

MINNESOTA HISTORY

VOLUME 22

DECEMBER, 1941

NUMBER 4

PIONEER BOOKSHELVES AND MODERN LIBRARIES¹

THE STORY GOES that there was a picnic under the pines out on Minnesota Point on Lake Superior one summer evening in 1856. Among the pioneers were some who, notwithstanding a certain amount of scoffing by the citizens of the rival town of Superior, felt that an important city might emerge here and that it would be wise to equip it with a splendid and appropriate name. The story makes this picnic a name-selecting conference; and it is said that the pioneers drank to the future city. It appears that local historians do not agree either about the picnic or about the toast to the future, but there seems to be fairly general agreement that one Joseph Wilson, a missionary, was the man who selected the name "Duluth" and thereby won for himself not only historical distinction but also the award of two lots in the proposed city. I am not particularly interested in the controversy as to whether there was a picnic or whether the pioneers did or did not drink a toast to the future of Duluth, but I must confess that I am interested tonight, when I have the privilege of joining you in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of your public library, in the way Joseph Wilson went about finding a name for this city.

Judge John R. Carey, a pioneer Duluth resident, tells us that "Mr. Wilson set about his task" by visiting "the homes of citizens that he expected might be possessed of a library." What a fine phrase that is — "possessed of a library"! Of course I realize that it can be reduced to the prosaic words

¹An address presented in Duluth on September 25, 1940, at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Duluth Public Library.

“owned a library,” but somehow it suggests that touch of enthusiasm, even madness, often associated with those for whom books have a consuming interest. Duluth today is “possessed of a library,” I hope, in the sense that it cherishes and supports this institution and understands its significance in the life of the community. To return to Judge Carey and Mr. Wilson, however, the judge says that Mr. Wilson made a search and ultimately found “among some old books belonging to George E. Nettleton, an old English translation of the writings of the French Jesuits, relating to themselves and the early explorers and fur traders of the Northwest. In this he ran across the name of Du Luth . . . [who] visited the head of the lake in the remote past.”²

I like to interpret this record as meaning that the little frontier village of more than eighty years ago boasted a copy of the *Jesuit Relations*. Surely Mr. Wilson found it in the little shanty where the Nettletons then lived — a hut built of such green lumber, Mrs. Nettleton later recalled, that the boards shrank, and every time it rained, they had to put dishes about to catch the water.³ A pioneer library in a pioneer shanty! For the phrase used was “among some old books.” And so at the very outset of the history of the city the people of Duluth had occasion to use a library, to consult what Carlyle somewhere calls the “articulate, audible voice of the past.”

The book tradition in this region is older than the episode of 1856, however, for men “possessed of libraries” had lived in the Superior country in an earlier day. Edmund F. Ely, the missionary, was one. In 1834 he came to open a Chippewa mission at Fond du Lac, the site of fur-trading activities since the eighteenth century. It is not surprising to learn that among Ely’s prized belongings were his books. Let us

² *Duluth Minnesotian*, September 4, 1869; John R. Carey, *History of Duluth and Northern Minnesota*, 25 (Duluth, 1898).

³ Dwight E. Woodbridge and John S. Pardee, eds., *History of Duluth and St. Louis County*, 1:208 (Chicago, 1910).

dip into a letter written to Ely by another missionary, William T. Boutwell, in 1846. "Have sent you Townsends Comentary & kept the vol. of Comprehension," wrote Boutwell on May 26 of that year. "You recollect I sent for the 3d vol. of Bancroft . . . the complete work was sent. I send you the 2 first vols. & have kept the 3d as I have not yet read it. . . . Some of the articles in your large Box were pretty well sweetened with molasses from a little paltry jar, you had tied a paper over the top." So today we may recall some of the hazards that these early volumes encountered—snow, rain, river, mud, and leaking molasses.⁴

Many of the early Minnesota missionaries sent regular reports to the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in Boston, reports telling of their hardships and work, their many disappointments and occasional successes. I have been looking into some of those old letters and find that they frequently contain long lists of necessary supplies which the missionary, his family, and his neighbors needed for the year's sustenance. Often these lists, I think, tell more about the actual conditions of the frontier than do the solemnly worded letters that accompany them. For in them are mentioned medicines, foods, materials for clothing, and other needed items of everyday life. And how often, tucked in between urgent demands for food or apparel, are there not equally urgent requests for books. Ely in October, 1835, wrote to Boston that he needed "a good *Atlas*" for the Fond du Lac mission, that a "Commentary" and "Barnes Notes on Gospels & Romans . . . would be valuable" to him, and that what Mrs. Ely needed—was this by any chance a reflection of some slight discontent with her culinary skill?—was "a copy of Mrs Childs, Dom[estic] Cookery."

