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The Other Librarian

Clara Baldwin and the Public Library

Movement in Minnesota

— Page 4



Clara F. Baldwin in 1936, shortly before her retirement from her position as the director of the Division of Libraries in the Minnesota Department of Education. She was a long-time leader in the Public Library movement in Minnesota whose career is profiled in this issue. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

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RAMSEY COUNTY History

Volume 42, Number 3

Fall 2007

THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE RAMSEY COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS IN JULY 2003:

The Ramsey County Historical Society shall discover, collect, preserve and interpret the history of the county for the general public, recreate the historical context in which we live and work, and make available the historical resources of the county. The Society's major responsibility is its stewardship over this history.

CONTENTS

- 3 Letters
- 4 *The Other Librarian*
Clara Baldwin and the Public Library Movement in Minnesota
Robert F. Garland
- 11 *Creating a Diocese*
The Election of Minnesota's First Episcopal Bishop
Anne Beiser Allen
- 16 *Growing Up in St. Paul*
Frogtown's Arundel Street
James R. Brown
- 24 *Roseville's "Lost Son" Honored*
John M. Lindley
- 25 Book Reviews

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A Message from the Editorial Board

The theme for this issue is the creativity of diverse Ramsey county residents as they responded to change. Bob Garland adds an important chapter to Minnesota women's history with his account of Clara F. Baldwin, who headed the drive to build a library system in greater Minnesota as its population grew. From the time she graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1892, Baldwin worked to make books accessible to all Minnesotans. As state librarian from 1900 to 1936, she first oversaw the development of traveling libraries, then a comprehensive system of local libraries. James Brown follows an earlier article for this magazine with more lively reminiscences of growing up in the 1920s and '30s in Frogtown, which was then a vital neighborhood near the state capitol that included African-American residents. His early relationships and activities, followed by his education on racism at the neighborhood barbershop, make a compelling read. And Anne Beiser Allen tells the intriguing story of Rev. Henry B. Whipple's election as the first Episcopal bishop of Minnesota in 1859, as that denomination was expanding in the new state. We hope you enjoy reading it all.

Anne Cowie
Chair, Editorial Board

The Other Librarian

Clara Baldwin and the Public Library Movement in Minnesota

Robert F. Garland

“... marveled, not for the first time, at the untiring conscientiousness of administrative women. Nobody’s interests ever seemed to be overlooked or forgotten, and an endless goodwill made up for a perennial scarcity of funds.”

*Dorothy L. Sayers*¹

Most readers would agree that Minnesota’s most prominent librarian has been the redoubtable Gratia A. Countryman, long-time head of the Minneapolis public library system. Biographer Jane Pejsa has admirably chronicled Gratia’s life in her detailed account, *Gratia Countryman: Her Life, Her Loves, and Her Library*.

Living and working in Ramsey County, however, there was another librarian, almost equally as important to the Minnesota library movement. This was Miss Countryman’s life-long colleague, Clara Frances Baldwin, state librarian from 1900 to 1936, and the prime, continuing force in the building of the library system in greater Minnesota.

Clara Baldwin, the daughter of Benjamin and Ann Baldwin, was born in Lake City, Minnesota, in March 1871. Her family moved to St. Paul in 1874, where her father, a surveyor, was clerk and later chief clerk in the office of the U.S. Surveyor General. Thereafter, except for a brief period of education and initial employment in Minneapolis, Clara always lived and worked in St. Paul.

Clara’s family lived at 681 Holly Avenue (then known, at first, as Yale Street), near the corner of St. Albans Street. She graduated from the St. Paul High School in 1887.

Next, Clara enrolled in the University of Minnesota. There, in 1888 when pledging the Delta Gamma Sorority, Clara met her life-long friend, coworker, and sometimes sponsor and mentor, Gratia Countryman. They found they shared goals in

advancing women’s causes at the university, and for this end, they settled on the somewhat surprising vehicle of military drill for women students. In 1889, they formed the Company Q drill group, of which Clara was elected first sergeant. The next year, she was captain.² Clara graduated from the university in 1892,

with a B.L. degree, and shortly thereafter rejoined Gratia as a clerk or cataloger at the Minneapolis Public Library.³ There, they and others were collectively known as “the library girls.”

