

Law Librarians of New England, 1946-1955

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During the fall of 1946, law librarians from Boston and vicinity met on two occasions for luncheon to renew acquaintances and discuss mutual problems. The initial gathering at Fox Hall, Boston University, on October 10, was attended by 17 colleagues to hear Dr. Eldon R. James, former librarian of The Harvard Law School Library and of the Law Library of Congress, speak informally about his new work as law school consultant for Lawyers Co-operative Publishing Company.

Before the meeting adjourned, the subject of organization was introduced. Frederick W. Schenk, Northeastern University Law School Library; Dennis A. Dooley, Massachusetts State Library; and Harrison MacDonald, Boston University School of Law Library felt it would be most desirable for law librarians in the northeastern area to organize professionally.

Most of the group had been attending various meetings of other library associations and the annual meeting of the American Association of Law Libraries, but specialized coverage at the local level was definitely limited. Although no particular conclusions emerged that noon, an idea that was to bear fruit had been launched.

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Further thoughts on the proposal were advanced at a luncheon held December 5 at the Colonial Kitchen on Beacon Hill when open discussion concerning affiliation with the American Association of Law Libraries appeared in the order of business. Sentiment expressed by all present proved Messrs. Schenk, Dooley and MacDonald correct in believing interest for such an association was more than a theory.

Activities during 1947 continued along the same vein. In order to attract a greater number of colleagues to the embryo association, it was decided to hold future sessions after hours for the convenience of those situated outside the Hub.

This new policy was adopted for the May 15 gathering at Langdell Hall, Harvard Law School, where additional deliberation regarding formation of a A.A.L.L. chapter ensued. Enthusiasm for the movement began to grow as librarians from other sections of New England received information.

At a December 2 meeting sponsored by the Social Law Library, it was agreed the matter should be the main business of the next session. Eunice Beeson, U. S. Court of Appeals Library (First Circuit), distributed notices inviting all concerned to attend

a dinner meeting at the Parker House in Boston on February 10, 1948, for the precise purpose of "planning the establishment of a local chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries."

The announcement was signed by Dennis A. Dooley, Philip A. Putnam, Harvard Law School Library and Mrs. Pearl J. Larson of the Middlesex County Law Library Association.

Mr. Dooley presided over the voting session. Mr. Putnam made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Larson, that a petition requesting approval of the formation of a chapter be sent to national headquarters of the A.A.L.L. The motion stood unopposed. Such a chapter, it was suggested, might be known as the New England Chapter of the American Association of Law Libraries. When the constitution was drafted, however, the official name chosen was Law Librarians of New England.

On April 27, 1948, during a meeting at the Hotel Touraine in Boston, Miss Beeson, *ad interim* secretary, read a letter of greeting from A.A.L.L. President Arie Poldervaart and a communication from Miss Margaret Coonan, executive secretary-treasurer, stating that the petition to form a chapter in the New England area had been received and turned over to the executive committee for action.

Mr. Putnam, the presiding officer, immediately appointed a committee of five to draw up a constitution and slate of officers for presentation at the next session. He designated: Ethel M. Turner, legislative reference librarian, Massachusetts State Library; Howard L. Stebbins, Social Law Library; Edith

L. Hary, legislative reference librarian, Maine State Library; Myrtle Moody, accessions librarian, Harvard Law School Library; and Arthur A. Charpentier, Boston University School of Law Library, as members of the committee, with Miss Turner as chairman.

Between the drafting of the constitution and its presentation for acceptance, the executive committee of the A.A.L.L. approved the application of the Law Librarians of New England for membership in the Association. Official recognition was accorded June 24, 1948, as recorded in the proceedings of the forty-first annual meeting of the A.A.L.L. (41 L. Lib. J. 317).

Miss Turner, Mr. Stebbins and Miss Moody drew up a constitution and by-laws which were read by the secretary *pro tem*, Miss Beeson, section by section and adopted unanimously at a spring dinner meeting, April 6, 1949, at the Hotel Touraine. With this act, the Law Librarians of New England became fully chartered.