Let me glance at a couple of other missionary lists—one made by G. T. Sproat, the other by Sherman Hall at La

⁴The Ely letters quoted in this article are among the Ely Papers in the possession of the St. Louis County Historical Society. Copies are owned by the Minnesota Historical Society.

Pointe. Sproat's list included five yards of red flannel, two pairs of small shoes for a child's second year, some Castile soap, some morphia, a dozen corset laces, one steel corset board, a toothbrush, six copies of the first part of "Emerson's Arithmetic," six copies of the "Beauties of the Bible," six inkstands, two hundred quills, two and a half dozen copies of Webster's "Spell. Book," "The Young Wife by Dr. Alcott," and the *Remains* of Mrs. Isabella Graham "(not her Memoirs) lately published by Mr. Bethune." Hall displayed no interest in works like the *Young Wife* or Mrs. Graham's *Remains*, but sprinkled requests for church psalmodies and various religious works among such items as seven yards of "French Merino Black," one pair of "Mens Yellow Kid Gloves," and two pairs of women's high laced shoes for feet nine and one-eighth inches long. After Sproat's request for one toothbrush, it is comforting to find that Ely in 1839 wanted, for the use of the Fond du Lac station, a copy of Dr. Mann's "Treatise on Preservation of Teeth," cost, six and a half cents. Ely in 1839 also wished to have Mrs. Torrey's "Ornament, or christian rules of Dress," "Dr. Bell's Lessons on the Human Frame," Dr. Humphrey's "Letters on Education," and the "Memoir of Carvosso," the latter a name that one suspects is not a misprint for Casanova. From these and other lists one can get an idea of the books in the wilderness log cabins—lives of famous divines, *The Christian Exemplified*, Mrs. Row's *Devout Exercises*, and the like. For the children there were the *New England Primer* and Gallaudett's *Picture Defin[ing] and Reading Book*. Ely's son had, in addition, *Youth's Penny Gazette*, which his father asked him to send on to "Mr. Carlton"—that Carlton whose name is recalled in the name of Carlton County—and the Ely children also rejoiced in an *Illustrated Almanac*.⁵

⁵ Ely to David Greene, October 15, 1835; Hall to Greene, October 17, 1839, January 1, 1841, in the archives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Andover Harvard Theological Library,

In the same period there were other men in the Lake Superior country who had more comprehensive and liberal tastes. The fur traders have often been pictured as men of adventure, businessmen of lone frontiers, trail blazers of the West, but it is worth recalling that they often were pioneers of culture, men whose bookshelves must have made the lonely winters less lonely, the isolation of the wilderness less cruel than it might have been. A farmer's wife of modern Minnesota, writing for what we today call library service, said "If only the men had something to read after the chores are done."⁶ Many of the fur traders of pioneer Minnesota had books to which they could turn on long winter evenings, especially such men as Dr. Charles W. W. Borup and Lyman Warren, traders of the American Fur Company whose careers are part of the history of the north country. Dr. Borup sometimes asked for medical treatises. In 1835 he wanted Lizar's *Anatomical Plates*. He requested later such religious works as *Persuasions to Piety, All Is Well*, or *Faith's Estimate of Affliction*, and *Saints Rest*, the well-known treatise by Richard Baxter, the seventeenth-century English divine. But Borup and Warren in 1837 called also for books of travel and natural history—*Discovery and Adventure in the Polar Seas*, Russell's *Ancient and Modern Egypt*, a *History of the Barbary States*, and the *Natural History of Insects*. They also requested a copy of "*Allein's Allarm*." This title may at first seem to suggest some thrilling story of adventure, but it was in fact a religious work. The author was an Englishman, Joseph Alleine; the title of the book, *An Alarm to Unconverted Sinners*.⁷ In January, 1841, the Minnesota traders ordered two volumes of Smollett, *Gil Blas* (in French), Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Gutzlaff's *Travels in*

Cambridge, Massachusetts. Transcripts of these and other papers relating to the activities of the board in Minnesota have been made for the Minnesota Historical Society. See also, Ely to his wife, March 7, 1849, Ely Papers.