In 1896, Clara and Gratia received enough vacation or unpaid leave to join two other young women (both, curiously enough, also named Clara) on a bicycling trip through England and Scotland. We have no direct record of Clara’s experiences on that trip, but Gratia’s voluminous letters to her family have been preserved. Two give interesting insights of Clara Baldwin. From one, we



Clara Baldwin, age 24, in 1895. She graduated from the University of Minnesota in 1892 with a degree in library science. Her first job was at the Minneapolis Public Library. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

learn that, although she is remembered as a woman of average size, she had unusually small and narrow feet and had great difficulty in buying shoes in England.⁴ Shoe stores there were compared unfavorably to those in Minnesota.

From the second letter, it's apparent that Clara already had the toughness that would stand her in good stead throughout her life. The return steamship trip to the United States was extremely rough. All four young women were very seasick and three of them were confined to their cabin. Clara Baldwin, however, "crawled out on deck every morning."⁵

Minnesota Library Commission and the Division of Libraries of the State Department of Education

In Minnesota, by the year 1900, the best efforts of individuals, associations of citizens such as women's clubs, and local governments had led to the establishment of only thirty public libraries, five association libraries, and fourteen paid-subscription libraries. Moreover, many counties, and most small towns and rural areas had no library service at all. During the 1890s, private and state legislative initiatives attempted to improve this situation. Clara, with others, was active in the movement, speaking to women's clubs and other local organizations.⁶ Finally, in 1899, the state legislature passed a law providing for a system of traveling libraries and creating a State Public Library Commission, three of whose members were ex-officio. The governor was to appoint two additional members.

The first commissioners were Cyrus Northrup, who was then president of the University of Minnesota; John H. Lewis, who was the state superintendent of public instruction; and Warren Upham, who was the secretary of the Minnesota Historical Society. The governor's two additional appointees were Margaret Evans, the dean of women at Carleton College, and Gratia Countryman, librarian of the Minneapolis Public Library. The Commission's charge was to encourage the establishment of free libraries in the state and to make good books accessible to all residents of the state.⁷

The Commission met November 18, 1899, to select its first employee. There were three candidates for the position of librarian. Clara Baldwin was selected at a salary of \$900.00 per year.⁸

Clara basically continued in the same position throughout her working life, although her responsibilities and staff expanded considerably over time. Her office quarters, however, were not so continuous. She and her staff were successively housed in the Minneapolis Masonic temple, the new State Capitol Building, the basement of the new Minnesota Historical Society Building (1918), and, finally in the new State Office Building.

In 1919, the Minnesota Library Commission ended its work, and Clara's office became the Division of Libraries of the Department of Education. The Commission supported this change.⁹ Clara did also, stating that it was a step forward because it recognized libraries as part of the state educational system.¹⁰ Clara's title became Director of the Division of Libraries, the position she held until she retired in 1936.

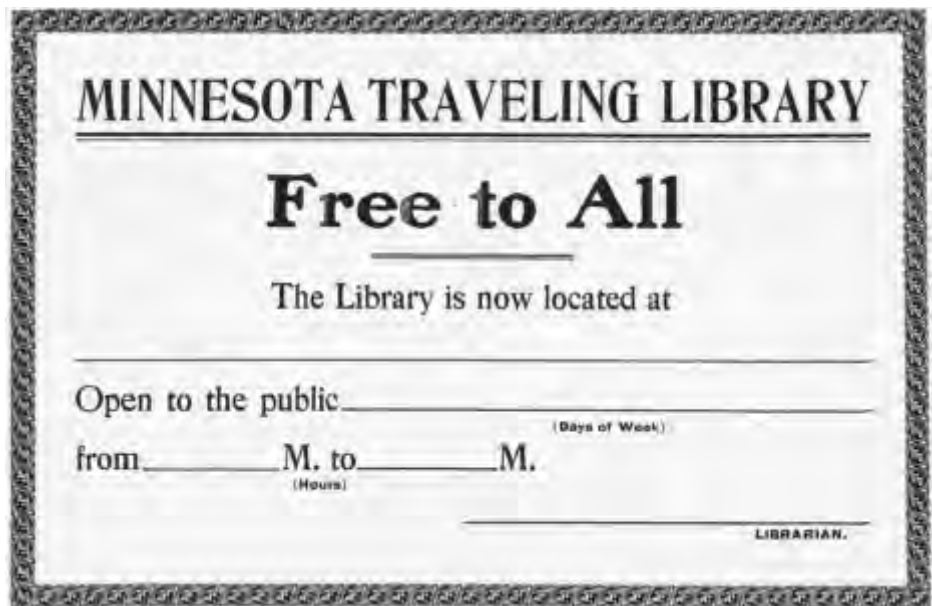
Traveling Libraries

In 1892 the State of New York had established a system of traveling libraries, and the next year, Gratia Countryman pro-

posed the idea for Minnesota. Legislation to accomplish this was introduced in 1895 and 1897, failing both times. Demonstrations of the system were started in Hennepin County, and in the cities of Duluth, Rochester, and Mankato. Thus, when in 1899 this legislative proposal finally became law, there was already evidence of success, and later, these libraries were added to the state system.¹¹

