right: Miss Wilder, Marjorie Graves, and Grace Mullany.
Source: Scrapbook, 1901–1924, 0197.002.

Plans were made for the library to open in June of 1902, but Mr. Field, the general contractor, died. He oversaw all aspects of construction and knew the project intimately. His death was a blow and delayed completion of the library by four months. On Friday evening, October 17, 1902, the Carnegie-Stout Free Library was officially turned over to the City of Dubuque by the Young Men’s Library Association at a “sneak-preview” tour to which the mayor, city council, and press were invited. The doors were opened to the public the following week, and to accommodate the crowds, reception days were assigned to different parts of the city.

The three-day public reception started on Monday, October 20, 1902. James Naughton, author of *Dubuque Library History (1856 – 1959)*, described this event as a “whopping success with every family represented by at least one or more members. The enthusiasm shown toward the new library was tremendous.”



Figure 15 Postcard of Carnegie-Stout Free Library, early 1900s
Source: Scrapbook, pc-19uu-Library Exterior-Postcard 3-0001-01.

The library's first president of the Board of Trustees, Jacob Rich, went before the Dubuque City Council to present the Annual Report on January 9, 1903, which covered the first 2½ months that the library had been open. Rich reported:

The purpose and spirit of the management, both of the trustees and the librarians, is one of general and courteous invitation. And everything will be done within the limits of the support fund to extend the advantages of the library to all classes and conditions of our people.³¹



Figure 16 Jacob Rich
Source: Encyclopediadubuque.org.

³¹ Annual Report, ar-1902-0045-02. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

Rich also shared that in the preceding 2½ months, the library had circulated 23,550 books and that the total collection numbered 20,648 volumes. Registrations for library cards had reached 3,641 and showed every sign of steady growth.



Figure 17 Second Floor Reading Room, Early 20th Century
Source: Carnegie-Stout Public Library Photograph Archives.



In describing the photo of the Art Room in Figure 18 it was recorded that “. . . through the generosity of a trustee the art room is well furnished, with a Persian carpet, handsome chairs and lights. The Art Association of the city gave some twenty pictures and other friends of the library has also given pictures, so that a fair start had been made toward a good collection.”³² In the center of the photograph notice the porcelain vase on a pedestal. This intricately painted and ornamentally decorated German vase is believed to be the library’s first piece of artwork, which was donated by Judge and Mrs. O. P. Shiras.

Figure 18 Third Floor Art Room, approx. 1905
(now the Aigler Auditorium) *Source: Carnegie-Stout Public Library Photograph Archives.*

³² Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. Jun. 12, 1905; p. 65-67.



Figure 19 Third Floor Rotunda, 1902
Source: Carnegie-Stout Public Library Photograph Archives

The original auditorium was located on the first floor (now the children's area) and could seat 350 people. University Extension lectures were planned to be held here as well as those hosted by the Women's Club. The Men's Reading Room was also located on the first floor of the library. This reading room included "many newspapers and magazines, including a number of foreign periodicals. Smoking is allowed in this room."³³

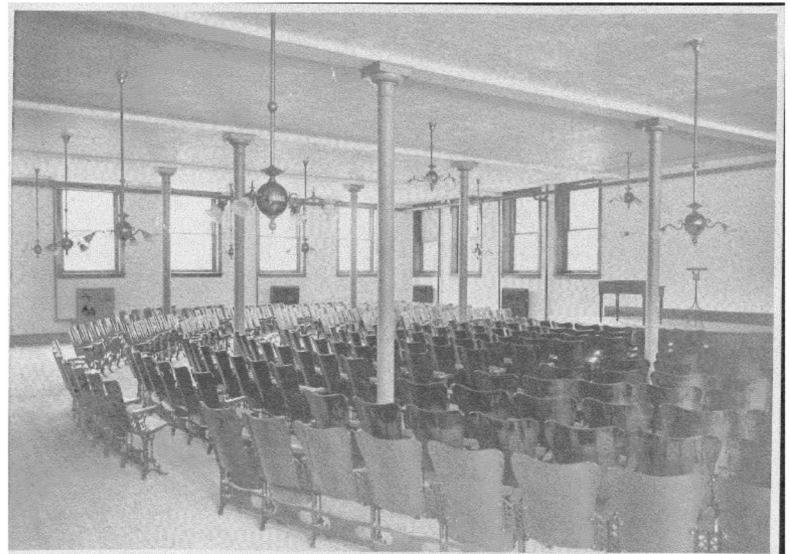


Figure 20 The Original Auditorium, First Floor
Source: Carnegie-Stout Public Library Photograph Archives

³³ Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. Jun. 12, 1905; p. 65-67.

