19th-century academic library buildings

By David Kaser

Distinguished Professor
Indiana University School of Library and Information Science

A checklist and request for an update.

As far as this writer has been able to determine, no inventory has ever been compiled of academic library buildings constructed in the United States in the nineteenth century. Some data on the period 1870–1900 were gathered as part of the ALA survey in 1926, “with the hope of obtaining information, some of which might be interesting historically, as illustrating tendencies prevailing at different periods.” Regrettably, however, the buildings reported were not identified but rather only grouped by decade and state and reported as follows:

1871–1880

New York, 1
Pennsylvania, 1
Virginia, 1

1881–1890

Indiana, 1
Kansas, 1
Michigan, 1
New Hampshire, 1
New York, 1
Pennsylvania, 1
Vermont, 1

1891–1900

Colorado, 1
Illinois, 3
Kentucky, 1
Minnesota, 1
New York, 2
Ohio, 3
Pennsylvania, 1
Vermont, 1

As the balance of this brief note will indicate, the numbers reported in that volume were very incomplete. For purposes of preparing a monograph on the evolution of the American academic library building, as complete a list as possible is now needed of such buildings constructed in the nation before the turn of the century. The preliminary checklist below enumerates all that have thus far been identified. Readers are invited to report others that are known to them. Only free-standing buildings erected with the intention that they would be used solely or primarily for library purposes will be included on the final list. The years given indicate when buildings were actually opened for public use.

19th-century American academic library buildings

1840 University of South Carolina
1841 Harvard University

Left: College of Charleston Library, Charleston, S.C., 1856.

Below: St. Stephens College Library (now Bard College), Annadale-on-Hudson, N.Y., 1893.

Right: Centre College Library, Danville, Ky., 1862.

Right: Denison University Library, Granville, Ohio, 1878.
1846 Yale University
1847 Williams College
1851 University of North Carolina
1853 Amherst College
1856 College of Charleston
1856 St. Louis University
1856 Ohio Wesleyan University
1862 Centre College
1868 Wesleyan University
1870 Marietta College
1870 Mount Holyoke College
1871 St. Lawrence University
1872 Hamilton College
1873 Princeton University
1876 Lehigh University
1876 University of Rochester
1878 Denison University
1878 Brown University
1879 Roanoke College
1881 University of California
1882 Washington & Lee
1883 Centre College
1883 University of Michigan
1885 Oberlin College
1885 Dartmouth University
1886 Dickinson College
1886 University of Vermont
1887 Grinnell College
1887 Kenyon College
1888 Drew University
1889 Syracuse University
1890 Indiana University
1890 Olivet College
1890 Colgate University
1890 University of Pennsylvania
1890 Peru State College
1891 Cornell University
1891 Wabash College
1892 Wittenberg College
1893 Baldwin-Wallace College
1893 Ohio State University
1893 Bard College (St. Stephens)
1894 Colorado College
1894 University of Kansas
1894 Northwestern University
1894 Doane College
1895 Indiana State University
1895 University of Nebraska
1896 Western Reserve University
1896 Carleton College
1897 University of Illinois
1897 Columbia University
1897 University of Northern Iowa
1898 Ohio Wesleyan University
1898 Franklin & Marshall College
1898 Lincoln University (Pa.)
1898 Emory University
1898 University of Virginia
1899 New York University

Additions to this checklist, information as to whether or not buildings are still standing, pictures, and other comments will be welcomed by the author at the School of Library & Information Science, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405.

ACRL courses at Northern Illinois University

ACRL, in conjunction with Northern Illinois University’s Department of Library and Information Studies and the College of Continuing Education, will cosponsor two one-day courses: “Your Paper: Its Preparation and Presentation,” and “Writing the Journal Article and Getting It Published,” October 5-6, 1987, 9:00-5:00 p.m. Both courses will be offered in the Burill Room, St. James Episcopal Cathedral, 65 E. Huron St., Chicago. The fee is $75 for one day or $125 for both days.

The October 5 course, “Your Paper: Its Preparation and Presentation,” will be conducted by Suzanne Dodson of the University of British Columbia. Top-notch presenters are developed, not born. Do you want to learn new writing and presentation skills or improve those you already have? Gain confidence and increase your ability to reach an audience and hold their attention by writing clear, concise, well-organized material. Effective presentation enhances the content of a paper. Make sure yours sounds as good as it reads. Improve your timing, handle visual aids, increase poise, and field questions with assurance and aplomb. You’ll have all the information you’ll need to enhance the skills you already have.

The October 6 course, “Writing the Journal Article and Getting It Published,” will be presented by Richard D. Johnson, director of libraries at the State University College, Oneonta, New York. Do you want to publish but don’t know how to get started? Find out what editors look for, how to choose a subject, whether you can write a research article if you’re not hot on statistics, what you can expect from an editor, whether you can send a paper you presented to a journal, and how to become a book reviewer.

To register by phone, call (815) 753-0277; for additional information, contact Linda S. Johnson, College of Continuing Education, Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, IL 60115-2860; or call (815) 753-1454.
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