

Founding the Public Library in Yakima

BY WILLIAM S. WALLACE

ON MARCH 1, 1951, the Yakima Valley Regional Library was formed by the merging of the Yakima County Library and the Yakima City Library. By the end of 1952 this new organization had extended its services through fourteen libraries located throughout the Yakima Valley and with the additional coverage of three bookmobiles had achieved a total circulation for the year of 637,409 volumes. The beginnings of the library movement which led to this substantial achievement form a significant though little known chapter in the cultural history of the Pacific Northwest.¹

The Yakima library had its origins in a public reading room on First Street just south of Mrs. Mays's store in the year 1889.² It was established by the Young Women's Christian Temperance Union and apparently attracted a number of strangers as well as townfolk to it. Encouraged by the "goodly attendance," the Union thought to extend its field of usefulness and proposed (if they could get the support of the citizens of the community) to build a temple costing \$5,000 in which would be located a library, a reading room and a lecture hall.³ This ambitious dream proved to be quite without substance. Even the modest beginning they had made brought its burden of debt, and the ladies were driven to put on a "lawn social" to pay it off.⁴ The W.C.T.U. dropped the whole project soon afterward, leaving it to a new organization to carry on. This second start was made on the night of March 26, 1891, when several women met at the Yakima hotel and organized a "circulating library association."⁵

The newly organized group elected Mrs. W. P. Sawyer as their president; Mrs. Susanna Steinweg, vice-president; Miss Anna Mattoon, treasurer; and Miss Hattie Sawyer, secretary. Of this group Miss Mattoon and Miss Sawyer, two schoolteachers in North Yakima at the time, appear to have been primarily responsible for reviving the

interest in establishing a library.⁶ Calling itself the "North Yakima Library Association," the group set up a committee to purchase books with funds turned over to the Association by the "old C.L.V.C."⁷ Arrangements were made to house the books in the office of the county school superintendent, J. G. Lawrence. This was in the same building where the W.C.T.U. previously had

¹ I have attempted to draw almost exclusively on the official archives of the city of Yakima and of the Yakima Public Library. These manuscript sources are stored in a safe belonging to the library and located in the basement of the Yakima city hall; the main city vaults, also in the basement of the city hall; and the vaults of the Yakima County Superintendent of Schools in the new Yakima County court-house. The present writer is indebted to Carol Trimble, head librarian of the Yakima Valley Regional Library, and to the various custodians of these records for permission to draw from these records information contained in this paper. For making the files of the *Yakima Herald* and *Republic* available, the author would also like to express his thanks to the Yakima Herald and Republic Publishing Company.

² Until 1918 the city of Yakima was known as North Yakima. The growth of Yakima's library movement, according to the *13th Census of the United States, 1910, Abstract, Supplement for Washington* (Washington, D.C., 1913), 75, coincided with a period of extensive population growth. In 1890 the population stood at 1,535 and by 1910 had grown to 14,082. Incorporated by Special Legislation Act, January 27, 1886, North Yakima in 1889 was discussing its two major topics of the moment: whether to buy a steam fire engine and the licensing of an electric company. "Records of the City of North Yakima, Washington Territory [Feb. 18, 1886-Feb. 16, 1891]," *passim*. (Hereafter cited as: Records I.)

³ *Yakima Herald*, June 20, 1889.

⁴ *Ibid.*, June 12, 1890.

⁵ *Ibid.*, March 26, 1891. North Yakima at this time was in hopes of being chosen as the site of the new state agricultural college. Activity in seeking a location for the college for a while appears to have temporarily detracted from a full interest in the library. J. B. Pugsley had tried to get the city council to appropriate \$5,000 for a site for the college "should it be located here." The council did not make the appropriation. "Records of the City of North Yakima, W. T. [Feb. 18, 1886-Feb. 16, 1891]," II, 13.

⁶ *Yakima Herald*, March 26, 1891. In the *Herald* for Feb. 18, 1891, Mrs. Steinweg was quoted as giving credit for the forming of the organization to "two school teachers." Miss Mattoon and Miss Sawyer were the only two present at the organizational meeting who seem to have been teachers in the local school. See: Yakima County School Superintendent's Archives, III, *passim*.

⁷ The "C.L.V.C." was evidently a civic organization that had collected \$107 towards the purchase of books for a library. The meaning of the initials is unknown to me.