In 1905, a donor approached the Board of Trustees and offered a collection of about 100 books. The board was interested in accepting this gift, but was challenged to find more space as the collection had increased in size. The trustees wrote a letter on April 6, 1905, and appealed to Andrew Carnegie who responded that he would “be glad to pay for the stacks installation” up to \$11,500.³⁴ Jacob Rich, in his letter to the mayor informing the mayor and city council of this gift said, “. . . Mr. Carnegie’s gift not only enables your board to meet this emergency but to provide for the future needs of the library in this direction for many years to come, and perhaps for all time, as the new set of stacks will give shelf room for fifty-five thousand books.”

In his response to Mr. Carnegie, Jacob Rich wrote:

The Board of Library Trustees of Dubuque, Iowa, voicing the sentiment of the people of Dubuque as well as their own feeling, desire to express the deep sense of the gratitude to Hon. Andrew Carnegie for his gift of \$11,500 for the purchase of book stacks for our free public library. The profound sense of former obligation for Mr. Carnegie, whose generosity was the inception of our present beneficent institution, is more deepened by his present gift, which will complete our beautiful library building, add greatly to its usefulness, and make it a more fitting monument to the unparalleled generosity of the greatest and wisest gift given the world has ever known.³⁵

³⁴ Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. Jun. 12, 1905; p. 65-67.

³⁵ Ibid.



Figure 21 Original bookstacks, 1902–1905, prior to the second donation by Andrew Carnegie, which provided for the addition of the glass floor mezzanine and additional stacks that would hold 55,000 books.

Source: Carnegie-Stout Public Library Photograph Archives.

Head Librarian Bessie Sargeant Smith's last day with Carnegie-Stout was April 15, 1907. The Board of Trustees had this response:

The resignation was accepted to take effect April 15th and the president has appointed a committee of one to express to Miss Smith the deep regret of each of the trustees present for the resignation of so efficient a librarian. The president read the following resolution: Resolved, that in accepting with great regret the resignation of Miss Bessie Sargeant Smith as librarian of this Library we do it under the assurance that the proposed change is in the line of her professional advancement and personal advantage. Her conscientiousness and faithfulness to us during her nearly five years of service as Librarian demand that we place no impediment in the way of this advancement and advantage. We assure her future employers that they will find in Miss Smith a mind trained in one of the best colleges in the country; a graduate of the best library schools of the country; a librarian of several years of experience in charge of successful librarians; and a personality marked with such courtesy of manner, such enthusiasm, in her work, such knowledge and skill in her duties, as to assure her success in any position in the line of her profession. This Board unhesitatingly commends her to any other library board seeking her services.³⁶

³⁶ Carnegie-Stout Library Minutes of Board, Feb. 9, 1901–Sept. 10, 1917. Mar. 11, 1907; p. 92-93.

Growth defined the first decade of library service. Although a diphtheria epidemic reduced checkouts in 1905, it rebounded to the “largest in history”³⁷ in 1908, boasting 112,381 circulations for the year. Collections were placed in seven schools and storytime drew 200 attendees. The art collection grew, and by 1906 the library owned 680 pieces of art.

The Next 110 Years

Source: Minutes of the Library Board of Trustees Meetings, 1910–2020.

1910 – 1919

The library’s small budget caused concern during this decade and it was lamented that “Dubuque has the lowest rated Library in the State of Iowa”³⁸. By 1918 the library “entered largely into war work.”³⁹ In addition to collecting books to be sent to training camps, and selling thrift stamps at the desk, the library took part in the Red Cross, Liberty Loan, and Food Conservation drives. The flu epidemic, as well as an epidemic of infantile paralysis, closed the library for “many weeks,”⁴⁰ while a fuel shortage closed the library once. Publicity was used for the first time in 1915 with colored slides advertising the library in seven of the city’s moving picture theaters.



Figure 22 World War I Thrift Stamp

Source: Wikipedia.

³⁷ Annual Report, ar-1908-0005-07. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

³⁸ Annual Report, 1914. ar-1914-0010-05. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

³⁹ Annual Report, 1918. ar-1918-0013-06. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

⁴⁰ Annual Report, 1918. ar-1918-0013-07. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

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Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0198-002. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0199-02-003. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0200-003. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0202-004. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

Scrapbook. 1901–1924, 0303-028. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

Scrapbook. 1901–1394, 0358-043. Carnegie-Stout Public Library.

