

Chapter 2

Libraries

in towns which had

from one thousand

to

twenty five hundred people

when the library was founded

Town	Population at founding	County seat	County	Location on map	City	Township	Founded by tax	Founded by gift	Date of founding	Volumes now	Circulation 1897-98	Remarks
Abingdon	in 1890, 1321	No	Knox	D-4	Yes			Yes	1898	377	(probably per month) 200	Gift, by Association, dating from '96
Barry	1600	No	Pike	B-6	Yes		Yes		1880	2280	2150	Association, 1879-80. Gift of farm.
Bunker Hill	in 1890, 1269	No	Macoupin	E-7	Yes			Yes	1898	2200	6400	estimate, Association, 1868-98.
Garthage	in 1890, 1654	Yes	Hancock	B-5	Yes		Yes		1894	2384	11485	Gift \$500; subscription.
Dundee	in 1880 1434	No	Kane	H-1		Yes		Yes	1879	1700	4800	
Geneva	in 1890, 1692	Yes	Kane	H-2		Yes	Yes		1895	1245	11327	Association lent \$850 to library.
Minsdale	in 1890 1584	No	DuPage	H-2	Yes			Yes	1893	2300	10006	Gift by Association.
Hoopeston	in 1890 2291	No	Vermilion	I-5	Yes		Yes		1898	1037	1000	Dec.-Apr. monthly, Club gave \$500.
Kansas	1037 estimate in 1870	No	Edgar	I-6	Yes			Yes	1897	600	No record.	To aid academy.
Kewanee	2000	No	Henry	E-3		Yes	Yes		1875	8300	20142.	in 1896,
Knoxville	in 1880 1600	No	Knox	D-4	Yes			Yes	1880-85	3340	5169	Given by Association.
Maywood	in 1890 2076	No	Cook	I-2	Yes			Yes	1888	2000	8000	Association 1878-88

Table 2, part 2

Town	Population at founding	County seat	County	Location on map	City	Township	Founded by tax	Founded by gift	Date of founding	Volumes now	Circulation 1897-98	Remarks
Monticello	in 1890 1643	Yes	Piatt	G-5		Yes		Yes	1897	3000	10599	
Naperville	in 1890 2216	No	DuPage	H-2	Yes			Yes	1897	1000	estimate 9000	
Onarga	in 1870 1500	No	Iroquois	H-4	Yes			Yes	1873	4000	in 1896, 11253	Given by Association
Polo	in 1890 1728	No	Ogle	E-2		Yes		Yes	1890	2264	5952	Association 1870-90, gave it.
Rochelle	in 1890 1789	No	Ogle	F-2		Yes	Yes		1891	1906	46000	in 1896. Why?
Urbana	in 1870 2277	Yes	Champaign	H-5	Yes		Yes		1872	9191	23435	Association gave its books
Warren	in 1880 1897	No	Jo Daviess	D-1		Yes		Yes	1886	3000	6000	To aid Academy.
Wheaton	in 1890 1622	Yes	DuPage	H-2	Yes			Yes	1891	3117	8311	
Woodstock	1683	Yes	McHenry	H-1	Yes			Yes	1890	3000	estimate, 8000	Association 1876-90, gave books

Abingdon

Public Library

At Abingdon, Knox county, a Library Association, organized January 1896, established a library " to enable the public to obtain better literary advantages." The Association consisted of all who paid for a membership.

The library was not self-supporting however, and the City Council was requested to take it in hand , which it did. The library became public May, 1898.

No special work has been done with the schools; the library is very popular. The majority of the readers are pupils from the schools and old people.

There have been no gifts. The library is open afternoons and evenings.

There are 377 volumes and the circulation is given as 200 volumes , probably per month, though it is not stated.

Abingdon and Hedding Colleges are located here; gloves and organs are manufactured and there are several sawmills.

The library has a two mill tax for its support.

Barry

Public Library

At Barry, Pike county, the library came into being in 1879, "for the good of the people", through the efforts of Mrs. L. F. Long, as a membership library. The next year the city took charge, and the library became public.

"Aunty " Ben Brown left by will a farm worth \$10000 to \$12000, to be sold and the proceeds used to erect a new library building. This has not been done yet. Entertainments and lectures were used to rouse interest at the time of founding the library.

