

NEW YORK
Society Library

ANNUAL REPORT

1945

53 East Seventy-ninth Street

Founded 1754

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The Trustees of the New York Society Library present to the members this their report for the year ending March 31, 1945.

My first duty is a sad one—to report the death of our former Chairman, Mr. Lewis Spencer Morris, a member of the Board of Trustees from November 1920 to November 1944. The following resolutions were adopted by the Board at their January meeting:

With deep sorrow the Trustees of the New York Society Library record the death on the 28th of November 1944, of Lewis Spencer Morris, lawyer, World War I artillery officer, good citizen with many roots in old New York, who was elected a Trustee in 1920 and served diligently as Chairman of the Board from May 1930 until May 1944.

During his chairmanship many vital problems confronting the institution were met and solved. He was the guiding force of the Trustees committee, including Messrs. Armstrong, Schermerhorn and Vaughan, that took charge of moving the Library from the obsolete building erected for it in 1856, at 109 University Place, to the present property at No. 53 East 79th Street. His willingness to attend innumerable meetings of the committee and his legal the financial advice were invaluable in carrying the project through to a successful conclusion. The new premises were open to the subscribers and public in July 1937, only sixty days after the doors of the old building were closed.

He was never too busy with his profession and with his many responsibilities in other organizations that serve the public to give valuable advice to the Librarian.

Wise, tactful, faithful to all in his duties, Lewis Spencer Morris is described by a Trustee who knew him for more than forty years as “a gentle and determined man.”

The Trustees extend to Mrs. Morris their sympathy and direct that a copy of this Minute be sent to Mrs. Morris and that one be placed upon the records of the New York Society Library.

During the year just closed, the number of books issued for home reading was 48,581 representing an increase of 3,737 over the year before. Subscriptions amounted to \$10,113 or an increase of \$1,076. There was a net gain of 79 in subscribers. A total of 785 subscribers and approximately 300 shareholders now actively use the Library. The Treasurer’s report will show that we are in a sound financial condition.

We are pleased to be able to record that we recently felt it safe to bring home the most valuable items in the Rare Book Collection from Saratoga Springs, where they had been sent, together with treasures

from the Morgan Library and the New York Public Library, for safe-keeping during the threat of Nazi bombing. As the books were unwrapped from their temporary covers of newspapers which proclaimed the fall of France, the attack at Pearl Harbor and other tragic events of the early years of the war, we were able to realize in one more way the debt of gratitude we owe our Armed Forces.

We have received many gifts during the past year, details of which will be found in the Librarian's report which follows the present one.

I should like to compliment the Library on its two new Trustees, Colonel Arnold Whitridge and the Honorable Nicholas Roosevelt.

In closing, the Trustees would wish me to say a word of special commendation, I am sure, to the members of the Library staff for their faithful service during the trying year just past.

For the Trustees,

HAMILTON FISH ARMSTRONG,
Chairman.

April 24, 1945.

To the Board of Trustees of the New York Society Library.

Gentlemen: I have the honor to submit to you the 191st annual report of the Library for the year ending March 31, 1945.

The tide of subscriptions continues to rise, with an increase of ten per cent over last year. Although a few members appear to subscribe as to a museum, with the idea of supporting the institution but not actively using it, the majority draw upon the Library's resources in gratifying measure. Balancing the usual decline in subscriptions after the winter, several new ones were taken last spring for the purpose of children's summer reading. One of the private schools decided that their use of the Library warranted two extra memberships, making three in all. Members of the editorial staffs of our daily newspapers and weekly magazines have subscribed during the past year, joining the large number of publishers represented in our membership. It is natural for the Library to attract the literary and academic world but now the movie industry is represented in a recent subscription. It is our author members who kindle in us the warm satisfaction that comes from having a part, however slight, in some lasting project. Names of famous authors grace our subscribers' lists from the earliest days.