⁶Quoted by James Gray, in the *St. Paul Dispatch*, September 20, 1940.

⁷A copy is in the library of the University of Minnesota.

China, Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella*, and *Handy Andy*, that Irish novel of Samuel Lover's, which, according to the *Oxford Companion to English Literature*, was not published in book form until the year after this list was written. Later in the same year Dr. Borup wanted Irving's *Sketch Book* and Mrs. Hemans' *Works*. So we know that as early as 1841 the North Shore had a glimpse of the boy who stood on the burning deck. These fur traders prevailed upon missionaries like Sherman Hall to send their book lists on to Boston. In one of his letters, Hall indicated the true library point of view when he said, "I presume you will be willing to hand the list to some bookseller. . . . I am the more desirous to accommodate them [*Borup and Warren*] on account of introducing such books as they send for into the country." On one occasion Hall used the word "circulate" in connection with a book order. He asked for six copies of the *Life of Harlan Page* and said that it would be "a useful book to circulate in this country."⁸

Do modern readers, notwithstanding the efficiency of libraries in anticipating their wants, sometimes wait with a fever of impatience for certain books to appear on the library circulating shelf? What of the booklovers of the early frontier who sent their orders off to Boston, New York, or other cities in the East and then waited a half year or more for the books to come? The Catholic Bishop Baraga in September, 1842, sounded a note of despair about the north country library system. He wrote to Ramsay Crooks, president of the American Fur Company in New York, "I come forth once more with some commissions. Please to procure for me the two works, whose titles you find on this piece of paper. . . . I will look for them next summer, if I live." One of the books that he listed — *Ritualis Romani* — was sent on to him by Dr. Borup in June, 1843, and it must be added that the good bishop lived to see many other summers and no doubt

⁸ Hall to Greene, February 12, 1835, January 2, 1837, January 1, December 26, 1841, American Board transcripts.

to order and receive many other books. Quite evidently he had a serene philosophy, this bishop of the frontier, for on one occasion he paid for a paper for four years in advance, and said, "If I die before, they may have the benefit, for their conducting so excellent a paper."⁹

A hunt in old records would disclose the fact that in many other parts of Minnesota and the Northwest there were pioneer booklovers for whom life on the frontier without books was unthinkable. A fur trader, John Aitken, wrote to Boutwell from Swan River in April, 1838, asking for various supplies including "a chip hat which one of my men will try on his head you will Receive by them 5 volumes of the History of England & the Biography of Napoleon Please also to send me a Horse saddle." Another trader, Martin McLeod, on his way to the Red River settlements, spent a day resting at the American Fur Company's post at Cass Lake on November 28, 1836, after an exhausting trek across frozen lakes. There he recorded in his diary that he read all day "The author of Cyril Thornton's Annals of the Peninsular Campaigns." His comment was—"Don't think much of the work. Not so good as Napier's." A few days later, suffering from a lame ankle, he again rested, this time at Red Lake, where he "by a wonderful chance, got hold of very old copies of 'The lady of the Lake,' the 2^d vol of the 'Scottish Chiefs['] and the 2^d vol of Thaddeus of Warsaw." With these "prizes" he hoped to take his mind from the pain. McLeod was a true lover of books. When obliged to spend the winter of 1840-41 in a "Cabin 15 by 20 with one man; an Interpreter & his squaw . . . & 2 d——d noisy, rude children"—the "dull & monotonous" lot of a fur trader wintering at Traverse des Sioux—he wrote philosophically in his diary: "a pleasant *prospect* God wot; n'importe, I

⁹ Baraga to Crooks, September 9, 1842, November 7, 1846. These letters are among the American Fur Company Papers in the possession of the New York Historical Society; photostatic copies are owned by the Minnesota Historical Society.

have a few books, a dog & a gun. — some patience — and *so, and so* I suppose I must be resign'd." Byron was his favorite poet, and during that winter McLeod's journal records frequent reading of his letters and poems, with the regret that Byron "did not leave some prose work worthy of his fame." McLeod devoured Scott's *Monastery* in two days, his *Abbot* in one, while Cooper's *Pilot* kept him "up until past 1 o.c." in the morning. Locke's *Essay concerning Human Understanding*, *Oliver Twist*, *Lalla Rookh*, and the Bible helped him to pass the lonely winter.¹⁰