There were in the library last year 2280 volumes, and 2150 volumes were issued for home use, a gain of 450 volumes over the number issued in 1896.

The town is small, and lost 300 in population between 1880 and 1890, having then only 1354 people. There are three flour mills and a woolen mill.

Bunker Hill

Public Library

The library founded by a stock company in 1868, was made public in January , 1898, " so that all might enjoy the advantage of its use."

During the thirty years , it was kept up by money from entertainments, usually given by the people of the town.A few gifts were received.

As regards the transfer, the librarian says:

" It took several years to do it, but by perseverance in presenting the question, by explaining the advantages that would result to the young people, by the offer free of nearly \$4000 worth of books, and, lastly, by a threat to close the library if the city did not take it , the change was accomplished."

The circulation of 1593 volumes in the first three months of the library's existence as a public institution, equal to over 6400 volumes yearly , from a library of 2200 volumes , proves the wisdom of the action.

The town is small and the tax will be about \$275 a year. The early settlers were from New England, but they have been replaced by Germans. There are fruit and dairy interests, a coal mine , a flour mill, and a large quantity of milk is shipped from here to St. Louis . The town is in Macoupin county.

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Carthage

Free Public Library

The library of Carthage, county seat of Hancock county, was founded in 1894, by the Ladies Columbian Library Association. The following letter from Mrs. Elizabeth Pennock, the librarian, explains how it was accomplished:

" I will try to answer your questions, being always glad to give information in regard to our Public Library of which we are so proud.

In the summer of 1892, some of our ladies met together and decided to work for a public library. An organization was formed, called the Columbian Library Association. Several receptions were held during the following fall and winter, and speeches were made by prominent citizens, encouraging the enterprise.

In order to get the two mill tax provided for by a statute of the State, we were obliged to work under the supervision of a Board of Directors. This Board was created by appointment by the Mayor. One of the members of the Board, Mr. M. P. Berry, was so enthusiastic over the founding of a library that he offered to give \$500 toward it if the citizens would give a like sum and make it a free public library. The citizens responded liberally to Mr. Berry's proposition, and in two days time the committee appointed for that purpose had collected \$612.

The library opened March 10, 1894, in a room rented for it.

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A "Book Shower ", was given and many books were given, in some cases whole sets. A purchasing committee was appointed and a librarian hired. For two years the business men furnished the tables in the reading room with suitable periodicals.

The Library Association keeps up its organization, and now supplies the periodicals. The Association gives monthly entertainments at private houses, charging ten cents admission.

In 1896 the city built a new City Hall and set aside two commodious rooms for a permanent home for our library.

We extend our influence into the country by selling membership tickets to non-residents at two dollars per year. The library and schools cooperate.

There is work connected with an enterprise of this kind, but when we see the good being done every day, we forget the work."

Among the gifts have been a case of curios , and a set of the Rebellion Records.

With only 2384 volumes the circulation last year was almost 12000 volumes.

The tax comes to from \$300 to \$400 a year.

There are tile-, reg-, and shoe-factories, and a creamery. Carthage has been described as " a church, a college , and a temperance town."

Dundee

Public Library

The library of Dundee, Kane county, was founded in 1879, " for the benefit of the public having no library", by Dr. E. F. Cleveland.

The income of the library is small; a room is furnished , rent free; the librarian receives \$84 a year.

There are 1700 volumes, and 4800 volumes were issued for home use last year.

The town has a creamery, a cheese-factory, and brick works. The community is not wealthy, and the library is said to be much used .

Geneva

Public Library

The Mayor of Geneva, Kane county, in 1893-4

suggested to the women of the Geneva Improvement Association that the city would furnish a room if a library was started. He gave valuable advice in planning and carrying on their campaign, and at the election the library carried in the township, by six votes.

By some mistake no tax was levied the first year; the women of the Association insisted on the election of Directors however, and loaned the library \$350 as a permanent investment. They also drafted a letter to tax-payers, asking for contributions in lieu of the tax, and the library went on. The need of a library was urged on the people, and Library lectures were given as an educational measure.

Last year the library contained 1245 volumes, while the circulation was 11327 volumes. Many of the readers are the children of foreign-born parents. The community is not wealthy; the only gifts have been a few books.

