

1910

Fifth
Biennial Report

Nebraska
Public
Library
Commission



Fifth Biennial Report

of the

Nebraska Public Library

Commission

Lincoln, Nebraska,

November 30, 1910

1910
THE WOODRUFF BANK NOTE CO.
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA.

F. L. HALLER, President,

Omaha, Nebraska

S. AVERY,

Chancellor of the University of Nebraska

E. C. BISHOP,

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

H. C. LINDSAY,

State Librarian

DR. W. K. JEWETT,

Librarian of the University of Nebraska

CHARLOTTE TEMPLETON, Secretary

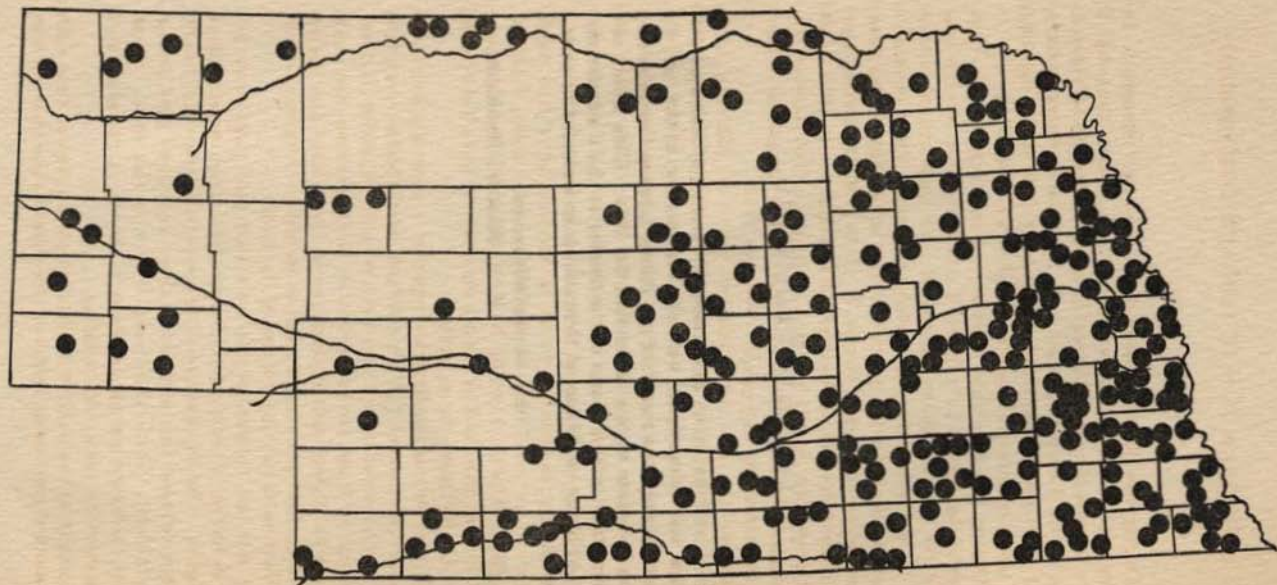
GUESS HUMPHREY, Librarian

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To His Excellency, A. C. Shallenberger, Governor of Nebraska:

DEAR SIR: Complying with the requirement of the law, I herewith present the report of the Public Library Commission for the biennium ending November 30, 1910. This report of our Secretary, which shows the activities of the Commission and the library conditions of Nebraska is commended to your attention.

Very respectfully yours,
F. L. HALLER, President.



PLACES TO WHICH BOOKS WERE SENT 1908-1910

NEBRASKA PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION

During the biennium there have been two changes in the personnel of the Commission. Dr. S. Avery succeeded E. Benjamin Andrews as Chancellor of the University of Nebraska and E. C. Bishop succeeded J. L. McBrien as Superintendent of Public Instruction; Dr. Avery and Mr. Bishop thus becoming ex officio members of the Public Library Commission.

During the biennium semi-annual meetings of the Commission have been held in April and November of each year, and the usual business transacted. At each annual meeting F. L. Haller has been re-elected president. The Commission was represented at the annual meeting of the American Library Association at Bretton Woods, N. H. in 1909, by the Secretary and Librarian and at the meeting at Mackinac in 1910 by the Secretary, Dr. Jewett and H. C. Lindsay. The Secretary also attended the mid-winter meetings of the League of Library Commissions in Chicago in 1908 and 1909.