WILLIAM S. WALLACE is assistant librarian and archivist at New Mexico Highlands University, Las Vegas.

had its reading room, in the Syndicate Block at the southeast corner of North Second and East "A" streets. The initial purchase of books totaled 128 volumes. Each Saturday from 3 to 8 P.M. "a few ladies took turns performing the duties of librarian."⁸ The organizational meeting also drew up a constitution. This document, better than any other source, displays the basic ideas of what a library organization in the Pacific Northwest at the end of the nineteenth century was to the local citizenry.⁹

Throughout its early years the Association functioned on a basis of equality among all members. Although the constitution had created an executive board, it did not act independently of the general membership. All matters of policy were decided upon at meetings of the members. The failure of the officers or the executive board to act on its own initiative was probably due to two factors: the social activities of the Association which were not confined to purely library affairs; and the constant low state of the treasury which made cooperative money-raising ventures a necessity. Officers and executive board never had the wherewithal to do anything without the support of the rank and file members.¹⁰

In February, 1892, Mrs. Steinweg, now president of the Association, reported that the Association had seventy-five members with a book stock of 350 volumes. At the same time she made the first statement on the wishes of the Association concerning the future of the library movement in North Yakima: "Someday the city will take up this work and make it a commodious city library as Seattle is doing and as our western cities have done, but in the meantime, an association like we have formed comes the nearest to meeting the public want of anything we know of."¹¹

MAY 19, 1892, marked the opening of the second phase of the library movement in North Yakima. At this time the Association began to keep relatively thorough and continuous records of its activities and began the slow but steady evolution from a social organization into a serious library movement. It would appear that this resurgence was due largely to the efforts of two people. First, and perhaps most important, judging from her apparent dominance in the archives of the Association, was the personal interest of Mrs. Susanna Steinweg. During the following three years on more than one occasion her efforts helped to sustain the Association and save it from the limbo to which so many similar groups were

lost for lack of a strong personality. The other was Hamilton W. Bartlett, the rector of St. Michael's Episcopal church in North Yakima, who filled the vacuum created by the sudden death of Mrs. Steinweg on May 16, 1895.

The Minutes for May 19, 1892, make the first reference to the technical problems of library operation: "The president suggested that we should catalog the books and that E. M. Reed would do the work at [a] very liberal price."¹² The months of decline during which the book stock had had to be moved from the Syndicate Block to the Lewis-Engle Block were coming to an end. Also, the Association meeting in June, 1892, agreed that they could move back to the Syndicate Block on July 1, where the rent was to be four dollars per month.¹³

The following April (1893) the treasurer reported \$103 on hand, and Mrs. Steinweg was reelected president with Mrs. W. T. Prosser and Mrs. Edward Whitson, vice-presidents; Miss Harriet Sawyer, treasurer; and Mrs. Ida Sharkey, secretary. The treasurer's report for the year ending May 1, 1893, showed a balance of \$76.68. One hundred dollars had been raised through various money-making entertainments. Nearly half as much came in from dues and fines. Expenditures amounted to \$80.30 for "rent, fuel, drayage, etc." The librarian, Miss Mary Reynolds, reported total acquisitions, as of June 3, 1893, at 376 bound volumes and 50 paper-backed books. The Association membership figure was 88.¹⁴

Trivial as the sums may be, the trouble taken to place the operation of the Association on a business-like basis is unique in the early stages of the operation of such cultural institutions in the West—it serves to document a phase in the

⁸ Yakima Herald, Feb. 18, 1892.

⁹ The full text will be found in "Minute Book of the North Yakima Library Association, May 19, 1892–March 31, 1896," 90-95. (Hereafter cited as: Minute Book I.)

¹⁰ Yakima Herald, June 11, Oct. 7, 1891.

¹¹ Ibid., Feb. 18, 1892.

¹² Minute Book I, 7.

¹³ Yakima Herald, July 7, 1892, announced that the library had returned to the Syndicate Block and that the Association now held 400 volumes with "100 more soon to be added."