The town has a creamery, glucose works, six factories, and a foundry. The library is popular and fairly prosperous.

Hinsdale

Public Library

At Hinsdale, Du Page county, the Library Association in 1893, being then about eight years old, turned over its books to the village, and the people "voted to appropriate the tax allowed by the State law for a free library."

There was no opposition to the change, and no conditions were imposed by the Association.

The library contains 2300 volumes and over 10000 volumes were issued for home use last year. The tax amounts to \$750 a year.

The town has no special industries, being a residence suburb of Chicago. There are four churches and an academy.

Hoopeston

Public Library

The library of Hoopeston, Vermilion county, was opened in November 1898.

The work was accomplished as follows:

" There was no public library. The ladies belonging to the the Mary Hartwell Catherwood tea club felt that a library was a much neededd thing in Hoopeston, so concluded to do all they could to start one. The city and Council were not ready then.

The ladies gave entertainments, among others a 'ladies' negro minstrel'; some of the ventures were very successful, others were not; their lectures especially , left them with a difference to settle, but they were a brave band and after two years work they felt that they had a start.

When the City Hall was built in 1897 , two rooms were set aside for library and reading rooms. In the early spring the ladies had the shelving put in the library , and invested \$31 in periodicals; the reading room was open to the public. Then a book social was held at which about 400 books were received, mostly new and valuable , among them being Larned's History for ready reference.

Then the Mayor and Council decided that if the ladies couldd raise \$500 , the city would accept the library as a public insti-tution and provide for its maintenance under the State law. The ladies raised the money by asking their husbands and friends to

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contribute. The amount was invested in books."

The book social gave a beginning, and the purchases were made, using the "A. L. A." catalog as a guide for the character of books in each class. Some other volumes have been given.

The library was formally opened Wednesday evening, November 23, 1898; guarantor's blanks and applications had been advertised as ready at the library a week before. An orchestra furnished music and the opening was made a social affair.

An entertainment was given in February, 1899, at 15 cents admission; \$100 was cleared for the purchase of more books.

The library in January, 1899, contained 1037 volumes; the circulation, December to April, has averaged about 1000 volumes monthly.

The town is the center of a prosperous agricultural district and has two very large sweetcorn-canning factories..

Mrs. Mary Hartwell Catherwood's home is here. Greer college is at Hoopeston.

Kansas

Public Library

At Kansas, Edgar county, the library was founded " by Edward Willasey and John A. Payne, June 1897, by private gifts and collections from public readings, to aid the private school, Eton Academy, and also the town."

The library is supported by voluntary contributions and funds raised in the manner mentioned above.

Mr. Willasey, Principal of the Academy , is the librarian.

No record of circulation was given; there are about 600 volumes in the library.

The library is free; I do not know that any effort has been made to obtain the tax.

There were two tile-factories in the town in 1888; the population is given in the Century Atlas as 1037.

Kewanee

Public Library

Before 1875 , a small subscription library existed in Kewanee, Henry county. That year the public library was founded by vote of the people, under the State law for townships.

This result was attained " by agitating, talking with people on the streets, and by bringing it before the people at the annual town meeting in April, notice being given on the election call." Since then the library has been kept before the public " by personal intercourse, and notices through the local papers." The librarian adds, "frequent advertising is a good thing."

There are 8300 volumes in the library; 20142 volumes were issued for home use in 1896.

As a township library the country people "use it freely and are pleased with it ."

The tax amounts now to \$1800 a year.

The town has coal mines, boiler and tube factories; the farms near are large and fertile. The community is wealthy and growing, so that the future of the library seems safe .

Knoxville

Public Library

The library of Knoxville, Knox county, was founded about 1870, by gifts as a private enterprise. It became public fifteen or twenty years ago .

Being difficult to maintain , the trustees voluntarily offered to turn it over to the city; the city accepted the responsibility and makes an annual appropriation to support the library. As a public library it has had no gifts and its history has been uneventful.

" Somebody has always been found who has carried it on his heart and toiled to make it helpful."

The library contains 3340 volumes and the circulation is 5169 volumes; the report for 1896 gives it as over 7000, so that there seems to be a decrease for some reason in the use of the library.

The town has a small college, and a woolen mill; farming tools are made also. The appropriation has not been large.