Activities during the Association's 10 year existence (eight years as an A.A.L.L. Chapter) have been rewarding in many ways. A great deal of professional acumen has been gleaned from speakers and discussions. Nationally prominent scholars such as Roscoe Pound, Dr. Eldon R. James and Professor Mark De Wolfe Howe, as well as leaders on the New England scene, have contributed generously of time and effort by addressing the group on various occasions. Subjects covered related not only to immediate law library problems, but considered general legal fields also.

Charter members recall with a cer-

tain amount of nostalgia the evening Dean Roscoe Pound described his part in the building of Harvard Law School Library—especially his experiences abroad in connection with the selection and purchase of portraits of legal dignitaries. (Refer to "List of Activities" for dates). At the conclusion of his remarks, librarian Arthur C. Pulling conducted a tour of Langdell Hall which afforded those present the luxury of seeing first hand the results of Dean Pound's untiring efforts. It was, indeed, a rare occasion for which members prepared a buffet supper under the direction of Chief Cook Philip Putnam.

Several speakers have been keenly aware of Massachusetts' prominence in the early legal affairs of our nation. Among them, Professor Mark De Wolfe Howe of Harvard Law School made an earnest appeal for proper preservation of the numerous source materials in American legal history gracing Massachusetts law libraries; materials, he pointed out, of utmost value to scholars. Benedict M. Holden, Jr. of the Connecticut bar, whose hobby is tracing origins of modern statutes, gave an intensely informative account of "A Colonial Background to Modern Legal Machinery". His unusual treatment of his subject took the human (and humorous) side of events into consideration. Dean Lowell S. Nicholson, Northeastern University Law School, carried the theme further with an outline of the history of Massachusetts bar organization—a field he studied thoroughly during a five year tenure as executive secretary of the Boston Bar Association. At Yarmouth, Maine, Hon. Robert B. Williamson,

Associate Justice of the Maine Supreme Judicial Court, delivered a learned talk on Maine legal history in regard to reports and statutes. All of these men possessed perceptive understanding of their subjects which reflected in what they had to say.

Other memorable speakers included Dr. Eldon R. James, who addressed the group on the forthcoming (1949) American Bar Association survey of the legal profession and the place law libraries would have in the inquiry. Dr. James was in charge of the law library section of the survey under the general direction of Mr. Reginald Heber Smith of Boston. Professor Thomas H. Lambert, Jr., Boston University School of Law, recounted his conclusions concerning the Nuremberg trials. A Rhodes scholar, Professor Lambert prepared the major portion of the briefs for the plaintiff in the case of Martin Bormann and took part in other trials on the docket. The executive secretary of the Boston Bar Association and editor of *The Bar Bulletin*, William A. Parks, spoke on "What a Lawyer Expects from the Law Library". The Boston Bar Association maintains a collection which Mr. Parks directs.

Another source of important information has been discussion periods: panel; round table; and general. Whenever a problem becomes pressing or captures enough interest, deliberation of this type is in order. Sometimes members put in their "two cents worth" and occasionally outside experts contribute the benefit of their experience. Miss Ethel B. Lewis of the Massachusetts State Library read a paper on U. S. government

documents which started a still-continuing exploration into various facets of the field. Her observations suggested the subject matter for a particularly helpful session in point held during the two-day annual meeting in Maine.

Eunice Beeson, Margreta Hughes (Northeastern University Law School Library) and Howard L. Stebbins were members of a panel emphasizing the particular purposes of their types of law collections—a federal library, a university collection and a “workshop for lawyers” (county bar library). These more or less formal sessions ended with question periods which offered ample opportunity for general participation. During informal discussions, library problems involving acquisition, classification, cataloging and micro-reduction received attention. Response at all these swap-fests was lively.