We have recently added to our noteworthy collection of New York printing two ordinances of Edward Cornbury, governor of New York and New Jersey, dated Nov. 7, 1704, and April 14, 1705, and printed by William Bradford, the city's first printer. The former revives the High Court of Chancery, which had been suspended by a previous ordinance (June 13, 1702) and establishes a schedule of fees for the court. The 1705 ordinance regulates the fees for the Court of Admiralty. Another unusual acquisition is the *Laws, Statutes, Ordinances and Constitutions . . . of the City of New York . . . Printed and sold by J. Parker at the New Printing Office, in Bever [sic] Street 1749*, only three other copies of which are recorded. The Library has every right to be proud of these three choice items which were the gift of Mr. Christian Zabriskie. The same donor has also presented us with a very early example of the bibliographer's art, *A Catalogue of the most vendible Books in England*, London 1658. We have also received many other gifts during the past year, including 287 volumes from Mrs. W. Romeyn Benjamin and 174 titles from Mrs. Amos Pinchot.

We have been able to complete our set of Odell's *Annals of the New York Stage* this year, and are now subscribing to the Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's *Correspondence*, the first ten volumes of which were a gift from Mr. Maitland Griggs. One of our members, Mr. Edward P. Chrystie, who made the beautiful drawing of the old University Place reading room which now hangs behind the loan desk, has given us a photostat from the Hall of Records of a plan of the lots belonging to the Library and its neighbors in Nassau street in 1804. We are glad of this addition to our material on all of the Library's former buildings.

Our old ledgers of books borrowed from 1789 to 1907 have settled a question from one of our readers. She came in search of a certain Mrs. Colden, "of much charm but with great education and masculine ability" who lived in New York around 1790. Might not those qualities indicate a membership in this institution of learning? We were able to show that Mrs. Henrietta Maria Colden had bought a share in 1795 and made excellent use of it, as evidenced by the large and scholarly array of books that she borrowed. Our unique collection of records has enabled us to supply interesting information along many lines. We answered an inquiry from a man who believed his great grandfather was Assistant Librarian here in 1840. We found his salary receipts as convincing evidence. He received thirty three dollars a month with an additional six dollars for making fires, dusting and sweeping the Library!

We plan an exhibition in the autumn of some of the more interesting items from these old records, as well as letters from the famous who have used the library through the years. We hope that any of our members having ancestors on the Library Board will be moved to help us fill out the collection of letters of our Library Trustees.

We made a bibliography on historic literary hoaxes in justification of *The Autobiography of Ephraim Tutt*. It was another literary hoax which was responsible for the Library's entrance into the Atlantic Monthly last December in an article by Miss Emily Wedge of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, describing her experiences and ours, with one of Mr. Stephen Vincent Benet's little jokers.

In our recataloging we have found in the open stacks *Biographia Britannica*, 1760, and a thirteen volume set of the *History and Proceedings of the House of Commons*, 1742-43, bearing our first bookplate which indicates that they are pre-Revolutionary possessions. Since few of these books were left after the British occupation of New

York we keep them (even though not otherwise of great value) in the Rare Book Collection and have thus far accumulated about two dozen volumes. A few requests have been made for samples of our various bookplates which we are always happy to exchange for additions to our own bookplate collection.

Our enviable collection of early travel books has been used recently for contemporary geological reports of the Gold Rush of '49 and accounts of American travellers in Central Europe. The member working on the latter project was particularly pleased to discover here David F. Door's pseudonymous *A Colored Man round the World*, by a *Quadroon*, Cleveland 1858. Our newspaper files have been searched for Columbia University commencement programs 1790-1810, contemporary accounts of Arnold's Quebec campaign in the Revolution, propaganda on Utopian communities published by the nineteenth century philosopher and reformer, Josiah Warren, and obituaries of Robert Livingston Patterson, the founder of the Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company for the centennial booklet published by that company. A checklist of our editions of Dumas père has been sent to a bibliographer in England and the preliminary edition of the catalogue of Rhode Island broadsides and pamphlets has been checked for the Imprints Survey, which is sponsored by the Bibliographical Society of America.

A college professor working on Herman Melville has had photostated the pages of our ledgers showing the books loaned to Melville. In 1850 he was appropriately enough reading Scoresby's *Journal of a Voyage to the Northern Whale Fishery* and *Account of the Arctic Regions*, but in his later years he (or more likely another member of his family) was reading novels exclusively at the rate of four or five a week.