Maywood

Public Library

The library of Maywood, Cook county, had its origin in the library founded in 1878, by an association "for the public benefit", by individual gifts and aid.

In 1888, a Library Board was elected, and the library was turned over to the village. Since then it has been public, supported by the tax authorized by the State law for village libraries.

Among the founders of the library were Gen. Wm. Sooy Smith, Hon. Hiram Barber, Hon. Z. Eastman, Professor N. A. Barrett, and others.

The library contains 2000 volumes and 8000 volumes were issued for home use last year.

The town has but one manufacturing interest, that of scrapers and ditchers.

The tax has varied from \$300 to \$800 per annum.

Monticello

Allerton Public Library

The library of Monticello, county seat of Piatt county, was founded in 1897 by Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Allerton of Chicago., " as a practical expression of the interest felt by them in our community and its advancement."

Mrs. Allerton offered to give the books, furniture, fixtures, and provide funds for the purchase of new books, if the township would furnish a building and pay the running expenses for heat, light and librarian's salary.

The library has had a few minor gifts ; Mrs. Allerton expects to establish a regular endowment. The librarian says:

" Monticello is fortunate in her library , in that it is a gift and all that is asked is that the township furnish a building and the necessary running expenses. The first land interests of the Allertons were in Piatt county, and they have always taken much interest in the county and the library is the visible expression.

Mrs. Allerton expects to add about 500 volumes a year with supplies as needed. She is very kind also in sending pictures and many little extras that add much to the interest and attractiveness of the library. She is so generous in her plans no special call has been made for individual gifts.

So far the township has made an estimate each year of the running expenses and made a levy for that amount; in time I

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think and hope they will arrange for the regular tax.

We try to carry out as far as possible , approved methods for creating interest in the library."

From the 3000 volumes contained in the library , 10544 volumes were issued for home use last year.

The town has a foundry, cigar, broom, fence, harness, and tile factories, and a planing-mill.

Naperville

Nichols Public Library

The library in Naperville, Du Page county, was founded by a legacy from J. S. Nichols, in 1897.

A Library party and book donation, mentioned in Public Libraries, November, 1898, added about 200 volumes to the library.

There are in the library at present, about 1000 volumes, and the circulation of 30 volumes daily, equal to probably 9000 volumes in a year, is a good showing.

The library is supported by taxation.

The town has a quarry, some factories, and a small college.

The population in 1890 was 2216.

Onarga

Public Library

In 1873, the shareholders of the existing library of Onarga, Iroquois county , gave the town their library.

The library had in 1898, 4000 volumes; the circulation is given as between 2500 and 3000; the 1896 report gives the circulation as 11253 volumes.

The reading and reference room is not in use; no periodicals are taken by the library.

The library has no endowment fund; it has received no other gifts.

The tax amounts to about \$300 a year.

The town, credited with a population of 1500 in Lippincott's Gazetteer, for 1870, had less than 1000 people in 1890 according to the U. S. Census. There is a flour mill and a wagon-shop.

Polo

Buffalo Free Public Library

The library of Polo, Ogle county, is due in a measure to Miss R. R. Barber; she had books and was asked to lend them ; she interested herself and others in the project for a public library.

The growth of the library may be traced in the following letter from Mr. R. D. Woolsey , one of the Directors, who has been an active worker for the library:

"The fact is , we people of Polo have a way of our own of doing anything we undertake, and we usually succeed. Away back in 1871 some of our leading citizens took the matter in hand and organized the Polo Library Association as a stock company. Our stock was put at five dollars a share and none but stockholders had any rights in regard to the control. I think we raised some \$1500, but this is only from memory. Outside of this a fund was raised, with which a lot was purchased and a building provided. Our people took hold with enthusiasm and everything went through with a rush.

The library was supported by a small charge per week on each book drawn. We also held entertainments for the benefit of the library and it prospered. When funds would get low we would sell more stock. Finally it began to lag , and for several years seemed almost dead; the enthusiasm was gone and no one seemed to care.

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In 1890 ,if I am not mistaken, we began an agitation to convert it into a Free Public Library under the township organization by a vote of the people. A certain per cent of us petitioned the town to organize a library under the Statute, it being understood by the old organization that if the measure carried, we were to deed the building and lot to the town and give the books.