¹⁴ Minute Book I, 14-15. Librarians prior to the advent of the public library were: Mary Reynolds, 1893-94; Miss Griffiths, 1894; Elva Baxter, 1895; Senova Fulkerson, 1896; Mahtild Guiland and Mrs. Jennie Barthollett (sisters), and a Miss Kingsbury, 1897-1900; Elizabeth Collier (Hall) Flannary, 1900-1904. Mrs. Flannary continued as public librarian after 1904. She was one of the few professionally trained librarians in the Northwest at the time, having taken professional work at the University of Washington in the late 1890's. Interview with Mrs. Flannary by the author, Yakima, Washington, Jan. 21, 1953.

cultural history of an area that was still little removed from the frontier days. Besides these reports a committee was appointed to "get up a catalogue" and tend to the matter of new shelving. This sudden burst of activity soon dissipated itself in the hot summer weather: "Aug. 2 '93, no meeting—everyone out of town. Sept. 6—No money. Librarian has \$4 in dues. On motion \$1 of that sum was paid to Mrs. Sharkey to buy paper for making a catalogue of the books. . . ." The librarian was instructed to pay herself after she had taken in some money, and it was further decided to send out letters in the community soliciting money for the Association. In November the members were faced with the problem of no heat in the library rooms, and the rent was four months past due.¹⁵ The ladies of the Association went to the attack and by February, 1894, had raised \$94.50 by giving "teas, talks, a quartette concert, and a musical."

Mrs. Sharkey was evidently proceeding with the cataloging of the collection because President Steinweg had the treasurer see about the "printing of the catalogues." The Association had in mind the printed type of catalog which was so much in vogue in the nineteenth century.¹⁶ Besides serving as a tool for location, the printed catalog, through wide circulation, was to serve the purpose of a public relations medium for stimulating interest in the library and, through a charge of 25 cents per catalog, it was expected to be a source of income.¹⁷ On May [28?] 1894, the treasurer reported the catalogs had been published by Charles E. Chaney, Publishers, Sandusky, Ohio, at a cost of \$12 and were ready for sale at 25 cents apiece. The advance of summer in 1894 presented an opportunity to save money by moving the book stock into a nearby office, rent free; cut the librarian's salary down from four dollars to three dollars per month; reduce open hours of the library to 2:30 to 7:30 on Saturdays, only; and have the library's furniture distributed among members for keeping until fall.¹⁸

By November the Association had moved back to its original quarters in the Syndicate Block. During the same month the treasurer reported a balance of \$12.10.¹⁹ The record of activities for the closing weeks of 1894 are lacking. Apparently the five years spent in attempting to maintain a library had dampened their spirits, for on January 9, 1895, the Minutes state the purpose of the meeting was to arrange for disposing of the library.²⁰

THE JANUARY 9, 1895, meeting was to be another turning point in the history of the library movement of North Yakima, for it was at this meeting that the men of the community first interested themselves in the library. The era of a socio-cultural group of women principally concerned with the library movement was coming to an end. The men had evidently made advance plans to attend the meeting in an effort to prevent the dissolution of the library. Present, among others, was the mayor of North Yakima, W. H. Redman. The mayor opened the meeting with a suggestion that the library be placed in a store where it would be more accessible and could be handled by the merchant on a commission basis. Then a Dr. Heg offered his waiting room as a place for the library. The ladies made short shift of both suggestions—the mayor's was too "commercial" and the doctor's evidently too solemn (although they assured him it was only because his waiting room lacked the necessary locked bookcases).

Mrs. Whitson suggested to the mayor that the city take over, but the mayor declined. It was also reported that the fire department might be willing to buy the book stock for the use of the members; the fire department at that time, being a social as well as a service organization, maintained its own club rooms. Committees were appointed to visit the firemen and the Commercial Club²¹ to see if some sort of support could be worked out for the library. The ladies of the Association then closed the meeting with a unanimous vote to retain control of the Association regardless of any outside support that might be received.²²

Within two weeks the Association again met, but the committees could report only that the firemen and the Commercial Club could be of no help. The mayor advised them that the city could levy $\frac{1}{4}$ mill for a library, but there was not

¹⁵ Minute Book I, 14-19.

¹⁶ The printed catalog was the forerunner of the present-day card catalog found in American libraries. It had some points to recommend it: it was portable; and it made available in a single volume the titles of the entire collection of books. However, the expense of frequent printings in order to keep up with new acquisitions eventually made the cost of such a bibliographical tool prohibitive.