During the past biennium the towns of Alliance, Alma, Ponca and Schuyler have passed library ordinances, made levies and established public libraries. At Pierce, Friend, Laurel, Clay Center and Gibbon, library associations have been formed which have started libraries free to the public and maintained by the efforts of the association. In Broken Bow an old library club turned over its books and a building to a new library association which is maintaining a free public library open every day of the week. In Aurora, Chadron, Madison, Minden, Norfolk, North Bend and Wayne, libraries which were organized by library associations have been turned over to the towns for support.

Of the sixty-seven libraries reported a year ago four seem inactive at present. With thirteen new libraries organized during the biennium we now have seventy-six active libraries. Fifty-six of these are supported by tax; seventeen are maintained by library associations free to the public; and the remaining three are what we call subscription libraries; that is, the borrowers pay for the use of the books.

In our last biennial report we stated that there were five towns having a population of over 2000 which were without libraries. The organization of libraries in Alliance and Schuyler has reduced this number to three and there now remain only Auburn, North Platte and Wahoo in this class. North Platte, however has an excellent Y. M. C. A. library which furnishes the town with reading.

Comparing the number of libraries at the present time with the number previously reported, the figures show that we now

**The
Commission**

**Public
Libraries**

Traveling Libraries

have seventy-six as compared with sixty-seven two years ago, and with twenty-six nine years ago.

During the biennium library buildings have been completed in Fairbury, Lincoln, Norfolk, Superior, and Neligh; and buildings are under way in Aurora, Chadron, David City, Alliance, Alma and Sutton. All of these, with the exception of the library at David City, have been given by Mr. Carnegie. Twenty-nine libraries are now in buildings of their own.

With almost no exception Nebraska libraries have good systems of administration. This is largely due to their newness no doubt, since two thirds of them have been organized since the establishment of the Public Library Commission and have availed themselves of the assistance and advice which the Commission stands ready to give.

The standards of librarianship are unusually high. We have sixteen librarians who have had regular library school training; fifteen who have taken summer courses and many who have taken the correspondence course offered by the Library Commission. Evidence of their interest in professional advancement is shown in the attendance at the meetings of the State Library Association. At the meeting held in Lincoln in October of this year there were about seventy-five persons present, representing forty libraries.

The Commission has given assistance in organizing to the libraries at Norfolk, Chadron, Alliance, Osceola, Humboldt, Pierce, Ponca, Schuyler, Friend, Laurel, Broken Bow, Clay Center and Gibbon. The secretary visited fifty-one libraries during the biennium and in addition to making personal visits has carried on a large correspondence, giving advice in regard to organizing and administering libraries.

During the biennium we have made some changes in our traveling libraries. Originally we made up the fixed groups on the basis of ten books of fiction, ten books of non-fiction and twenty books for children. The proportion of non-fiction seemed large and we decided several years ago to put in eight books of non-fiction to twelve of fiction; at the same time endeavoring to put in only readable non-fiction. Still libraries came back with some books practically unread and a year ago we made a further change. We took out all non-fiction except such books as Riis's "Making of an American" and Booker Washington's "Up from Slavery" which almost rank with fiction in popularity, leaving a fixed group of thirty-five volumes. To each library that we send out we add from five to fifteen volumes, suiting as far as possible the needs and tastes of the community.

The books of non-fiction taken out form a reserve collection from which we draw to send books to study clubs, to individual students, or to fill out a traveling library in a community which expresses a desire for reading along special lines. In

this way we are making good use of books which in traveling libraries found almost no readers.

During the biennium we have sent out 17,932 volumes in response to 442 requests for general traveling libraries, compared with 17,280 volumes and 432 requests of the last biennium. In our special loan work we have sent out 4,921 volumes in response to 636 requests as compared with 2,789 volumes and 388 requests of two years ago. The total number of volumes sent out was 22,853 and the total number of requests 1,078. That the use of the books has been widely distributed over the state will be seen from the map appended. During the biennium we have sent books to eighty-three counties.

The collection of Bohemian books which was barely ready for circulation at the time of our last report has proved popular and twenty-six towns have availed themselves of this opportunity of getting books in the Bohemian language. The twenty-five Bohemian libraries have been out ninety-four times since the spring of 1908.

Since the establishment of the Library Commission, largely through the efforts of the Nebraska Federation of Women's Clubs, there has always existed a close relationship between the clubs and the Commission. Two years ago when the financial needs of the Commission were pressing, the clubs of the state undertook to interest the legislature in the work of the Commission and the result was an increase of \$2,000 in the biennial appropriation.