The measure carried and in 1891 we elected a Board of Directors the old organization deeded over the building and since that time everything has prospered nicely. We have a fine selection of books, and add two or three hundred dollars worth each year. Of course it is not large.

We levy a tax each year of one mill on the dollar, raising about \$500, and sometimes we get small funds from entertainments, which are thankfully received and put to good use.

Our American people are perhaps too busy to do much in this direction but they are mostly right if brought to a realizing sense of what is needed. A few energetic men and women pulling together can build a library in any town. Why do they not do it? Here is in my opinion the secret of progress. These are simply random thoughts thrown together without any effort at system, but I would gladly give special questions such attention as I could if specially desired. "

Mr. Woolsey's views on the present law for township libraries

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will be found in the article on Polo in the chapter on township libraries.

The library has received one gift of \$500 and the interest on this with some smaller gifts of money is being put aside for a building fund.

The circulation last year was 5952 volumes for the 2254 volumes contained in the library.

Harvesting machines and other farm tools are made in the town; a great many hogs and cattle are shipped from the place to Chicago.

The tax last year amounted to almost \$650.

Rochelle

Flagg township Public Library

The library of Rochelle, Ogle county, is the property of the township. The date of founding is given as 1891.

There are 1906 volumes ; the circulation is given in the Report for 1896 as 46000, but this may be reading room circulation, as well as books issued for home use.

The income from the tax is \$1300 a year; there have been no important gifts, and there is no endowment fund.

The town is the center of a prosperous agricultural and stock-raising district; there are two foundries and a flour-mill.

The reports so far as they can be obtained seem to show that the library is flourishing and appreciated.

Urbana

Free Public Library

The library of Urbana, county seat of Cham-
paign county had its origin in 1870-72, as a private book-club;
first each member gave a book; then subscriptions were asked for
and sums varying from \$5 to \$50 were received.

The present University of Illinois was established in 1867 in
Urbana; in 1869-70 the railroad shops were located there. The
citizens began to think of improving the city; the first improve-
ment suggested was a library, and the club became interested in
the project. Mr. Frank G. Jacques, one of its most earnest mem-
bers took up the cause of the library: he urged the need of a
free public library persistently, gave largely of time and money,
and worked unceasingly for the library from its beginning till
his death in 1896.

Chiefly by his efforts the Library Association in 1872 gave
its books and other property except the official records to the
city, on condition that the city should establish and maintain
a free, public, library.

The library has received gifts of books from time to time,
about 1000 volumes in all; most of these were gifts from Mr. Jacques,
who was one of the Directors of the library till
his death.

There are in the library 9191 volumes; the circulation for
1898 was 23435 volumes. This is large when we consider that the
library was only open evenings, 6-9 P. M. and from 2-5 P. M.

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on Sundays.

The library was in rented rooms until 1893-94 , when it was moved to rooms in the new City Hall; the growth of the library has been such that in 1898 , an addition had to be built to provide room enough for it.

The railroad shops and the University were largely instrumental in causing the founding of the library. There are manufacturing factories of flour , tile, brick, and farming tools.

Warren

Free Public Library

The library of Warren township, Jo Daviess county, was founded in 1885, by H. C. Gann, John Bird., and S. A. Clark; it was opened in 1886.

The Warren Academy furnishes a room and a librarian, but the library is open to all residents of the township freely.

The library contains 3000 volumes and the circulation in 1897-98 was 6000 volumes.

The income of the library is given as \$230 , but the source is not stated. There have been no large gifts; there is no endowment fund.

The township is in a lead-mining, tobacco-growing, stock-raising and agricultural region. The population of the township was in 1860, 1897; in 1890, 1587; of the town in 1890, 1172.

Wheaton

Adams Memorial Library

The library of Wheaton , county seat of Du Page county, was founded in 1891, by Mr. John Quincy Adams, as a memorial to his wife, Mrs. Marilla Phipps Adams , and for the benefit of the citizens of the town of Wheaton .

Mr. Adams gave the land , building and furnishings, worth about \$50000; he added \$3000 for the purchase of books at once, and a piece of property in Chicago worth about \$25000 as an endowment for the support of the library.

There are 3117 volumes in the library and the circulation in 1897-98 was 8311 volumes.