¹⁷ Minute Book I, 23. It appears these additional services performed by a printed catalog as revealed in the archives of the Association have not heretofore been cited in the literature of the early library movement in the United States.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 25.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 28-29.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

²¹ A forerunner of the present Chamber of Commerce.

²² Minute Book I, 30-32.

enough money in the city treasury.²² Since outside help was not forthcoming, the Association set about reorganizing its schedule of dues, etc. It was decided to let members who paid a flat \$2.50 per year be exempt from all fees and "strangers" by paying 25 cents per month in advance. "The question was then put 'whether the governing board shall still consist of ladies only,' and it was decided in the affirmative."²³

This was the last show of strength made by the ladies. When the Association met on February 1, 1895, Mrs. Steinweg temporarily turned the chair over to Oscar A. Fechter, who noted that the original constitution of the Association had been lost and he then proceeded to appoint a committee of two men and one woman to draw up a new one. At the March meeting the new constitution was presented and accepted. It was also announced that the firemen were willing to assume the responsibility for the library if one of their members could be vice-president. This proposal was tabled. But the threat of disbanding, plus a readjusted fee system, brought in about \$50 within a few weeks.

At the meeting of April 3 Mrs. Steinweg was reelected president. It was at this meeting that the first list of titles was entered in the records. In the list were such items as F. M. Crawford's *Don Orsino*, Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer*, Du Maurier's *Peter Ibbetson* and Trilby, T. H. Caine's *Deemster*, and Coin's *Financial School*.²⁴

On May 1 a "Sunflower Ball" was given which further nourished the treasury to the extent of \$75. On the following Monday, May 13, 1895, Mrs. Steinweg died.

By this time, however, the North Yakima Library Association had gathered enough momentum to continue. Popular support was improving, and the book stock was beginning to be large enough to offer a good selection of titles. All income for the balance of the year was spent entirely on books.²⁵ In December the Fair Board donated \$100—the first grant of public moneys to the Association.²⁷

THE YEAR 1895 had been the critical one for the library movement in North Yakima. It marked the transition from the day-to-day efforts of a small group of interested women to a fulltime library movement which received ever-broadening public support. This increased support also brought basic changes in the reorganization plans.

At the Association meeting of February 27, 1896, it was decided to revise the constitution

again. This time full membership was made possible for anyone who paid monthly dues for three months in succession; amendments to the constitution could be made by three-fourths present at a meeting after the executive board had seen the proposed amendment; and the secretary was to keep separate records of the meetings of the executive board.

These last two changes reflected the growing strength of the Association. The time had arrived when the organization was substantial enough for the executive board to act in a more independent manner than heretofore. It was no longer a social organization in which all members enjoyed full participation. Rather it was becoming increasingly an administrative agency. Group spirit declined, and the executive board acted more and more on its own initiative without consulting the general membership.

On March 26, 1896, the executive board decided to incorporate the Association. At the meeting of March 31 the general membership approved the move to incorporate, and W. L. Steinweg, widower of the former president, was delegated to draw up the papers necessary for incorporation.²⁶ Action by the membership in approving incorporation marked the last time the library movement in North Yakima was presented to more than a select few for advice and action. It lost at this time, so to speak, its "grass-roots" composition.

On April 10, 1896, the Articles of Incorporation were received from Olympia.²⁸ Under the new corporate constitution the organization became known as the "Yakima Library Association" with two classes of membership: the nonvoting member who paid 75 cents per quarter dues, and

²² North Yakima was in the midst of financial troubles similar to those of most governmental units in the United States at this time. The city government's drive for economy was thorough, if not effective. At the council meeting of March 4, 1895, the clerk was instructed to notify the *Yakima Herald* to discontinue sending a paper to the city hall if the city had to pay for it. By 1898 it had become necessary to sell city warrants to private banking interests at 88 cents on the dollar. Records II. 216, 332.

²³ Minute Book I, 35.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 40.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 42-44. This was the time of the great fad for buying sets. The Association bought no less than five sets during the month of June: Green's *History of England*, 4 vols.; Hallam's *Works*, 6 vols.; Rawlinson's *Ancient Egypt*, 2 vols.; Gibbon's *Rome*, 5 vols.; and, Ruskin's *Works*, 13 vols.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 50; *Yakima Herald*, Dec. 12, 1895.