Most of the initial year's appropriation of \$5,000 was spent for books and the metal boxes used to ship them. Circulars were issued outlining the plan of traveling libraries, followed by a few articles in magazines such as *The Farmer and Farmer's Annual*. Response was very strong and casts interesting sidelights on rural Minnesota of that time. Groups of citizens had to organize a library association, then the organizers all had to sign an application, pay a deposit of \$1.00, promise to make the books readily available without charge, and return them within six months.

Applicants obviously felt they had to present a good impression to the officials in St. Paul. Sincerity and a strong interest in reading were very apparent. Indeed, two competing groups in the town of Fulda both applied for traveling libraries and had to be refused "until they settled their disputes."¹² Eden Prairie said they



A preprinted Minnesota Traveling Library notice card that local librarians used to alert members of their community where and when they could obtain library books. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

represented a “very intelligent class of farmers.” Some applications included a description of the ethnic makeup of the community, for example as “Germans and Americans,” or “Americans and foreigners.” Heron Lake and others explained that usage would vary, as they would have more time to read in the winter. In one case, the newly formed local library association obviously saw the traveling library as a solution to a local concern. In its application, the town of Morgan, Minnesota, wrote that the library was needed because “the saloon element was quite strong.”

The libraries were kept in a variety of places. Examples were the home of the local librarian, a cigar and confectionary store, and a local telephone company. Sometimes the community already had a public library building, and the traveling library was kept there.¹³

Within about a year 120 libraries, of 25 or 50 books, were in circulation. The early libraries included books for general reading on a variety of subjects, fiction and non-fiction, with another selection of several books on a specific topic useful for study clubs.¹⁴ The Library Commission always tried to purchase books “in-state” if prices were competitive.¹⁵ The St. Paul Book and Stationery Company appears to have been the largest supplier. Clara ordered books “on approval,” and many were returned for credit.¹⁶

Clara was continuously interacting with the local library associations and librarians. Her 1900 letter to the Farmington librarian is typical. She wrote:

“I have shipped to you today, via C. M. & St. P. Ry, freight pre-paid, Library No. 2. I enclose the key in this letter, also the blank secretary’s report, which must be filled out when the library is returned. You will find fifty catalogs in the box for which I hold you responsible as before. I need give you no further instructions, as everything was so perfectly kept with your other library, that I am sure you understand all our regulations. I want to congratulate you on your circulation. It was the largest yet reported, and is a splendid showing. Fifty books circulated 547 times in six months. You ought to brag a little in your local papers, and see if you can’t stir up interest enough to have a reading room of your own. Have



This photo of the Carnegie Library in Little Falls, Minnesota, was taken in 1914. In the first decade of the twentieth century, industrial magnate and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie donated eight public library buildings to towns and cities in Minnesota. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

you considered the matter at all? If you could get your mill tax from the town, there is no reason why you could not soon have a nice little library of your own. Of course, the State would still send you the traveling library, which would practically give you fifty new books every six months, and so keep up the interest if you were not able to buy many books. You don’t know how encouraging it is to us to have the libraries come in with such a fine report as yours, and we feel the deepest interest in your having still larger opportunities. Yours very truly, Clara F. Baldwin, Librarian.”¹⁷

Not all the books traveled long distances. In 1915, Clara exchanged letters with a woman whose address was “St. Paul,” but who said she actually lived outside the city limits and was thus ineligible to use the city library. Clara offered to mail her books from the traveling library if she would pay the postage or arrange to have them picked up.