The library is free, but it receives no public money. It was opened to the readers in 1892.

The town is the center of an agricultural, dairying and stock-raising region; Wheaton College is located here.

The income of the library is \$1200 a year.

Woodstock

Public Library

The library of Woodstock, McHenry county, was started fifteen or twenty years ago, as an Association library. The following letter from the librarian gives the steps in its development:

" I shall be very pleased to help you as far as possible. The library owes its existence, in the first place, to the banding together , fifteen or twenty years ago , of a number of public spirited citizens in what was called the Woodstock Literary and Library Association, an organization in which Rev. T. C. Northcott , then pastor of the Congregational church was one of the prime movers.

Literary entertainments at which an admission fee was charged, were held at stated intervals, and with the proceeds and the yearly dues of members, a circulating library of a few hundred volumes was obtained.

In 1890 the library had increased to nearly 1000 volumes, and upon the completion of the City Hall it was proposed to turn this collection over to the city , to be used as the foundation of a public library and reading room , to be located in the new building.

The library is supported by appropriations by the City Council and an annual lecture course.

The use of the library is free to any person in this vicinity.

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upon presentation of a voucher from a property owner of Woodstock. Books may be retained three weeks, with a renewal of two weeks; a fine of three cents a day is collected for any delinquencies.

In connection with the library is a large, well-lighted reading room. This is supplied with the leading magazines and county papers; it is open to the public in general, without limitation except as to behavior.

Both the library and reading room are open seven days in the week, from one until five p. m.; also every evening except Sunday from seven to nine p. m. Both are well patronized.

There are at present about 3000 volumes, mainly historical works, fiction, and juvenile literature. There are not far from 700 books loaned and nearly 3000 visitors during each month.

The growth of the library has been slow but steady. The circulation, from the figures given above, would be about 8000 volumes a year.

Woodstock is the county seat. There are pickling and canning works, several mills, and the Todd Seminary for boys.

Summary

Libraries seem to be most often begun when a town has a population of from 1000 to 2500; at least in the 60 towns whose libraries have been investigated for this paper, this has been the case, for in twenty-one of the towns the library was started when the town had reached that stage of its growth.

Six of these towns are county seats, Carthage, Geneva, Monticello, Urbana, Wheaton, and Woodstock; two, Geneva and Monticello, have libraries under the law for townships; the former was founded by tax, the latter by an individual's gift. The library of Carthage was founded by tax, those of Urbana and Woodstock are due to city library associations, and that in Wheaton is the gift of an individual.

Ten of the remaining fifteen of this group were founded by gifts; those in Kansas and Warren were established primarily to aid private schools, but are now free and public; Dundee and Naperville owe their libraries to individuals; the six remaining were founded by Associations, and then given to the public.

In Barry, Hoopeston, Kewanee, and Rochelle, the libraries were founded by tax; that of Barry is due to an association, the one in Hoopeston owes its existence to the efforts of a club; the Rochelle library was preceded by a small subscription library, presumably transferred to the public library, though there is no report of the transfer.

The libraries of Dundee, Geneva, Kewanee, Monticello, Polo,

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Rochelle, and Warren are township libraries.

According to circulation, Rochelle is far ahead of the others; issuing for home use in 1896 more than twenty times the number of volumes in the library; no adequate reason appears for this phenomenon. Hoopeston ranks next, estimating from the four months the library has been open, with nine times the number of volumes the library contains as the circulation for a year. Geneva follows with the same, Abingdon estimates over seven, and Naperville issued last year eight times its whole number of volumes.

All of these except Rochelle which was founded in 1891, are less than four years old so that novelty plays some part in the use of the libraries; Abingdon and Hoopeston were founded in 1898.

The libraries which issue from five to barely three times the number of volumes they possess are, in order, the highest first, Carthage, Hinsdale, Maywood, Monticello, Bunker Hill; that at Maywood, founded in 1888, is the only one more than five years old.

Circulating from two and one-half to one and one-half times their whole number of volumes are Dundee, Onarga, Kewanee, Polo, Urbana, Wheaton, Woodstock, and Knoxville, while Barry has issued less than the number of volumes in the library; Kansas keeps no record. The first three, with Urbana, Knoxville and Barry were founded 1872-85, and that at Kansas in 1897; the rest, 90-1.