²⁸ Minute Book I, 61.

²⁹ Brad W. Davis (chief clerk, state of Washington, Department of State, Olympia) to W. L. Steinweg. Pasted to front end-paper of "Min. Book II, April 16, 1896—April 21, 1904." (Hereafter cited as: Minute Book II.)

the life member who paid an initiation fee of one dollar but who also had to have the approval of the president and the librarian. A board of trustees was composed of six, two of whom were subject to election every two years by a vote of the life members. This was to be the only link between the will of the general membership and the board.³⁰ The board of trustees agreed to meet on the third Thursday of April, July, October, and January. And it was at these meetings that the activities of the Association were to be controlled for the next several years. The first corporate board was composed of: W. L. Steinweg, president; Emma V. Morrison, first vice-president; Col. W. F. Prosser, second vice-president; Carrie B. Fulkerson, secretary; P. A. Ditter, treasurer. At the meeting of April 24, 1896, the board decided to have the library open from 7 to 9 P.M. on Wednesdays and 3 to 6 and 7 to 9 on Saturdays. The librarian was paid on the basis of 50 cents for each hour on duty.³¹

About the time the Association became incorporated, there arrived in North Yakima the previously mentioned Hamilton W. Bartlett, who was to become the leading force in the final stages of the Association's transition into a free, public library. Bartlett's first connections with the Association appear to have been as a benefit lecturer on behalf of the organization.³² During 1897 the board carried on in a routine manner. In April the librarian, Senova Fulkerson, resigned, and Mrs. Virginia Bartholett was appointed to fill the vacancy.³³ At the July 22 meeting Col. Prosser got the board to subscribe to *Book Notes*, and a Mr. Bailey was given the monopoly of selling life memberships in the Association on a 15 per cent commission. It was also in July that the board initiated the policy of having the librarian submit quarterly circulation reports. By January, 1898, the Association was again experiencing a period of renewed vigor. During that month the Knights of Pythias agreed to sponsor five benefit lectures on behalf of the Association, and the Yakima *Herald* once again offered to turn over a regular edition of its paper to the Association with all proceeds going to the library. The first definite circulation figure is also given for January—152 books.³⁴

The treasurer's report for the first year under incorporation also indicates the library movement was becoming more solidly entrenched.³⁵ With a comfortable surplus the Association decided to spend \$100 on new books.

This spurt of new activity was not long maintained. Between April, 1897, and January, 1898,

no meetings appear to have been held. And the treasurer's report for the year ending April 24, 1899, showed a balance of only \$32.34. To correct a rapidly deteriorating situation various possibilities were discussed. Seriously considered was the plan of "taxing" each member one dollar. In the end the board sent special notices to delinquent members (of which there were many), scheduled some lectures by Mr. Bartlett, and planned a large ball. The subject of cataloging the library again was discussed, but "no definite steps were taken in the matter."³⁶

On the whole, almost four years of incorporated life had led to a library organization further removed from the general membership and little else. As the new century opened, the Association began a new and final evolutionary change: that of passing from the private to the truly public stage.

SOMETIME PREVIOUS to the board meeting of January 18, 1900, Mr. Bartlett had been privately soliciting subscriptions for the opening of a public reading room, for at this meeting he told the board he had \$16 per month promised and he thought he could raise as much as \$30 per month in regular subscriptions.³⁷ He also told the board that a room next to the post office suitable for a reading room could be had for \$12.50 per month. The board was quick to act on the suggestion, and a motion was carried to lease the suggested room for "not less than three years" and to arrange for water and lights. A few nights later the board met again to arrange for subscriptions to periodicals for the new reading room totaling "not more than fifty dollars." Bartlett requested that the matter of a librarian for the reading room be "left to him."³⁸ Sometime early in February the board met again and

³⁰ Minute Book II, 1-27. Other provisions of the constitution included: an annual meeting of the general membership with a total of seven or more present constituting a quorum (Art. IV); general membership could not amend the constitution until the proposed amendment had been posted for ten days in the library (Art. V); no one in debt to the Association could borrow books (Bylaw 3); librarian specifically required to "classify and arrange" books (Bylaw 4); bylaws could be amended by board of trustees (Bylaw 6).

³¹ *Ibid.*, 28-30.