Appendix 1

Library Board of Trustees Members 1901–2020

1901–1901	George B. Burch
1901–1902	John S. Murphy
1901–1905	J. R. Lindsay
1901–1909	Peter Kiene
1901–1909	Judge D. J. Lenehan
1901–1910	Mrs. J. S. Lewis
1901–1913	Judge Benjamin W. Lacy
1901–1913	Jacob Rich
1901–1919	Judge Oliver P. Shiras
1901–1909	Peter Klauer
1902–1903	James E. Welsh
1904–1917	James M. McFadden
1905–1910	Major W. H. Day
1909–1914	R. Louis Murphy
1909–1921	H. B. Spensley
1909–1936	Henry B. Gniffke
1910–1924	Helen M. T. Sauer
1910–1924	Judge Mathew C. Matthews
1913–1951	Frank R. Lacy
1913–1919	Peter Klauer
1914–1921	Frank Ross
1916–1941	Dr. John C. Hancock
1917–1925	Mr. J. W. McEvoy

1919–1959	Matthew H. Czizek
1921–1926	Edward Schrempf
1921–1926	William M. Hetherington
1921–1929	Louis Guthrie Hurd
1925–1947	Edith McKay
1926–1942	Charles McLean
1926–1945	Dr. James J. Alderson
1938–1948	Frank Huftill
1941–1955	William J. Markey
1942–1973	Father Karl Schroeder
1945–1960	Dr. William B. Zuker
1946–1977	Mabel Hoffmann
1948–1975	Merlin Hantleman
1951–1954	Al Diedsch
1954–1963	Arnold Stierman
1955–1971	George Kaufman
1960–1964	Robert Kenline
1961–1973	Dr. George Ehlhardt
1963–1975	David Hammer
1964–1977	Robert G. Holscher
1971–1973	Mrs. Saul Greenstein
1973–1975	Rev. Samuel Calian
1973–1985	Eileen Coursey
1974–1983	Kenneth R. Pease
1975–1976	Dr. Wesley Schlotzhauer, Jr.
1975–1981	Norman R. McMullin
1975–1981	Catherine M. Seitz

1977–1978	Lynn Rutan
1977–1979	Andrew J. Kisting
1977–1981	Leland P. Stocker
1979–1981	Sr. Mary A. Healey
1978–1983	Bill B. Totty
1981–1981	Robert F. Mattox
1981–1987	Dolores L. Kent
1981–1987	Joan G. Higley
1982–1983	Catherine M. Seitz
1982–1991	Marilyn M. McDonald
1983–1987	J. Duane Mortenson
1983–1989	Leland P. Stocker
1983–1989	William B. Gould
1985–1991	Michael D. Gibson
1987–1988	Garry A. Hammond
1987–1992	Lawrence E. Cremer
1987–1993	Ann O. Boultinghouse
1988–1989	Edward J. Hannon
1989–1991	Diane O'Dell
1989–1995	Sharon E. Smith
1989–1999	Brian D. Southwood
1991–1995	Dee Diederichs
1991–1995	John R. Darrah
1991–1997	Michael J. McKinley
1992–1994	Helen Hantelmann
1993–1999	Edward H. Everts
1994–1999	Janet Marxen

1995–1995	Jane Dusil
1995–2001	Steven Augspurger
1995–2001	Edmund J. Vandermillen
1996–2011	Kristen L. Smith
1997–1998	Piper Kuhljuergen
1998–2005	Jack Felderman
1999–2000	Thomas Goodman
1999–2003	Kevin Lynch
1999–2005	Mary Strom
2002–2008	Sue Lindsay
2001–2005	Thomas Tully
2001–2008	Michael Shubatt
2003–2008	Alan Avery
2005–2008	Becky Hauder
2005–2010	Beverly Kolz
2005–2014	Diann Guns
2008–2011	Elizabeth Leeper
2008–2016	Paula Connors
2008–2013	David Hammer
2008–2017	Mike Willis
2010–2014	Frederick K. Miller
2011–2015	John Anderson-Bricker
2011–2017	Jenny Harris Weiss
2013–2015	Daniel Boice
2014–2017	Jon Trotter
2014–2021	Patty Poggemiller
2015–2016	Angela Allred

2015–2019	Pat Maddux
2016–	Christy Monk
2016–	Robert Armstrong
2017–	Rosemary Kramer
2017–	Greg Gorton
2017–	Pam Mullin
2019–	Victor Lieberman

Appendix 2

Library Directors 1902–2020

Bessie Sargeant Smith, 1902–1907

Lillian B. Arnold, 1907–1916

Almira R. Wilcox, 1916–1918

Mae M. Clark, 1919–1953

Ruth A. Dennis, 1953–1964

William G. Fullmer, 1964–1980

Elizabeth D. (Donnan) Minter, 1980–1988

Nicky K. Stanke, 1988–1994

John R. McCracken, Ph.D., 1994–1996

Thomas J. Moran, 1997–2001

Susan A. Henricks, Ph.D., 2002–2021