

EIGHTH BIENNIAL REPORT

OF THE

Historical Department of Iowa

MADE TO THE TRUSTEES

OF THE

State Library and Historical Department

OCTOBER 31, 1906

BY CHARLES ALDRICH, CURATOR

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT OF IOWA,
DES MOINES, IOWA, October 31, 1906.

To the Honorable Board of Trustees:

GENTLEMEN: I have the honor herewith to transmit the Eighth Biennial Report of the Historical Department of Iowa, covering the period from October 31, 1905, to October 31, 1906.

Very respectfully yours,

Charles Aldrich
Curator.

HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT OF IOWA.

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REPORT OF CURATOR.

Owing to the fact that the usual Biennial Report from this Department appeared but a few months ago, it has seemed best to me to simply report progress at this time and not attempt to include lists of our accessions. I shall do this in a few brief paragraphs.

THE NEWSPAPERS.

We are now receiving 294 Iowa papers, 29 from other states, making a total of 323 newspapers currently received. During the past year 416 bound volumes have been added, making in all 4,300. Among recent accessions of old files of newspapers are the following:

Storm Lake Pilot, Vols. 1-15, October 26, 1870-October 5, 1885.
Vol. 17, October 7, 1886-September 29, 1887.

Sioux City Industrial Press, September 15, October 6, 1877; January-April, 1878.

Sioux City Weekly Journal, January 2, 1879-January 27, 1881;
March 18, 1886-December 20, 1895.

Sioux City Weekly Tribune, March 24, 1876-1891.

Olean (N. Y.) Journal, 1853-1855 (incomplete).

Columbus Junction Safeguard, Vols. 1-6, October 27, 1870-September 20, 1877.

Moline, Ill., Review, Vols. 1-5, December 3, 1870-January 9, 1874;
Vols. 9-11, March 1, 1878-September 3, 1880.

In this department there is of necessity an immense and rapid increase in bulk, and it is at present the most congested part of the building. Stacks have been ordered, however, for a large additional room in the new portion of the building, and it is hoped that before many weeks there will be space for a systematic arrangement of the newspapers, with reading tables conveniently near for the use of those consulting them.

A current index of the leading Iowa dailies, on historical and biographical subjects, is made. This indexing of current newspapers is done by only a few libraries in the country. The Indiana

State Library, for instance, has listed the more important contents of the Indianapolis papers from 1898 to the present time. An hour or two a day suffices for the work, yet in their report it is stated that "This guide to the files as people learn of it, is coming more and more into popular use, the newspapers themselves being among the most frequent patrons."

THE LIBRARY.

Additions have been made in the library on the various lines marked out at the beginning. All publications pertaining to our own State, including reports of every description, town and county histories, school and college catalogues, works on the civil war, travels, Indian history, state and general history. The library is especially strong in three lines; genealogy, local history of the older eastern states, and the history of the civil war. During the past year 633 books and pamphlets have been added, making a total of 14,815. Among the notable accessions may be mentioned the following series: The Crown Collection of Photographs of American Maps, now in manuscript in the British Museum; The Philippine Islands; Early Western Travels; Vital Records of Massachusetts Towns.

MANUSCRIPT DEPARTMENT.

Constant effort is made to secure for the Historical Department the correspondence of notable Iowa men and women, distinguished for their services in this State or elsewhere, and to preserve it in finely bound volumes. Single manuscripts are preserved in the same manner. Since the last report there have been added to the collection twelve large volumes of the correspondence of Laurel Summers, aggregating several hundred letters.

THE ART GALLERY.

The increase of the number of oil portraits has been gradual, until at the present time we have secured close upon one hundred—more than can be exhibited to advantage in the present room. In the new building there is to be an increase of space, with better light, so that the facilities for exhibiting the portraits will be greatly improved. We have now secured portraits of all our Governors with but two exceptions. Many of these have been secured without expense to the State, but I earnestly recommend that a reasonable amount be appropriated by the Legislature to complete

the list. Thus far our art collections consist mostly of portraits of Iowa pioneers. The most notable of our recent additions are fine portraits of Mrs. Mary Newberry Adams, late of Dubuque, Mrs. Albert G. Swalm, Rear Admiral John Grimes Walker, Hon. P. M. Casady, and Maj. S. H. M. Byers. We have in this collection, portraits by that illustrious American artists, George P. A. Healy, and William E. Marshall, the distinguished painter-engraver of the world famous large steel portraits of Washington, Lincoln and Grant, and by Ernest C. Peixotto, the famous artist and illustrator, with several from the easels of George H. Yewell and Charles A. Cumming, our well-known Iowa artists. A number of others have been promised in response to invitations from the Department. Among so many, there must of necessity be some of inferior quality, but the general average as works of art is, I believe, very good. The portraits have been provided with name plates, and copper wires have replaced those of steel, which are very liable to breakage on account of rust.

THE MUSEUM.