Virtually all of the shipment and return of traveling libraries was by rail, however, and things did not always work smoothly. Once, Clara found herself confronted with a letter from the agent of the Minneapolis, St. Paul, and Sault Sainte Marie Railway, about a box of books found in

Minneapolis. These finally proved to be a traveling library shipped from Gully, Minnesota, two years before. The library never reached the Commission and no one in Gully answered Clara’s tracing letters.¹⁸

In spite of such occasional vicissitudes, the traveling library system was a resounding success. By 1919, there were 628 traveling libraries with over 30,000 volumes consisting of fixed libraries for general reading by adults and children, agricultural books for farmers, and groups of foreign books.¹⁹

Clara had worked hard, and Minnesota’s “library movement” was on the move! Long before, in April 1901, the Commission hired an assistant for her, so that she could spend more time on cooperative work, the librarian’s summer school, and assistance to new libraries.²⁰

For Clara herself, all this nearly came to a premature conclusion, however. On a very windy day of one of the summers of the first decade of the twentieth century, she nearly drowned in a White Bear Lake sailboat accident. Clara had joined her brother-in-law, Henry Merrill, and his brother, in an attempt to sail *The Kewardin* from Tenth Street over to Lake Shore. The sailors lost control of the boat in the high winds, and it capsized. They clung

to the overturned hull, but the same high winds made it very difficult for other sailboats to reach the victims. Finally, help arrived, but the three were exhausted and stiff with cold. The next day's *Pioneer Press* or *Dispatch* ended its report of the accident with the sentence, "Neither of the Messrs. Merrill were at work today." The newspaper account was silent in regard to Clara Baldwin, and perhaps we may assume she was.²¹

Developing Local Libraries

Traveling libraries soon gave rise to what might almost be called "traveling librarians," as Clara and certain members of her office increasingly fanned out over the state to support the development of local libraries. State law authorized a one-mill property tax for library support where there was no local, tax-supported library. The funds thus raised could be used as a "buy-in" to provide access to another nearby library, or to support a new library.

There already were more of these. By 1903, ten more local library buildings had appeared, eight donated by Andrew Carnegie, and two by other private citizens. The legislature increased the Commission's annual appropriation to \$6,000 per year, and Clara got a raise to \$1,200 per year. Her staff was expanded so she could spend more time helping these new libraries. In the next year, she visited libraries in Monticello, Marshall, Hastings, Blue Earth, Pipestone, Minnesota, and later Brainerd, Little Falls, Worthington, and Spring Valley. The legislature must have been pleased, for the annual appropriation increased to \$12,500 per year by 1907, and Clara's salary rose to \$1,800 per year.²²

Virtually all this travel was by railroad, and wasn't always very convenient. In 1915, Ortonville was opening its new library. Clara had already offered the services of her "organizer" (to set up the library catalog and shelving) and had sent them sample programs for the opening ceremony. In December, she was urged to come to Ortonville for the opening. She wrote back, "If I can possibly get away from Graceville on the afternoon freight train, I will come down."²³

Other staffers traveled, too. Also, in 1915, Clara wrote the local librarian

in Deerwood, giving advice on how to catalog their library, and what supplies would be needed. She also offered the services of her organizer, saying there would be no charge for her services, but adding that she would be grateful if the librarian would "provide for the organizer's entertainment while she is in Deerwood."²⁴ She doesn't say what sorts of entertainment she thought might be available for the organizer in Deerwood at that time.

Other help could be given solely by correspondence. For instance, Clara sent the librarian at Fairmont the plans for a newspaper rack and suggested the type of holder to purchase. She wrote the librarian at Owatonna recommending a speaker on Russia. The librarian at St. Peter received advice as to which encyclopedia should be purchased, and the librarian at Sauk Center was told which other nearby libraries employed assistants to their librarians. The librarian at Sleepy Eye learned how to classify a book by William James, and also what should be done if the amount of overdue fines on a book exceeded the value of the book itself. Clara suggested that the borrower should be allowed to keep it.

Some of this correspondence is more obscure. The librarian at Eveleth wrote Clara with the news that "Miss Jackson has become engaged." Clara's reaction was that this was likely to improve relations between the Eveleth library and the local school library. How and why, she does not say!

Clara was not above, once in a while, taking a bureaucratic approach to local situations. She wrote to Fairmont, "I am glad to know that you have money to spend, which is an unusual situation for a Minnesota Library. For pity sake spend it before the end of the year or the council will be treating you like the man with one talent."²⁵

Money concerns of a different kind were not infrequent within Clara's own office. In 1913, the Library Commission had to vote to refer requests for help from school libraries to the Superintendent of Public Instruction because of lack of funds. In 1918, the Library Commission told Governor J.J. Burnquist that its support of the "Americanization work so nec-



Clara Baldwin in 1915. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

essary in Minnesota" was being crippled by the cut of its budget to \$12,000 per year.²⁶