³² A board meeting in January, 1897, had as one of the items on its agenda the selection of a time and place for a lecture by Bartlett. *Ibid.*, 30.

³³ Mrs. Bartholett is still actively interested in the affairs of the library in Yakima.

³⁴ Minute Book II, 42.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 43.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 52-54.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 56.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 57.

decided to try to have the new reading room open on February 15, 1900, providing Bartlett could have a suitable heating stove installed by then.³⁹

The reading room opened on schedule, and during the year 1900 apparently was used more and more.⁴⁰ By January, 1900, the Association's activities become so numerous that the board started holding meetings every month. Gone were the days when the library movement was a social as well as a service activity. Order work was requiring more record keeping, and increased membership was beginning to require more system and time in handling circulation of the book stock.⁴¹ In May the Knights of Pythias extended its support by requesting each member of the lodge to subscribe one dollar per month for use by the library. And the librarian, Miss Kingsbury, reported she was taking in dues, fines and donations to the extent that she needed to have a locked money drawer in the reading room.⁴²

North Yakima was undergoing rapid changes just as was the rest of the world at the beginning of the twentieth century. The *Yakima Republic's* terse notice of February 1, 1901 was symbolic of the change: "Cowes, Isle of Wright, Jan. 23.-Queen Victoria is dead and Edward VII reigns." On February 22 the first year of operation of the reading room was completed. The librarian's report indicated the room was open daily, both the afternoons and evenings; an average of twenty persons per day were using the room; nearly 1,800 volumes were on the shelves; and the *Scientific American* and the *Etude* had been added to the periodical list. At the same time the board said that "whenever the city authorities can guarantee its support, the Association will be glad to hand over the property and control of the library to the city...."⁴³

The board's statement was more than wishful thinking, for Bartlett was beginning to make plans to share in the philanthropies of Andrew Carnegie. The *Yakima Republic* of July 19, 1901, revealed the first open steps toward such a move.

Rev. Hamilton W. Bartlett of St. Michael's church will go east about the first of October to remain three months. Before returning he will personally interview Andrew Carnegie...on the subject of a donation for a library in this city. Some correspondence has passed between those interested...and the interview has been arranged for. There are reasons to believe that Mr. Bartlett will be able to report a contribution of \$25,000 by Mr. Carnegie on his return.

The Association hopes for Carnegie aid were premature. Through 1901, 1902, and 1903 Car-

negie withheld support, and the Association continued as a private library organization. Membership continued to increase, and in 1902 the librarian reported about two-thirds of the members had books out all the time. In 1903 the Association moved its library from the site next to the post office to the second floor of the Clogg Building at the corner of Yakima Avenue and Third Street and was actively soliciting funds to buy a building site under the direction of Bartlett. The year 1903 was also the beginning of the rise of the Yakima Valley to national prominence as an agricultural center-especially for fruit crops.⁴⁴ President Theodore Roosevelt stopped off on May 25 and gave the populace a twenty-three minute speech on the glowing future of the area.

The year was climaxed with the success of Bartlett's efforts for Carnegie's support. During the summer Bartlett had secured \$2,500 in subscriptions toward the purchase of a building site, and then in December he received the letter with the news he had spent the past three years in trying to bring about.

December 14th, 1905

Rev. H. M. [sic] Bartlett
Pres., Public Library Assn.
North Yakima, Wash.

Dear Sir,

Responding to your communication on behalf of North Yakima—If the City agree by Resolution of Councils to maintain a Free Public Library at cost of not less than Once Thousand dollars a year and provide a suitable site for the building Mr. Carnegie will be pleased to furnish

³⁹ *Yakima Republic*, Jan. 19, 1900. Fifteen hundred volumes was far from the national average of 50 books per 100 population in cities having public libraries in 1900. See: U. S. Bureau of Education, *Public Schools and School Libraries, 1901* (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1901), *passim*. However the advance of the library movement in North Yakima during its earlier years kept pace with similar developments in eastern areas of the United States when they were encountering growth difficulties prior to 1850. Herman Lindewig, "Bibliographie und Bibliotheken in den Vereinigten Staaten von Nord-Amerika," *Seaport: Zeitschrift für Bibliothekswissenschaft, Handschriftenkunde, und ältere Literatur*, VI (1815), 269-271; VII (1816), 113-25, 129-62, 178-22, 294-295.