Although no limit in regard to the number of meetings per year is imposed by the constitution, generally speaking, the president calls two per annum—the annual meeting in May plus an interim meeting in the fall. For the past three years, annual meetings have been held outside immediate Boston. This trend started with a highly successful gathering at Springfield, Mass., Saturday, May 23, 1953. The following spring, a two-day weekend session (May 21-22) took place at Homeward Inn on Casco Bay, Yarmouth, Maine; and Saturday, May 21, 1955, an all day meeting was held at the Connecticut State Library and the Hotel Statler, Hartford, Connecticut.

These sessions were not only professionally stimulating, but proved

socially gratifying as well. The cooperation of hostesses Mrs. Grace L. M. Gainley (Hampden County Law Library Association, in Springfield); of Mrs. Marion B. Stubbs and Edith L. Hary (Maine State Library) and Mrs. Annie B. F. Rich, (Nathan and Henry Cleaves Law Library in Maine); and of Virginia Knox (Connecticut State Library) and Mrs. Michalina Keeler, (Hartford Bar Library, in Connecticut) cannot be fully appreciated.

Similar laurels must go also to the following hosts and hostesses who secured their facilities and put their talents to work in connection with meeting places and dinners throughout the years: Arthur C. Pulling, Harvard Law School Library; Howard L. Stebbins, Social Law Library; Harrison MacDonald, Boston University School of Law Library; Margreta Hughes, Northeastern University Law School Library; James Tibbetts, Worcester County Law Library Association; Mrs. Pearl J. Larson, Middlesex County Law Library Association; and Stephen G. Morrison, Boston College Law Library. A complete list of those who served in various capacities regarding meeting details would include practically everyone ever listed on the Chapter's roster. Their unceasing efforts—and the aid of the law-book companies—were a large measure of the success of every program.

The Law Librarians of New England as a group has not been particularly active on the national scene. Individual members, however, have served and are serving on numerous A.A.L.L. committees and on the *Law Library Journal* filling responsible posts, compiling information, statis-

tics, indexes, etc. The Association did get a very welcome opportunity to act as host to the A.A.L.L. national convention held in Boston, June 25-28, 1951. Those assigned specific duties were delighted to aid in helping the program run smoothly. Dennis A. Dooley and Arthur C. Pulling, co-chairmen of the local arrangements committee, worked closely with national headquarters co-ordinating activities. Mr. Dooley delivered the address of welcome and concluded affairs as master of ceremonies at the final banquet.

After a decade of existence, the Law Librarians of New England stands firmly established as a worthy enterprise. It may be hoped that the future holds many more fruitful years in store. If the past can be relied upon as an indication of usefulness and professional merit, realization of that aspiration is assured.