This has enabled us to buy a great many books needed for study and to assist the clubs more than ever before. In addition to the books loaned to individuals to aid them in the preparation of special topics we have made up study group libraries to send out to clubs for the whole winter, covering as fully as possible the year's work. This fall we sent out thirty-one such study groups.

We have also made suggestions to program committees and have assisted in outlining courses of study for women's clubs. The clubs are working away from the "miscellaneous" program and we are assisting them, as far as we are able, to take up definite lines of work.

Last winter the Art Department of the State Federation had some money in its possession and decided to purchase photographs of famous paintings to be used by the art clubs in the state. They sought the cooperation of the Library Commission and the Commission made up three study libraries on French, Dutch, and English painting and the Art Department supplied three portfolios of photographs of the most notable paintings of the various schools, to accompany the

Women's Clubs and The Commission

Books for University Extension Courses

libraries. These portfolios are to be permanently deposited with the Commission.

The Library Commission has cooperated with the university extension department of the State University and has supplied students taking the course on Abraham Lincoln with the necessary books for study. For this purpose the Commission bought sixteen sets of the complete works of Abraham Lincoln and seven copies of the "Life of Lincoln," by Tarbell, and thirteen copies of the life by Morse. The constant use of these books has justified their purchase and the Commission may well consider developing this line of work further.

The Schools and the Commission

One of the activities of the Commission which is not shown in statistics, is assisting in the selection of books for school libraries. The secretary serves as an advisory member of the Reading Circle Committee which makes up each year suggestive lists of books for school libraries. She also gives a great deal of advice to individual teachers. A count was made of the letters from teachers and school directors for help in book selection which came between September and April of last year and it was found that the Commission had answered 125 such requests.

Library Extension

I called attention in my last report to the need of amending our library law to provide for some means by which library privileges may be extended to country people. A library extension bill was drawn up and introduced in the last session of the legislature but failed to pass; not, I believe, from opposition, but rather from indifference.

According to our present law, only incorporated towns and cities may establish libraries and tax themselves for their maintenance. There certainly should be some provision by which people living outside the corporation limits might, if they so desired, enter into a contract with a town library for the enjoyment of its privileges, or by which they might, if they chose, establish a library of their own.

From the rapidly increasing number of libraries we may complacently consider that we have adequate library facilities, but when we come to study figures, we find that we have not reached an ideal condition by any means. While the inhabitants of our large towns are fairly well provided for, in the small towns the book collections are usually pitifully meagre, and there still remains our large rural population practically untouched by the library movement. We have in Nebraska, by the census of 1900, 1,068,539 persons. The towns having libraries have a total population of 308,736. It will be seen that only 28% of our people have access to libraries. The total number of volumes in the public libraries of the state is 203,946. So it will be seen that even the fortunate 28% have less than a book a piece. To be sure, each library has a few

out of town patrons, but the number is so small as to be almost negligible. Let us estimate it at 2% of the total population, and consider that 30% of our people have some sort of library privileges. There still remains 70% unprovided for. The State Traveling Library is doing its best with the limited resources at its command but it can reach comparatively few. What we need is a strong system of local libraries, supported by town and country people alike, so that it cannot be said, in this democracy which should mean "an equal opportunity for all" that less than one third of our people have the free use of books.

We have made a great to-do over the library movement; we have felt it our duty to see that every one has proper reading; the dwellers in cities and towns through public libraries, the rural population through traveling libraries, but with all this we have ignored a large number of our citizens, a class of citizens who need most the beneficent influence of books, a class who are in no position to know their needs or to clamor for their rights,—the wards of the state, the inmates of our state institutions. We have upwards of 4000 of these unfortunates in Nebraska and so far practically nothing has been done to supply them with reading which is well chosen and adapted to their peculiar needs. I think that it is time that we turned our attention in this direction.

All of our institutions are pitifully in need of the right kind of books. Such libraries as there are, are largely the result of indiscriminate generosity. Very little money has been spent and that not always with wisdom. The meagre collections of books which they have are ill-cared for and are not used to the best advantage. I am not criticizing the present administration; the condition is the result of a wrong system of control of state institutions. One can hardly expect a man who is in charge of a state institution possibly for only two years, who has had no previous training for work which demands the most highly specialized education, and who has no money for the work in hand, to build up and wisely use a good collection of books.