Our manuscript collection yielded four Jefferson letters for the definitive edition of Jefferson's papers to be published at Princeton. One of our letters, dated Jan. 16, 1816 and addressed to James Monroe (then Secretary of State) concerns the appointment of Mr. LaMotte as consul at LeHavre and includes a neighborly request for permission to make cuttings from some of Monroe's shrubs for transplanting at Monticello. These letters have all been photostated for inclusion in the Princeton project. We also found in the collection two letters of Bishop Benjamin Moore for a reader doing research on Clement C. Moore's father. A professor who is doing a biography of Thomas Pownall was pleased to find here a broadside commissioning Benjamin

Goodhue as captain of the Third Military Foot Company in Salem, signed by the Massachusetts colonial governor. We also have a *View in Hudson's River of the entrance to Topan See, sketched . . . by Pownall*, dated 1761.

At this time, with the death of a great President ending a great dynasty, as it were, it is interesting to note the long association of the Roosevelt family with this Library. It began, in fact, before he Library's beginnings.

In 1730, John Roosevelt was one of a committee named to receive the books bequeathed by the Reverend John Millington of England to the Plantations in America, and sent out to New York "in the good ship Alexander." These were placed in the City Hall becoming the Corporation Library, and in 1754 formed a part of the collection that the newly founded New York Society Library agreed to care for and administer in exchange for the use of a room of its own in the City Hall. The Millington books were finally absorbed into the Library's collection where some of them perhaps still exist—if only we knew which they were.

In 1789 when the Library resumed its course after the Revolution, James and Cornelius Roosevelt, the latter the great, great greatuncle of President Theodore Roosevelt, each bought a share. In 1791 Nicholas J. Roosevelt acquired a share by depositing the equivalent of its value—five pounds—in books. We have the record of this transaction, and the list of the nineteen volumes, apparently all novels, one called *Love and Madness*.

Elbert Roosevelt became a member in 1793. Catherine Louisa Roosevelt bought a share in 1823 which she left to her son James H. Roosevelt, the founder of Roosevelt Hospital. James J. Roosevelt became a member in 1839 by the merging of the New York Athenaeum with the Library. Robert B. Roosevelt bought a share in 1856, Theodore Roosevelt, the father of President Theodore inherited his father's share in 1874. The Roosevelt names in each generation, too numerous to list, show that there was no year after 1789 when some of the family were not using the Library. The wives of the two President Roosevelts own shares, and the children and grandchildren of the first have either shares or subscriptions.

We have had the benefit of two members of the family on the Library Board—Mr. W. Emlen Roosevelt from 1906 to 1920 and Mr. Philip J. Roosevelt from 1934 to 1941. Now we feel pleasure in welcoming one again, Mr. Nicholas Roosevelt, one hundred and fifty

years after an earlier Nicholas Roosevelt purchased his share, not with a handful of beads but with a handful of light reading.

The recataloging of the books continues, approximately 37,000 books having been catalogued to date. Antiquities, Fine arts, History, Travel, Sociology and the entire foreign collection are now classified and catalogued under the Dewey Decimal arrangement.

Classes from the Library schools connected with Columbia University and St. John's University have visited the Library. The Librarian has also continued her work in an advisory capacity to the Red Cross Gray Ladies serving as Hospital Librarians in the Metropolitan area.

The scarcity of fuel forced the Library to close Mondays and Tuesdays from February 1st to March 15th and the fires were then banked over the long week ends. In normal times we would have used approximately 80 tons of coal. By shutting off stacks and floors we used 60 tons in the winter of 1942-1943, burned 63 tons in 1943-1944 and were cut to 53 tons in 1944-1945. What next winter holds for us, no one knows!

In closing, the Librarian wishes to thank the members of the Board of Trustees and the Library staff for their cooperation and support in the administration of the Library during the past year.