Henry Hastings Sibley as early as 1844 sent an order to New York for a little library that included Prescott's *Ferdinand and Isabella* and *Conquest of Mexico*, Sparks's *American Biography* in ten volumes, Hallam's *Middle Ages*, Thiers' *French Revolution*, Froissart's *Chronicles*, a book called *Music for the Million*, and Webster's "Dictionary Abridgement Revised Edition." He sent his order on January 2 and asked that the books be shipped out to Mendota in the spring. It requires no stretch of the imagination to think of Sibley's books as a semipublic library, for his home was almost always crowded with guests, and we may be sure that many of them turned to his bookshelves with that glow of interest that bookshelves everywhere generate, not least in frontier areas.¹¹

The time came when something more was needed. The story of libraries is the story of the democratization of books; the glory of libraries is their part in the diffusion of knowledge; and both have their setting in the democracy of a free people. A Minnesota writer not long ago, commenting on the services of libraries to the people of this state, said that we are "casually grateful — if we remember to be — that such services exist." It is a tribute to Ameri-

¹⁰ Aitken to Boutwell, April 25, 1838, Sibley Papers, in the possession of the Minnesota Historical Society; Grace Lee Nute, ed., "The Diary of Martin McLeod," *ante*, 4: 388, 389, 422-426.

¹¹ Sibley to Crooks, January 2, 1844, American Fur Company Papers.

can freedom that the gratitude is casual, but in a world darkened by the intolerance of book burners who would destroy the free play of libraries in the diffusion of knowledge, we need something more than casual gratitude.¹² We need actively to cherish our libraries, to support them as precious institutions, and to understand their contribution to our democracy.

Our public libraries were created out of the need of our people just as surely as our farms and mines and cities were so created; and the ideals of public library service were formulated by experiment in response to that need. Like most things that people take for granted, the library, as a democratic public institution, was built up gradually. The pioneers took hold of an idea that seems to go back to Benjamin Franklin, the idea of subscription clubs or associations, a kind of joint-stock association. In a word, people got together, raised funds, paid fees, purchased books, and enjoyed the privileges of a reading room. This did not mean a public library, but it was a step toward the public library. Minnesotans interested themselves early in such associations. The citizens of the new community of Northfield, for example, as early as October, 1856, united in one. We still have the minutes of its first meetings, which tell how the members collected \$28.00 for the upkeep of a reading room, including \$11.60 for a stove and pipe, \$3.00 for a cord of hickory wood, \$10.40 for a table and benches, and a small sum for a lamp. Soon they were able to put up a building, which cost them \$580.00, and the library opened with 269 volumes on February 3, 1858. The minutes reveal considerable trouble over unreturned books, a kind of trouble not wholly eliminated from modern library systems, and there was some grumbling about the failure of papers and magazines to arrive as ordered from New York. One record runs as follows: "It is the private opinion of the

¹² Gray, in *St. Paul Dispatch*, September 20, 1940.

Librarian (Publicly expressed) that there is hard Sledding somewhere between here and N York City, or that Mr. Orvis [*the bookseller*] is a swindler." Among other things, the *Atlantic* and *Putnam's* monthlies had not arrived. A debating society ran hand in hand with the library association, and among the subjects debated were woman suffrage, the question whether war is ever justifiable, and the proposition, striking across the decades since the 1850's with incredible freshness, "That England is the guardian of Liberty in Europe."¹³ The association of libraries with free debate is no coincidence. In many parts of Minnesota the pioneer lyceums figure in the genesis of libraries. Reading and discussion are natural twins.

In 1855 the *St. Croix Union* carried a lengthy editorial on Stillwater's need for a library. The good it could do was "incalculable"; it would help to keep the mischievous out of trouble and stimulate their minds "to healthful action." The editor was especially exasperated at those who said they had no time to read, yet spent "from one to five hours every day telling some hard yarn and spitting tobacco juice all over creation."¹⁴ But a New Englander living in Stillwater at the same time wrote less disparagingly of his townsmen:¹⁵ "People pay more attention to the literature of magazines and papers, than at the East. You can hardly enter a family without finding Harper, Putnam, Graham and Godey, and oftener two of these than one. The Home Journal, and Arthur's Gazette visit hundreds of log cabins, and then every body takes the Tribune. We have heard of the annexation of Hawaii and the war in Europe, and we discuss and settle these great questions as much as you do

¹³ Minutes of the Northfield Lyceum, 1856-60, in the possession of Mrs. Charles A. Bierman of Northfield. A copy on film slides is owned by the Minnesota Historical Society.