⁴⁰ Although the reading room was to be free, it was pointed out that it would "still be necessary as heretofore to charge an annual fee of one dollar for use of books when carried home. The library is not a free public library and cannot become so without having a city tax or an endowment for its support. In time it will doubtless have one or the other of these resources or both." *Yakima Republic*, Feb. 3, 1900.

⁴¹ *Minute Book* II, 62-64.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 65.

⁴³ *Yakima Republic*, Feb. 22, 1901.

⁴⁴ The library was now open daily from 3 to 6 and 7 to 9 p.m. R. L. Polk & Co's *North Yakima and Yakima County Directory, 1901-4* (Yakima, 1903), 41.

Ten Thousand Dollars to erect a Free Public Library Building for North Yakima.

Respectfully yours,
[Signed] Jas. Bertram
p. Secretary⁴⁵

On January 12, 1904, the Association met and agreed that as a first step toward changing the library from a private to a public institution, all library property was to be given to the city without compensation. There was still some doubt as to how the changeover was to be effected and the new public library managed. This is evident from the fact that the Association did not agree on turning its property over to the city until after it had elected a new board of trustees.⁴⁶ No further action was taken by the Association until its meeting of April 21, 1904.⁴⁷ The Minutes for the meeting stated: "Mr. Weed moved that the Library Association accept the offer of the City Council to maintain a free public library and hereby instruct its officers to make a proper transfer of its property and effects to the City of North Yakima. Motion carried." Another member then offered the resolution:

Whereas the Library Association adopted a resolution accepting the offer of the City Council of the City of North Yakima to take the property of the Association and maintain a free public library and directing its officers to make the proper transfer. Now therefore be it resolved that the President and Secretary of this Association be and they are hereby directed and empowered to make, execute and deliver to the City of North Yakima a bill of sale transferring all of its property to said city.⁴⁸

This resolution was approved, but the members were still uncertain or unready to relinquish all control, for at the same meeting it was decided to retain current officers until new ones replaced them.

It was not until June 20, 1904, that the city council got down to the business of actually introducing an ordinance calling for a free and public library financed from public tax moneys. At this session the first reading of the proposed ordinance was made.

Ordinance No.—[401] An ordinance providing for the establishment of a free public library in the City of North

Yakima, Washington, creating a fund for the maintenance thereof, and providing for the levy and collection of taxes to supply such a fund was read the first and second time.⁴⁹

On July 5, 1904, it was read for the third time and passed with all councilmen voting in favor with the exception of L. L. Thorp, who was opposed to libraries.⁵⁰ On July 18, Mayor O. A. Fechter appointed North Yakima's first board of trustees of the North Yakima Public Library, thus ending the era of the private library in North Yakima.

The history of the library since 1904 cannot be reviewed here. The story is quite a different one, a record of steadily widening service by a publicly supported agency. So far as organization is concerned, only the executive board survived as a feature common to the earlier and later years. As the geographic area served was progressively enlarged, even this governing body was altered in order to give representation to communities other than Yakima. In 1951 the local board surrendered most of its authority, and the organization became a regional library administered by a regional board of trustees in cooperation with the local boards of libraries absorbed into the regional organization.

⁴⁵ News of the Carnegie grant was not announced in the press until Christmas Day. See *Yakima Republic*, Dec. 25, 1903. The Carnegie insistence on an annual maintenance guarantee by the city equivalent to 10 per cent of the grant was in line with all Carnegie grants for public libraries. Martha Conner, *Outline History of the Development of the American Public Library*, preliminary ed. (Chicago, 1931), 89.

⁴⁶ Minute Book II, 66. On Jan. 18, 1904, Bartlett addressed the city council asking for \$1,000 annual maintenance for a city library. He also revealed that he had raised a total of \$3,810 for a building site. The council referred the matter to the city attorney. "Records, City of North Yakima, Wash., Aug. 19, 1901–March 20, 1905," II, 396. For a brief moment the Association was on the verge of continuing as a private library despite the Carnegie grant. At the last minute such a division of interests was overcome.

⁴⁷ This meeting followed the city council session of April 4, when the council voted the \$1,000 maintenance fund provided "that after investigation the conditions were found satisfactory." Records III, 421.

⁴⁸ Minute Book II, 67, 68.

⁴⁹ Records III, 463.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 474.