Considering the existing system of control in Nebraska, it has seemed to the persons most interested in this subject, that the most satisfactory method of doing efficient library work in the various institutions, would be to centralize the work in the State Library Commission. This Commission is out of politics, it is fairly permanent, and it already has the "machinery" for book ordering, cataloging, and library organizing. A thoroughly qualified librarian should be added to the staff of the Commission to take charge of the work; a person who would combine a knowledge of books with a sympathy and insight into the needs of the various unfortunates,

Libraries in State Institutions

who would divide her time among the different institutions, going over the old libraries, weeding out the undesirable books, organizing the collections into working libraries, getting in touch with the attendants and inspiring them to make the utmost use of these tools at their command. There should be an appropriation for the purchase of new books, to be divided among the various institutions according to their needs. It has been estimated that a biennial appropriation of \$7500.00 would make a very creditable beginning for this work; \$2500.00 to be used for salaries and supplies and \$5000.00 to be used for books.

SUMMARY OF STATISTICS, NOVEMBER 30, 1910

Volumes in library, December 1, 1908.....	7,084
Additions, Nov. 30, 1908–Nov. 30, 1910	
By gift.....	358
By purchase.....	1,566
	<hr/>
Total.....	1,924
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	9,008
Withdrawn, Nov. 30, 1908–Nov. 30, 1910....	197
	<hr/>
Volumes in the library, Nov. 30, 1910.....	8,811
Number of volumes sent out, 1908–1910.....	22,853
Number of requests in answer to which books were sent..	1,078

EXPENDITURES, NOV. 30, 1908–NOV. 30, 1910

Books.....	\$1,518.64
Travel.....	597.71
Binding.....	400.35
Printing.....	82.50
Office expenses.....	1,102.79
Secretary.....	2,400.00
Librarian.....	1,633.34
	<hr/>
Total.....	\$7,735.33
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Appropriation for 1909–1911.....	\$8,000.00
Expended from 1909–1911 appropriation.....	6,900.36
Balance, Nov. 30, 1910.....	\$1,099.64

PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF NEBRASKA

PLACE	Year Est.	INCOME			EXPENDITURES			No. of Vols.	No. of Borrowers	CIRCULATION	LIBRARIAN
		Tax	Other	TOTAL	Salaries	Books	Other				
Albion.....	1900	\$551.75	\$31.75	\$583.50	\$285.00	\$189.00	\$557.58	2,000	663	6,647	Mrs. Jennie Gradon
Alliance.....	1909	755.95	23.78	779.13	100.00	95.50	89.55	1,136	206	4,474	Mrs. Helen Rowan
Alma.....	1910	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	400	50	.....	Mrs. Mary R. Morgan
Ashland.....	1902	176.00	.....	176.00	60.00	55.80	37.73	1,231	600	2,846	Vera Railsback
Aurora.....	1908	1,200.00	2,238.50	3,438.40	222.50	253.56	2,962.34	1,863	800	13,761	Lillian Moore
Beatrice.....	1893	2,500.00	466.24	2,966.24	1,253.00	869.91	843.33	12,080	3,000	39,268	Florence Smith
Blair**.....	1880	.....	50.00	.....	27.00	50.00	.....	12.00	100	.....	Mrs. Kenny
Bloomfield*.....	1908	.....	500.00	500.00	360.00	35.00	220.00	600	.....	.....	Mrs. L. G. Crosby
Bridgeport*.....	1910	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Broken Bow*.....	1910	.....	72.00	72.00	.....	.....	.....	700	459	.....	Mrs. Margaret Purcell
Carroll.....	1906	15.00	4.00	19.00	.....	.....	30.00	350	40	.....	Mrs. J. H. Melick
Central City.....	1882	500.00	.....	500.00	180.00	154.67	67.70	1,784	1,024	8,501	Margaret Anderson
Chadron.....	1908	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,223	701	4,611	Mrs. Elizabeth Smith
Clay Center*.....	1901	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	Etta Tofflemire
College View.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	700	410	.....	Mrs. Libbie Collins
Columbus.....	1901	1,290.04	.....	.....	540.00	311.92	406.18	2,542	1,872	9,280	Fanny Geer
Crete.....	1878	.....	.....	425.00	120.00	290.67	64.91	3,879	.....	6,000	Margaret Dick
David City.....	1901	500.00	70.18	570.27	91.25	331.71	42.00	3,463	491	6,108	Lillian Simkins
Decatur(a)**.....	1908	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
DeWitt.....	1902	\$200.00	\$104.00	\$304.00	\$32.00	\$150.00	\$133.00	.....	400	3,000	Marie Carmichael
Edgar*.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	800	.....	.....	Mrs. Orogan
Fairbury.....	1900	1,343.53	86.10	1,429.63	474.75	317.41	1,027.75	3,060	1,412	10,244	Vera Prout
Fairfield(a)*.....	1905	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Falls City.....	1902	933.94	333.47	1,267.41	440.00	496.42	562.08	4,657	685	22,498	Mary Hutchings
Fremont.....	1901	1,580.02	1,107.49	2,687.51	973.90	715.43	632.76	6,351	.....	29,189	Elva Greef
Friend*.....	1909	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	500	.....	.....	Mrs. Minnie Roche
Geneva.....	1907	640.00	.....	640.00	300.00	100.00	220.00	1,554	636	4,224	Nellie Williams
Genoa(a)*.....	1907	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Gering*.....	1910	.....	.....	.....	.....	22.50	.....	340	.....	.....	Mrs. Ed. Whipple
Gibbon*.....	1910	.....	392.62	392.62	44.00	103.00	40.94	371	131	.....	Mattie Davis
Grand Island.....	1887	2,000.00	.....	2,000.00	1,039.40	398.62	586.27	5,513	1,221	27,088	Daisy Houck
Hastings.....	1904	1,715.16	450.83	2,165.99	1,047.00	459.30	448.45	4,705	3,057	22,329	Mrs. Ida Capps

PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF NEBRASKA

PLACE	Year Est.	INCOME			EXPENDITURES			No. of Vols.	No. of Borrowers	CIRCULATION	LIBRARIAN
		Tax	Other	TOTAL	Salaries	Books	Other				
Havelock.....	1907	900.00	168.41	1,068.41	565.50	120.11	352.77	1,628	826	8,447	Clara Howard
Holdrege.....	1895	1,010.00	67.26	1,077.26	600.00	390.00	368.46	2,574	860	10,682	Mrs. H. E. Bush
Humboldt.....	1890	342.00	255.00	597.80	216.00	100.00	100.00	4,000	680		Mrs. J. K. Liggett
Kearney.....	1890			1,700.00	900.00	300.00	400.00		7,582	3,720	Mrs. Pauline Frank
Laurel*.....	1909		225.00		120.00	75.00	10.00	416	479		R. L. Lathrop
Lincoln.....	1875	10,174.88	2,254.07	12,428.95	4,993.54	3,613.24	5,772.65	28,574	10,527	175,979	Lulu Horne
Louisville.....	1901	\$152.49	\$10.50	\$162.99	\$39.00	\$30.75	\$32.10	415	116	975	Edith Shryock
McCook.....	1902	1,100.00	90.14	1,190.14	489.40	303.47	673.18	4,357	3,089	16,816	Grace Willetts
Madison.....	1907		79.00		234.00	50.00		1,000	565	4,928	Mrs. Ida Brannian
Minden.....	1907	500.00	28.87	528.87	240.00	227.64	30.20	1,823	1,060	9,068	Mrs. Helen Slusser
Nebraska City.....	1896							5,875	300	9,700	Mrs. Mollie Cornutt
Neligh.....	1904	500.00	75.00	575.00	100.00	101.42		1,550	778	6,212	Mrs. Carrie M. Jones
Nelson**.....	1908							818	200		Mrs. H. Grace Thomas
Norfolk.....	1906	1,000.00	32.05	1,032.05	120.00			1,200	540	6,953	Helen Lobdell
North Bend.....	1908	238.89	162.00	400.89	218.00	117.00	169.90	1,018	100	6,000	Laura Roup
Oak**.....						10.00	350.00	400		550	
Omaha.....	1877	24,570.47	2,175.91	26,746.38	14,326.30	5,867.18	6,552.90	83,960	14,150	268,774	Edith Tobitt
Osceola.....		240.00	7.88	247.88	75.50	113.36	75.50	577	142		Ethel Blake
Pawnee City.....	1904	613.94	249.34	863.28	368.00	136.89	141.26	1,364	700	9,087	May Edwards
Pender*.....	1904		10.00				9.50	1,000	250		Constance Freese
Pierce*.....	1908			237.28	96.00	89.16	52.40	660	263	2,576	Mrs. J. A. Andrew
Plainview.....	1908	348.68	31.32	380.00	180.00	125.00		780	478	5,098	Mrs. A. P. Clark
Plattsmouth.....	1886	500.00	42.00	542.00	348.00	25.00		4,300	1,521	9,390	Olive Jones
Ponca.....	1910	287.32	118.00	405.32	36.00	232.77	49.65	454	392	3,925	Esther Wood
Randolph*.....				26.00		9.74		845	56		Cecil Thorndike
Schuyler.....	1909	\$500.00	\$705.00	\$1,205.00	\$170.58	\$489.49	\$571.43	1,355	769		Marcia Webber
Scribner.....	1900	282.90	11.00	293.90	125.00		163.61	1,539	381	3,724	Verna Bowlus
Seward.....	1890	487.00		487.00	147.28	211.42	175.50	2,800	935	1,500	Neva Palmer
Shelton.....		461.83			268.00	86.32	157.86	1,990	474	3,737	Jessie Smith
South Omaha.....	1904	4,711.00	213.04	4,924.04	2,173.35	939.44	1,702.91	8,144	3,264	41,326	Mrs. Grace Pinnell
Stanton*.....	1888				60.00			1,200			Mrs. Rachel Antles
Sterling.....		190.00	13.06		120.00	67.92	66.07	899	178	5,190	Mrs. Rhoda Rice
Superior.....	1884	600.00	127.60	727.60	275.00	232.24	319.16	3,042	764	15,187	Mrs. Lucy Conn