¹⁴ *St. Croix Union*, October 13, 1855.

¹⁵ This letter from the *Northampton Courier* of September 19, 1854, is quoted by Professor Charles W. Nichols in an article entitled "New Light on the Northampton Colony," *ante*, p. 173.

at the East, only we are about ten days behind you, that is all." The *New York Tribune* had nearly three thousand subscribers in Minnesota in 1856. Joseph Haskell, who broke soil at Afton in 1839 for what has been called the first farm in Minnesota, saw a young man working on his road crew take a copy of the *Tribune* from his pocket to read at lunch time. Haskell remarked "that any young man" who read that paper would "not go far wrong." Haskell had a small but select collection of books in his pioneer home. He carefully preserved the volumes of the *Atlantic Monthly* from its very first issue, and subscribed to such other publications as the *Boston Journal of Commerce*, Orange Judd's *American Agriculturist*, and *Scribner's Magazine*.¹⁶

But let us talk for a moment about Duluth and begin by opening the *Duluth Minnesotian* for June 5, 1869. "We have neither hotels, side-walks, gas-light nor police—as yet," declared that paper. "Our town-site even, is not all surveyed out. We are carving a city right out of the woods, and he is a fool who comes here expecting to see a full grown city, or even a large town. . . . we warn everybody . . . to bring two blankets. . . . Every man 'takes up his bed and walks.'" That, mark you, was on June 5, 1869. Page on in the paper to July 10, and for a town that lacked sidewalks, gaslights, and police, the paper discloses a most interesting item. It states that "some of our young men are moving toward starting a Literary Society connecting it with a Library and Reading Room." How fast they moved may be seen by a little further inquiry. A group met and formulated plans for the new society on August 30; and on December 1 the formal opening of the new library and reading room took place in a building opposite the Clark House on Superior Street. The old newspaper enables us to reconstruct the scene with surprising

¹⁶ Dr. Hiram A. Haskell, *Joseph Haskell of Afton*, 10-12 (1941).

vividness, testimony incidentally to the extraordinary historical interest of our pioneer papers. According to the paper the room "was quite crowded by a fashionable and intelligent audience of ladies and gentlemen, fully appreciative of the significance and purpose of the occasion." The room was "carpeted; the walls . . . hung with evergreen wreaths and handsome pictures; a large and commodious reading table, filled with papers and periodicals" occupied "the middle of the room; while in the recess a most flattering commencement of a Library" was "seen, containing about 500 volumes, varied and variable." The same evening, in conjunction with the library association, a lecture, described as "The First Lecture of the North Shore of Lake Superior," was delivered by General George B. Sargent, who took as his subject "Boston and the American Revolution." According to the paper it was hoped that the reading room would "be a place of resort for the ladies as well as the gentlemen" and "conduce to social as well as mental cultivation during the long winter." It seems evident that the library did not have an easy time, notwithstanding the high hopes of its founders. When its successor, founded by the Ladies Library Association, was burned in the Grand Opera House fire of January, 1889, the *Duluth Daily Tribune* did not even recall that such a library had existed, until some time after the catastrophe. Many other losses were mentioned at once, but it was only later that mention was made of a loss of two thousand dollars' worth of books by the Ladies Library Association—a loss for which the ladies later collected five hundred dollars in insurance. It is good for the human spirit to know that sometimes triumph emerges from disaster. In this case the phoenix arose from the ashes, for in the spring of 1890 plans were formulated for Duluth's first public library, opened that year in the Masonic Temple Building. Thus Duluth became "possessed" of its own public library.