LIST OF ACTIVITIES

- Oct. 10, 1946: Fox Hall, Boston University.
Speaker: Dr. Eldon R. James. Subject: His position as law school consultant for Lawyers Co-operative Publishing Company. 17 present.
- Dec. 5, 1946: Colonial Kitchen, Boston.
Organization meeting. 19 present.
- May 15, 1947: Langdell Hall, Harvard Law School Library.
Speaker: Dean Roscoe Pound. Subject: Harvard Law School Library. 38 present.
- Dec. 2, 1947: Social Law Library, Boston.
Organization meeting. 11 present.
- Feb. 10, 1948: Parker House, Boston.
Vote on A.A.L.L. Chapter petition.
Speaker: Dr. Eldon R. James. Subject: 1949 American Bar Association survey of the legal profession. 23 present.
- Apr. 27, 1948: Hotel Touraine, Boston.
Speaker: Professor Mark De Wolfe Howe.
Subject: Massachusetts' prominence in American legal history. 33 present.
- Apr. 6, 1949: Hotel Touraine, Boston.
Constitution accepted by members.
- Speaker: William A. Parks, Esq. Subject: "What a Lawyer Expects from the Law Library." 31 present.
May 22, 1950: Parker House, Boston.
Plans for 1951 A.A.L.L. national convention.
Movie: "Case in Point", courtesy Harvard Law School. 36 present.
Nov. 8, 1950: Northeastern University.
Speaker: Dean Lowell S. Nicholson. Subject: "Organization of the Bar in Massachusetts." 23 present.
- March 30, 1951: Worcester County Law Library, Worcester, Mass.
Speaker: Hon. Carl Wahlstrom, Senior Judge of Probate for Worcester County. Subject: "American Frontiers of Today." 26 present.
June 4, 1951: Smith House, Cambridge, Mass.
Speaker: Professor Thomas H. Lambert, Jr. Subject: Nuremberg trials. 21 present.
- Jan. 31, 1952: Middlesex County Law Library.
Discussion by county law librarians of "Standard Classification of Expenditures by Kinds of Services and Commodities" prepared by the director of accounts, Division of Corporations and Taxation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
Nov. 12, 1952: "39 Newbury Street", Boston.
Panel discussion on acquisition and selection techniques. 20 present.
- Jan. 30, 1953: Smith House, Cambridge, Mass.
Panel discussion by Eunice Beeson, Margreta Hughes and Howard L. Stebbins on purposes of federal, university and county bar libraries. 20 present.
- May 16, 1953: Colony Club, Springfield, Mass.
Speakers: Hon. Edward T. Broadhurst, Associate Justice of the Superior Court of Massachusetts; John S. Begley, president, Hampden County Bar Association; Robert W. Bodfish, vice-president, Massachusetts Bar Association. Subjects: Role of the law librarian; History of bar associations and law libraries in Massachusetts; Statute problems in law libraries. 21 present.
- Mar. 5, 1954: Parker House, Boston.
Speaker: Miss Ethel B. Lewis, Massachusetts State Library. Subject: U. S. government documents. 32 present.
- May 21-22, 1954: Homeward Inn, Yarmouth, Maine.
General discussion, U. S. government documents.
Speakers: Hon. Robert B. Williamson, Associate Justice, Maine Supreme Judicial Court; Clement Robinson. Subjects: His-

- tory of reports and statutes in Maine; American Bar Association Package Plan. 31 present.
- Nov. 15, 1954: St. Thomas More Hall, Boston College Law School.
Speaker: Dean William J. Kenealy, S.J. Subject: History of Boston College Law School. 29 present.
- May 21, 1955: Connecticut State Library and Hotel Statler, Hartford, Conn.
Speaker: Benedict M. Holden, Jr. Subject: "A Colonial Background to Modern Legal Machinery." 32 present.
- Nov. 19, 1955: Patten Restaurant, Boston.
Movie: "Vagabond Tour", Prentiss Reed. 28 present.

OFFICERS

	1949-1950	1950-1951
Pres.:	Dennis A. Dooley	Eunice Beeson
Vice-pres.:	Eunice Beeson	Philip A. Putnam
Sec.-Trea.:	Mrs. Pearl J. Larson	Mrs. Pearl J. Larson
Director:	Philip A. Putnam	Mrs. Grace L. M. Gainley
Director:	Mrs. Grace L. M. Gainley	Dennis A. Dooley
	1951-1952	1952-1953
Pres.:	Philip A. Putnam	Stephen G. Morrison
Vice-pres.:	Katherine Warren	James Tibbetts
Sec.-Trea.:	Lois Peterson	Lois Peterson
Director:	Dennis A. Dooley	Ethel M. Turner
Director:	Eunice Beeson	Philip A. Putnam
	1953-1954	1954-1955
Pres.:	Stephen G. Morrison	Lois Peterson
Vice-pres.:	Margreta Hughes	Mrs. Grace L. M. Gainley
Sec.-Trea.:	Lois Peterson	Edith Hary
Director:	Edith Hary	Charles Connolly
Director:	Philip A. Putnam	Stephen G. Morrison
	1955-1956	
Pres.:	Mrs. Grace L. M. Gainley	
Vice-pres.:	Edith Hary	
Sec.-Trea.:	Christy Hetherington	
Director:	Charles Skinner	
Director:	Lois Peterson	