

Surgeon-General's Library and the John Crerar Library are able, within reasonable limitations, to do for the practitioners of the country, the State Library of Iowa should be able to do for the physicians and surgeons of Iowa."

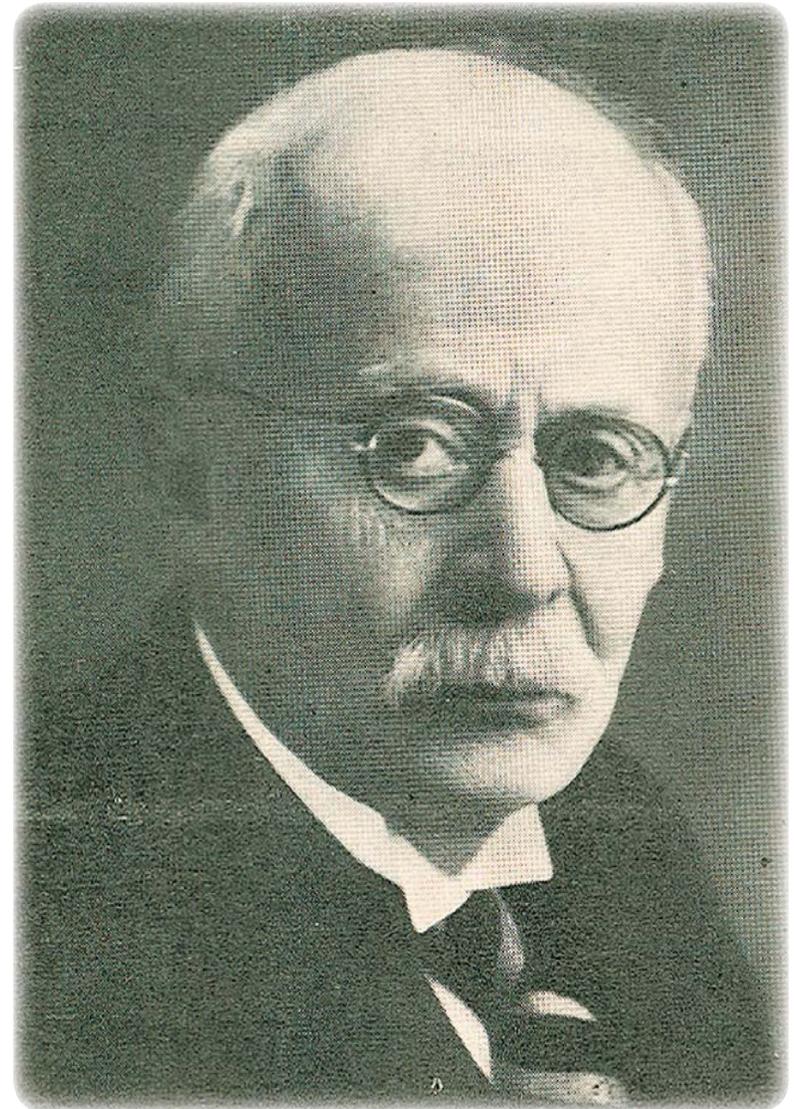
- 1918 - The first of many pleas were made to increase the salaries of State Library Staff - all librarians - to an acceptable level. Salaries being received were compared to those of custodial staff.
- 1919 - The library, in anticipation of the creation of the Medical Department, acquired a photostat - "This machine conveniently arranged for photographing book pages, is now at my disposal." A medical librarian was hired October 1, 1920 - Miss Margaret Brinton, Medical Librarian of Yale University library to begin "responding to calls for assistance in the way of information from members and students of the medical profession."
- 1920 - The State Library began providing materials on interlibrary loan to patrons across the state. It was "the aim of the librarian [Mr. Brigham] to make the General Library useful to the citizens of Iowa regardless of the distance from the library center."
- 1921 - The 38th General Assembly passed legislation officially creating the Medical Department of the State Library. "Instead of shelving thousands of books as receptacles for the dust of future years, it is becoming more and more a working library to which the medical profession of the state can come ... Its shelves are open also to students of medicine and surgery."
- 1926 - The State Library continued to grow, thrive, and evolve to the point where space was becoming a problem.

Mr. Brigham states,

"The necessity of more room in all four departments of the State Library becomes more pressing with every installment of new books. In the Law and Legislative Reference Department, many permanently valuable books are of necessity, piled upon the upper floors. In the General Library every available space is filled. The growth of the Medical Library long since overflowed the shelf-room in the room assigned to the department, and medical works are crowding more and more the space on the second floor of the Historical Building, compelling the removal of books of the General Library from shelves to tables and the floor."