Under the management of Mr. Van Hyning the Museum is being systematically rearranged. The best systems of classification are followed; the material exhibited in its natural order and form, and intelligently labeled. Preference is given to Iowa material, but much accrues from time to time from outside the State and forms a popular feature. A catalogue of the Museum should be published as a convenience to the public.

Since the last report the most notable accessions have been the following:

Sioux Indians: A collection of about one hundred pieces, among them a fine buckskin coat and trousers; a number of mocassins, blankets, pouches, etc., all heavily embroidered with beads; one blanket covered with picture-writing; several arrows, pipes and war clubs. This is a very complete representation of the Sioux handiwork and material much needed for the Museum. All tribes known to have inhabited Iowa should have a representation in the Museum, but up to this time the Sioux had been but inadequately represented.

Prehistoric Implements: Another desirable collection of several hundred stone implements, consisting of flints, that were collected in Iowa. While the list contains but few forms not already in the Museum, yet the perfection of the specimens and the ma-

terial of which a number of them are composed, make the addition a valuable one.

Philippine Collection: The most valuable recent accession to the Museum is the exceedingly fine lot collected by Capt. Frank Tompkins and wife of Fort Des Moines. This collection was accumulated principally by Mrs. Tompkins during their service in the Philippines. It is a very complete collection of the apparel, war implements and necessary domestic utensils of the different tribes of that country. Among the lot may be mentioned two dozen hats of as many different patterns, and many forms of spears and bolos. A number of varieties of basketry are represented. The headhunters are represented by the spear for killing men, the axe for taking off the head and the basket for carrying it. The Iggorote kettle for cooking dog and rice, with bowls and spoons for serving it, are among the lot.

THE HALL OF PUBLIC ARCHIVES.

Doubtless the most important undertaking of the Historical Department the past year is the initial work in the establishment of a Hall of Public Archives. Those who are familiar with our Biennial Reports and with The Annals of Iowa, are aware that this has been one of the works that we have been urging upon public attention. Soon after I came to Iowa in 1857, I saw with deep regret that little had been done by the Territory and State for the preservation of the materials of their history. There seemed to be no sentiment looking in that direction. I made an attempt in the year 1858 to secure a file of the printed State documents, applying for them to Hon. Elijah Sells, Secretary of State, who would have had them in his custody had they been in existence. "I am sorry to say," he replied, "that this is impossible, for the State of Iowa does not possess even a single file of her own public documents." I therefore gave up the idea altogether. I have regretted many a time since that I did not secure such as were still in existence, the most of which cannot now be had. Not only were the manuscripts, as letters and other official papers, treated with neglect, but the printed documents were deemed so much useless lumber doomed to destruction. In one noted instance, a man was even employed to destroy most of the printed documents, and he did the work most effectually. It was reported that he was directed to save 100 copies of such documents as he deemed valuable. He has been dead many years, but I am of the impression that he was

handsomely paid for the effort. It has been stated that he hired a car and loaded the precious documents into it and sent them to Chicago, where they were sold to paper makers. Now and then some man tried to stem this tide of destruction, but the results of their efforts were very meager.

Discussion of this general subject has gone on here and there for many years, but the first determined effort was the introduction of a bill in the Thirty-first General Assembly, which became a law and is known as Chapter 142, Laws of the Thirty-first General Assembly. Under this law the Board of Trustees were authorized to take the preliminary steps for the foundation of a Hall of Archives. The first move in this direction was the employment of Prof. B. F. Shambaugh, of the State Historical Society at Iowa City, to visit the leading States and Canada, in which this subject of preserving the archives has been agitated and under consideration, and investigate the work done. He was peculiarly fitted for this work for the reason that he had been for some time a member of the Archives Commission of the American Historical Association. His report was submitted to the Board of Trustees at their regular meeting on September 22, 1906. That report is to appear in The Annals of Iowa for January, 1907, and there has been authorized the printing of an extra edition of 500 copies, for the purpose of making the subject as widely understood as possible. This report is a very comprehensive survey of the whole subject of the preservation of public archives, together with a summary of what has been done in this direction by Canada and the States, with a plan for the work in Iowa. It should be read and carefully considered, not only by the press of Iowa, but by the members of the coming Legislature. The subject is one which would seem to need little or no argument. The needs of the State should be apparent to every intelligent person.

At this writing, October 30th, the work of investigating, arranging and classifying the manuscripts and other documents in the office of the Governor is proceeding under the direction of Mr. John C. Parish, of Iowa City, assisted by Mrs. Clara A. Neidig, of Des Moines. They have made many rare finds of historical value, aside from general investigation and classification of materials.

Professor Shambaugh recommends an appropriation of \$6,000 annually to foster and forward this work. Upon the completion of the Historical Building quarters will be provided for the Hall of Archives, at least until this division of labor requires more space and a settled policy is formulated.

THE NEW BUILDING.