Sutton	1908	520.00	160.00	680.00	200.00	210.00	200.00	1,416	487	6,750	Ida Rolland
Syracuse*			68.56	68.56	80.00	61.66	91.60	1,506	280	2,206	Ora Diener
Talmage	1904	87.83	69.32	157.15	50.00		55.50	900	434		Mary J. Cooper
Tecumseh	1887	600.00	10.75	610.75	223.35	150.49	156.35	1,995		7,080	Mrs. Mary Appelget
Valley*	1902				60.00			250			Mrs. John Mehl
Wakefield	1902	160.00	15.45	175.45	60.00	76.37	9.00	1,030	677	3,404	Mrs. E. L. Temple
Waterloo*	1904				60.00	15.00		190	60	369	Mrs. W. C. Rodgers
Wayne	1903		24.65		45.00	75.00		1,540	900	1,200	Mrs. Eva Davies
Wisner	1903	301.28	14.00	315.28	129.52	129.88	13.58	1,331			Jessie B. Kay
Wood River	1906	169.72	175.79	345.51	60.00	170.26	121.66	1,279	371	4,277	Mary M. Brown
York	1894	2,074.31	96.37	2,170.68	561.00	508.50	891.06	5,690	1,902	14,185	Estella Detrick

* Free but not supported by taxation.

** Fee charged for use of library.

(a) No report received.

¹ Report covers five months only.

² Report covers ten months only.

³ Report covers six months only.

⁴ Report covers three months only.

⁵ Report covers six months only.

Report covers eight months only.

COLLEGE AND SCHOOL LIBRARIES

TOWN	SCHOOL	No. of Vols.	LIBRARIAN
Bellevue*	Bellevue College	5,542	
Bethany*	Cotner University	2,600	Helen Byram
Blair*	Dana College	1,500	
College View*	Union College	2,420	
Crete*	Doane College	11,000	W. E. Jillson
Franklin*	Franklin Academy	4,990	
Grand Island*	Baptist College	7,000	Harriet Craig
Hastings*	Hastings College	6,300	Emma Cadwallader
Kearney	State Normal School	5,295	Anna V. Jennings
Lincoln	University of Nebraska	87,007	Dr. W. K. Jewett
Neligh*	Gates Academy	2,500	
Omaha*	Brownell Hall	1,900	
Omaha*	Creighton University	28,250	
Peru	State Normal School	17,000	Elva E. Rulon
University Place	Wesleyan University	7,486	May Ingles
Wahoo	Luther Academy	5,280	Aleda C. Johnson
Weeping Water*	Weeping Water Academy	1,400	
York	York College	2,400	Blanche Bagg

*Reports not received in 1910. Number of volumes reported in 1908.

STATE LIBRARIES NOT ALREADY MENTIONED

TOWN	INSTITUTION	No. of Vols.
Lincoln	State Library	62,843
Lincoln	State Historical Society	32,100
Lincoln	Penitentiary	2,650

ASSOCIATION LIBRARIES

North Platte	Y. M. C. A.	3,000
Fairbury	Jefferson County Teachers' Library	1,600