EDITH HALL CROWELL, *Librarian*

MARION D. KING, *Circulation Department*
MARJORIE WATKINS, *Rare Book Department*
POLLY FENTON, *Cataloging Department*

REPORT OF
THE AUDITING COMMITTEE

To the Trustees of the New York Society Library:

The Committee appointed "To audit the accounts of this Corporation and to make an inventory of its real and personal property, excepting the books," respectfully submits and reports:

THAT

They have employed W. S. Salway, Certified Public Accountant, to examine the accounts of the Treasurer for the year ended March 31, 1945.

The securities were examined by the Auditing Committee on May 4, 1945 and were found to be in order.

EDWARD C. DELAFIELD

WALTER MILLIS

Auditing Committee

New York, N. Y.,
May 4, 1945.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT AS AT MARCH 31ST, 1945

ASSETS

CASH

Principal—Uninvested	\$ 12,624.64	
Income—Unexpended	7,301.28	\$ 19,925.92

SECURITIES

General Fund	229,142.17	
Goodhue Fund	350,017.45	
Green Fund	45,767.06	624,926.68

LIBRARY BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT

Total Coast, less Reserve for Depreciation	322,325.35	
Less: Mortgage Payable	25,000.00	297,325.35

DEFERRED CHARGES		616.16
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\$942,794.11

STATEMENT OF
PRINCIPAL RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

For the Year Ended March 31st, 1945

BALANCE—APRIL 1ST, 1944:		
General Fund	\$ 4,168.74	
Goodhue Fund	9,329.65	
Green Fund	645.61	
	\$14,144.00	
 <i>RECEIPTS</i>		
Mortgage Principal Repaid	12,337.89	
On Allowed Claims	688.88	
Transferred from Income to cover depreciation reserve	1,000.00	
Sales of Mortgage, Securities and Real Estate	40,560.33	
On Principal of New York, New Haven and Hartford R. R. Co. 15 year 6% sec. Gold Bonds due 4/1/40	390.00	
Transferred from Income to cancel balance due to Principal Account	5,839.23	
	60,816.33	
	\$74,960.33	
 <i>DISBURSEMENTS</i>		
Securities Purchased	56,125.16	
Transferred to Income to cover cash deficit from operations of Real Estate sold in previous year	5,731.23	
Membership Certificates Repurchased	210.00	
Re Mortgage sold in previous year	269.30	
	62,335.69	
BALANCE—MARCH 31ST, 1945:		
General Fund	6,328.57	
Goodhue Fund	5,614.20	
Green Fund	681.87	
	\$12,624.64	

STATEMENT OF
INCOME RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

For the Year Ended March 31st, 1945

BALANCE—APRIL 1ST, 1944		\$ 2,977.25
 <i>RECEIPTS</i>		
<i>INVESTMENT INCOME:</i>		
General Fund	\$11,363.35	
Goodhue Fund	16,323.76	
Green Fund	2,261.66	
	29,948.77	
 <i>INTERNAL INCOME:</i>		
Dues	\$ 250.00	
Subscriptions	10,113.50	
Fines	367.98	
Books Sold	337.28	
	11,068.76	
Total Receipts	41,017.53	
	\$43,994.78	
 <i>DISBURSEMENTS</i>		
<i>OPERATING:</i>		
Books	3,336.20	
Binding and Repairs	80.73	
Periodicals	603.21	
Postage	121.76	
Printing	237.14	
Supplies	747.70	
Salaries	24,825.82	
Building Repairs and Maintenance	728.93	
Electricity and Gas	1,450.79	
Heat	655.33	
Insurance	735.03	
Cleaning Supplies	88.45	
Telephone	162.23	
Water	75.00	
Pension Fund Premiums	660.00	
Legal and Professional	510.00	
Miscellaneous	51.83	
	\$35,070.15	

OTHER DISBURSEMENTS:

Interest on Mortgage . . .	\$ 999.99		
Provision for Depreciation			
Reserve	1,000.00		
Custody of Securities and			
Safekeeping	808.25	2,808.24	
Total Disbursements			37,878.39
			6,116.39
NON-OPERATING CASH TRANSACTIONS:			
Net Receipts			1,184.89
BALANCE—MARCH 31ST 1945			\$ 7,301.28