Inquiries are so frequently made in regard to the uses of the different floors and rooms of the new building that I am prompted to make the following statements:

The front entrance of the west wing will be removed and the one entrance for the entire structure will be in the center of the building fronting on Grand Avenue. The basement under the east wing has been assigned to the Iowa Library Commission and is ready for occupancy. The second and third floors of the east wing will be occupied by the Iowa State Library. The main building is being finished also for the uses of the State Library to the center of that structure. The remainder of the building is to be occupied by the Historical Department. This will give to the Department rooms for the offices and collections, including newspaper, library and art rooms and museum. The whole of the third floor is to be occupied by the Museum. This arrangement is of course subject to such modification as the Executive Council may deem best adapted to subserve the purpose for which the building was projected. The Hall of Archives will probably occupy space on the second floor now devoted to the Museum, but will be temporarily located on the second floor of the east wing.

The lower or basement floor will be given up to the newspaper collections, as soon as more space is required. For the present the newspaper space will be enlarged by the addition of one room 24x36 feet. At some future time the Museum materials on the lower (S. E.) floor will be removed for the further accommodation of the rapidly growing collection of newspapers.

The main (first) floor in the west half of the building will be occupied as now by the Historical Library, reading room, ladies' reading room and rest room, offices and work rooms. The reading and ladies' rooms will be somewhat larger and more commodious than those now in use in the west wing.

The present art gallery (second floor) will be enlarged at once by the addition of another well lighted room, which will nearly double its present capacity and render still more convenient the exhibition of pictures.

A suitable room will be provided for the meetings of the Board of Trustees, with facilities for keeping their records. There has existed a need for this improvement and I believe it will be greatly appreciated by the Board.

WORK ON THE HISTORICAL BUILDING.

The contracts which are now being carried out include finishing of the plastering, all the wood floors, the concealed conduits, wires for lighting, all interior wood work. The plumbing will be completed, together with the heating of the first floor and basement of the east wing. The roughing in and direct radiation will be put in the remainder of the building, leaving only the indirect ventilation to be put in the central portion and the second and third stories of the east wing. The contracts also include steel book stacks for the State Library, Library Commission, and the newspaper department of the Historical Department.

At the last session of the legislature the sum of \$150,000 was suggested as necessary to complete the Historical Building, of which \$50,000 was provided for. With this sum, to which \$20,000 was added from the previous appropriation, the work above mentioned is now in progress. The architect, Mr. O. O. Smith, submits the following estimates in response to my request:

Main Stairs (cast bronze finish).....	\$ 5,000.00	
Two Rotunda Balustrades (cast bronze).....	2,500.00	
Eight Elevator Enclosures.....	1,500.00	
		\$ 9,000.00
Marble Wainscoting (rotunda, stairs, corridors, reading room and two offices), Marble Columns (rotunda), Marble Stair Treads and Risers; Marble Base (all rooms except Library Commission rooms), Vitreous Tile Floors (basement, rotunda and corridors), Marble Mosaic Floors (1st, 2d and 3d stories, rotundas and corridors).....		32,000.00
(If Vitreous tile floors are used in 1st, 2d and 3d floors, deduct \$2,800 from above.)		
Granite Curbing and Cement Walks.....	\$ 7,516.00	
Grading and Seeding.....	300.00	7,816.00
Sub-basement Floors.....		1,300.00
Balance Painting (wood work).....	\$ 2,000.00	
Walls and Ceilings, Three Coats.....	2,500.00	
		4,500.00

The above includes only plain painted walls; if wall decorations are considered, any amount from \$5,000.00 up may be considered; \$10,000.00 would be a reasonable sum for the entire building.

EIGHTH BIENNIAL REPORT.

Electric Light Fixtures.....	6,000.00
Freight Elevators.....	3,000.00
Balance Heating and Plumbing.....	7,743.00
Incidentals, 10 per cent.....	7,135.00
Total	\$78,494.00

Passenger elevators are not included in the above estimate. If of bronze metal finish \$10,000 should be allowed to install them.

DECORATION OF HISTORICAL BUILDING.

I wish to make a suggestion in regard to the interior decoration of the Historical Building. In my judgment, when this is undertaken, it should be done on a scale of equal magnitude and artistic skill with that which has become so acceptable in the State Capitol.

ASSISTANCE.

Owing to the increase and development of the work in the Historical Department there is need for another general assistant and stenographer, and I earnestly recommend that the Thirty-second General Assembly make provision for this additional help.

PUBLICATIONS.

Since our last report the Department has published "Early Settlement and Growth of Western Iowa, or Reminiscences by Rev. John Todd," a book of 203 pages.

The Annals of Iowa, Third Series, will complete its seventh volume with the January, 1907, issue, and soon after we expect to publish a complete and comprehensive index to Vols. 1-7. It will supply a long-felt want and will prove valuable to those using The Annals.

A Bibliography of the American naturalist Rafinesque, by Prof. T. J. Fitzpatrick, of the State Historical Society, Iowa City, will soon be published by the Department.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES ALDRICH,
Curator.