From that point until his death, Mr. Brigham lobbied for, and counted on, the constructions of the Temple of Justice, "the first floor of which provides space for a reassembling of the several departments of the State Library in the same building, and upon a single floor."

As we know, the Temple of Justice was never built. Neither was the Hall of Archives added to the Historical Building as originally planned.



Johnson Brigham

Johnson Brigham

- State Librarian 1898-1936.
- Born March 11, 1846, died October 9, 1936 (was still serving as State Librarian at age 90).
- Began work as a newspaper editor and publisher in New York state and at the Cedar Rapids Republican from 1881-1893.
- Noted Iowa author and historian.
- Founder & editor of Midwest Monthly Literary Magazine 1894-1889.
- First recipient of the Iowa Library Association (ILA) award plaque for the most outstanding piece of literature written during the past year by an Iowa author. This award was later named the Johnson Brigham Plaque award as a memorial to his life and service.
- ILA President 1903 & 1927; President Emeritus of ILA (one of only 3 in the first 35 years of the association)

Structure of the State Library during his tenure included the Law, Historical, and Miscellaneous Departments (changed to the General Library in 1910). Other departments added under his administration were the Legislative Reference Bureau (later called the Economics & Sociology Department) and the Medical Department. The Library Commission included the board of Library Extension, the Bureau of Library Information for the libraries of the state, and the Traveling Library.

Highlights:

- 1898 - Initiated cataloging of the Miscellaneous collection using the Dewey Decimal System.
- 1900 - Library Commission was formed as a separate agency. It took responsibility for the Traveling Library (which began in 1896). Its "object" [or mission statement] was "To aid in the establishment and development of free and other public libraries in the State of Iowa." Mr. Brigham, as State Librarian, also served as the chair of the Commission.
- 1900 - The Consolidation Act of 1900 added the Historical Department to the State Library in anticipation of relocation of the Miscellaneous Department to the newly built Historical Building (then just the west wing).
- 1907 - The Legislative Reference Bureau was added to the Law Department. This evolved over the years into the Economics & Sociology Department in 1924 and moved into the General Library.
- 1908 - The Miscellaneous Department and Library Commission moved into the newly completed east wing of the Historical Building. In Mr. Brigham's own words, "The removal [from the Capitol Building] and shelving of about fifty thousand books was accomplished within a single week, and without confusion. In fact there was no time during the process when an assistant [a librarian] was unable to hand out any book called for." [Report of the State Librarian 1908, p. 1]

Mr. Brigham was instrumental in lobbying for and working toward the construction of the building. Even when the State Library moved in, the building was not yet complete. In the same report he states,

"I would further urge upon the president of the board the immediate necessity of completing the interior of the historical building. While the working rooms of the new building are finished and furnished for use, the lobby remains unfinished, conveying to the visitor an impression which does far less than justice to the building, to the successive general assembly under whose direction the building has been brought to its present state of efficiency, and to the executive council under whose direction it was erected and has been made ready for occupancy. I would also recommend that the niches in the rotunda and the sides of the porch be filled with artistically high-grade statues or busts of great men who have done most to build up our commonwealth; and that the interior walls be decorated in keeping with the high standard set by the executive council in the decoration of the state house."

Mr. Brigham took as his office the room on the first floor, now named the Johnson Brigham Conference Room.

- 1910 - Progress had been made, but there were still no elevators installed in the shafts provided. "A very large proportion of the visitors feel mentally unwilling or physically unable to visit the basement or the third floor....Many even stop short of the portrait gallery and the library on the second floor, because of the hard climb."
- 1910 - An average of 1,000 people per month consulted the State Library over the last 2 years. "The daily stream of visitors and sight-seers passing through the library has not been included" in that count.
- 1914 - Progress toward Mr. Brigham's long-desired dream of creating a Medical Department began to take form. While working with the Iowa Medical Society and the Polk County Medical Society toward this new department, Drake University's Medical School, as a result of its closing, turned over to the State Library a collection numbering about 1,400 works. Those, along with those already in the library, made a strong nucleus for the proposed department. Mr. Brigham proposed the legislative creation of a formal Medical Department within the State library, headed by "a medical librarian who should have an education in medicine and surgery", as well as "more or less familiar with library science." This idea of Mr. Brigham's was unique among state libraries, with a keen interest by other states in "the Iowa idea".
- 1916 - "In anticipation of the creation of a Medical Department, the Library Board set apart as the nucleus of the proposed medical library a room on the second floor of the Historical building opening into the General Library." Steel bookshelves were installed in that room. Mr. Brigham felt "What the