INVESTMENT INCOME

For the Year Ended March 31st, 1945

	<i>General Fund</i>	<i>Goodhue Fund</i>	<i>Green Fund</i>	<i>Total</i>
Interest on Mortgages . . .	\$ 8,697.24	\$ 9,184.99	\$2,099.16	\$19,981.39
Interest on Bonds . . .	1,750.62	1,500.42	162.50	3,413.54
Dividends	915.49	6,136.21	—	7,051.70
Real Estate Income . . .	—	2,267.15	—	2,267.15
	\$11,363.35	\$19,088.77	\$2,261.66	\$32,713.78
<i>Less: Real Estate Expenses</i>	—	2,765.01	—	2,765.01
	\$11,363.35	\$16,323.76	\$2,261.66	\$29,948.77

ACCESSIONS TO THE
GREEN ART COLLECTION

ALAJALOV, C.	Conversation pieces
APEL, W.	Harvard dictionary of music
BREUNING, M.	Mary Cassatt
COWDREY, B.	William Sidney Mount
COX, W. E.	Book of pottery and porcelain
DREPPERD, C. W.	Primer of American antiques
ELST, J. J. VAN DER	Last flowering of the middle ages
ERSKINE, J.	What is music?
FRIEDMAN, J. S.	History of color photography
FROST, R.	Pierre Auguste Renoir
GARWOOD, D.	Artist in Iowa
GOODRICH, L.	Winslow Homer
HOLME, B.	Master drawings
JANIS, S.	Abstract and surrealist art in America
JEWELL, E. A.	Paul Cezanne
KIMBALL, S. F.	Creation of the rococo
LEONARD, R. A.	Stream of music
LEVEEN, J.	Hebrew Bible in art
MCCLINTON, K. M.	Flower arrangement in the Church
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART	Art in progress
MUSEUM OF MODERN ART	Modern drawings
NEVINS, A.	Century of political cartoons
PRICE, G.	It's smart to be people
RIGBY, D.	Lock, stock and barrel
ROTHENSTEIN, J.	Augustus John
SABANEEV, L. L.	Music for the films
TERHUNE, F. B.	Decorating for you
THACH, S. D.	Painting as a hobby
THOMSON, V.	Musical scene
TYLER, P.	Hollywood hallucination
U. S. CAMERA ANNUAL	1945
U. S. NATIONAL GALLERY	Masterpieces of painting
VEINUS, A.	The Concerto

DONORS

For Year Ending March 31, 1945

Mrs. Edith Mulhall Achilles	Estate of Miss Elsie Couper Lord
Mrs. Sinclair Howard Armstrong	Miss Barbara McGraw
Dr. Fenwick Beekman	David Randall-MacIver
Mrs. W. Romeyn Benjamin	Mrs. Walton Martin
Frank Barna Bigelow	Mrs. William R. Mercer
Mrs. Raymond Brown	Mrs. Elizabeth C. Moore
Charles C. Burlingham	Miss Josephine Morrison
Mrs. M. Ramsay Church	Miss Ray Newell
Edward P. Chrystie	Mrs. Amos R. E. Pinchot
Mrs. William Redmond Cross	Estate of Mrs. A. Terry Post
Miss Elizabeth Daly	Mrs. Harold T. Pulsifer
Etienne de Hedry	Baron Franz Recum
Miss Augusta de Peyster	Mrs. Guy Richards
Edward C. Delafield	Mme. Louza Riane
Austin K. Gray	Miss Harriet Sampson
Miss Sylvia Holt	Miss Sistare
Mrs. Sarah C. W. Hoppin	M. Edmund Speare
Mrs. Hamlin Hunt	E. T. Stone
Miss Fannie Irvin	Samuel A. Tucker
Rupert L. Joseph	Oswald Garrison Villard
Albert Ralph Korn	Arnold Whitridge
Kosciusko Foundation	World Publishing Co.
J. W. Little	Christian A. Zabriskie

FORM OF BEQUEST

I hereby give and bequeath to

“THE TRUSTEES OF THE

NEW YORK SOCIETY LIBRARY”

the sum of.....*dollars.*

CONTRIBUTIONS

Members donating books to the Library may deduct the value of the books from their individual income tax returns.

Federal Income Tax Regulations III, Section 29.23.