You will observe that we are now speaking, not of a library association limiting the use of its books to shareholders and fee-paying members, but of a public library. The word "public" is the clue to a development that was becoming more and more marked all over Minnesota and indeed all over the United States. For the subscription libraries did not meet the needs of a civilization in which the processes of education were being progressively democratized. Legislators in Minnesota caught the trend of progress when in 1879 they passed a law authorizing city and village councils to establish public libraries and to levy taxes for their support. It was one thing to pass a law, another to create and develop public libraries. They did not spring up by magic. People worked for them. In many towns women's organizations took the lead in starting public libraries, and in many instances the beginnings of these libraries were extremely humble. Sometimes private gifts encouraged the better housing and administration of the libraries. By the end of the nineteenth century the public idea had gone so far that the state was ready to institute a state traveling library system. The idea of free libraries was securely established. It got a great impulse from Andrew Carnegie and I cannot refrain from quoting his familiar account of why he came to be so deeply interested in founding and helping to develop public libraries, for it touches the heart of the whole story. "When I was a boy in Pittsburgh," he wrote, "Colonel Anderson . . . a name that I can never speak without feelings of devotional gratitude—opened his little library of four hundred books to boys. Every Saturday afternoon he was in attendance at his house to exchange books." Carnegie never forgot "the intense longing with which the arrival of Saturday was awaited, that a new book might be had"; and he said later that "it was when revelling in the treasures which he [*Anderson*] opened to us that I resolved, if ever wealth came

to me, that it should be used to establish free libraries, that other poor boys might receive opportunities similar to those for which we were indebted to that noble man."¹⁷ That boyhood resolve is written into this great library of Duluth. Combined with it is a heritage that comes to you out of your pioneer past.

The more modern story of how, against this background, the efficient service of public libraries to our communities has developed and expanded until they have become as indispensable to our citizenship as they are efficient, I cannot undertake to tell. Indeed, I do not need to tell that story, for it is exemplified in this library. What I want to emphasize, however, is the need and accompanying determination of the pioneers to have books. The pioneer need for books expressed itself in private collections which, by grace of the open shelf, were shared with others. Then came co-operative efforts to make books available, at first through private associations and the sharing of costs, and later through general community action backed by local ordinance and law. In the early era the Duluth citizen hunted through his community for individuals "possessed of libraries." The spirit has passed from individuals to communities, and the Duluth Public Library, whose life story has now run a half century, is a symbol of the community "possessed of libraries." What happened to the community happened to the state, and as the public library has given an increasing and ever more significant service to all the people, Minnesota itself has become "possessed of libraries."

To make the scene the more interesting and significant, the story of books in Minnesota has affiliations with the story of books about Minnesota and by Minnesotans, books so wide in their "variety and interest" that they have come to be a prized possession of the whole country. Only the

¹⁷ Quoted by Theodore W. Koch, in *A Book of Carnegie Libraries*, 8 (New York, 1917).

other day Mr. James Gray, the St. Paul critic, remarked, "Between Rolvaag's mood of sober intensity seeking the subtle springs of human conduct and Emma Brock's gently ironic comedies of child life; between the poetic fervor of Herbert Krause as he examines certain aspects of rural life and the alert curiosity of Margaret Banning studying social crises in the urban centers—between these extremes nearly the whole range of human activity is covered."¹⁸ I was glad to join you in your recognition of the value of books to the community not only because I appreciate what this library has meant to Duluth but also because Duluth has given Minnesota and America that dynamic force called Margaret Culkin Banning, who, among her many activities, serves as the president of your library board.

I have touched at several points on the relationship of the public library to the democratic way of life. What I want to say in closing is that the public library is not merely a factor in deepening the spirit of our democracy, not merely an influence upon it, but a living part of it. It is one of the ways in which our democracy expresses itself. Democracy and the public library are not things apart; they are intimately bound together. For this, among other reasons, I believe we should abandon the feeling of casualness about the public library, measure it with fresh eyes, not simply take it for granted. The things we commonly take for granted, like our assumptions and our institutions, are our most precious things, because they are fundamental. But we have come upon a time when many peoples are finding their assumptions and institutions challenged and even swept away. So we are looking with a new awareness at things about us and ways within us, treasuring them with an intensity that we have not felt heretofore. This awareness should be turned into vigilant support of libraries and other agencies of a free people—support by individuals and com-

¹⁸ Gray, in *St. Paul Dispatch*, September 20, 1940.

munities alike. I hope that this anniversary of a Minnesota public library will be a challenge to make more effective its public service and that of like institutions throughout the land.

THEODORE C. BLEGEN

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
MINNEAPOLIS



Copyright of **Minnesota History** is the property of the Minnesota Historical Society and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. Users may print, download, or email articles, however, for individual use.

To request permission for educational or commercial use, [contact us](#).