Sometimes, Clara and the Commission had to work quietly behind the scenes. In May 1915, she exchanged letters with a librarian in Pittsburgh about a newly graduated librarian who might be suitable for the school in South St. Paul. Clara explained the importance of that city, but also its complexity, as she hoped the school library might be opened to the public. "The packing plant and the business portion is down by the river while most of the residence district is scattered along the bluffs, which is not an easy problem by any means, and will require a person with a good deal of tact and ability." She showed insight by adding that "the superintendent, moreover is rather independent and I think would rather like to discover his own librarian." She ended by suggesting that the librarian in Pittsburgh write the superintendent directly.²⁷

Occasionally, it seemed impossible to give help where it was needed. A new library was proposed for Pine Island, but the architect's plans were far too expensive. Clara wrote a rather plaintive letter to a Mrs. Perkins saying, "As I have offered my services to the board repeatedly I am somewhat at a loss to know what to

do. I wrote Mr. Cornwall in August, asking him to send me a copy of the plans, but have had no reply. I really am very anxious to help them and wish they would call upon me.”²⁸

At other times, help was obviously needed and doubtless was accepted. In April 1915, the St. Paul Public Library, then located in the Market House on Seventh Street, experienced a disastrous fire. Clara wrote the librarian, “As I have been away from the office most of the week I have not had an opportunity to express my sympathy and to assure you of our eagerness to do anything we possibly can. Of course I am sure you know that what resources we have in the way of booklists and bibliographies are at your command. We also have a file of your class lists—1 to 7—which we shall be very glad to return to you. In our magazine collection we have a good many complete volumes of standard magazines. We should be very glad, indeed, to give these to your library if you care for them. If you wish I can send you, a little later, a complete list of what we can furnish. We are all filled with admiration with the splendid record you are making to resume the service so promptly.”²⁹



This newspaper photograph captures the destruction that the April 27, 1915, fire caused to Market House, which was then the home of the St. Paul Public Library. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Clara also conducted and taught summer institutes for the training of librarians. These continued for the first two or three decades of the twentieth century, sometimes scheduled in coordination with Minnesota Education Association meet-

ings, or the state fair, or planned in different parts of the state to reduce travel. Librarians from all over the state managed to attend these institutes, including some from places like St. Paul, North St. Paul, and White Bear Lake, who didn’t have to go very far. Not all of those working as librarians had formal training. Topics included cataloging, shelving, and even the mending of damaged books. One worried librarian interrupted one of the latter sessions, loudly complaining that what she really needed was help in not losing books. She said she was losing as many as three per year.³⁰

Another of Clara’s tasks was what we would now call “managing the interface” with the regional library clubs and associations that were critical to the support of libraries and librarians in greater Minnesota. She repeatedly visited the Lake Region Library Club meetings at places like Brainerd and Alexandria. She must have been a popular speaker, for she was favorably compared to another who was described as “too meek.” No one would have said that of Clara Baldwin. She also addressed many meetings of the Range Library Club at Eveleth, Hibbing, Marble, Coleraine, Buhl, and Chisholm.³¹

There were always extra tasks, whether answering a request for statistics from



A Traveling Library exhibit in 1925. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

some other government office, writing a busy rural librarian inquiring about a suitable location for a traveling collection of pictures, or seeking help from the Federation of Women's Clubs in obtaining "carefully selected" books for the new State Reformatory for Women.³²

During World War I, there was even more work. In 1917, the American Library Association mounted a campaign to raise \$1,000,000 for libraries for soldiers and sailors. Rather typically, Gratia Countryman was regional chair, and Clara was responsible for Minnesota. An initial goal of \$8.00 per 100 residents of each library community was proposed. Clara immediately told the national director that this was too high and would "frighten people off entirely." The goal was reduced to \$5.00.

Even with that, the project had its difficulties. Some librarians reported a conflict with all the work being done for the Red Cross. The librarian at Red Lake Falls replied to Clara's first letter by saying that their population was largely foreign and that it would be impossible to interest them in contributing to soldiers' libraries. Clara simply ignored this and sent the materials anyway. Once received, Red Lake Falls complied, saying that the task now did not seem too hard. They ultimately raised \$100.

The soldier's libraries also needed books and Clara guided local libraries in their book collection drives. Books collected were sent directly to training camps at Camp Cody, New Mexico; Camp Bowie, Texas; and Camp Robinson, Wisconsin.

There was still more to do for the war effort. As state librarian, Clara also had the task of promoting nutrition and food conservation, guiding the local librarians in the display of posters, and the preparation of exhibits. For instance, a St. Paul exhibit promoted Christmas candies that used very little sugar.³³

Except for the war work, most of these library support activities continued on into the 1920s and 1930s. The number of local public libraries continued to grow, reaching 153 in 1919³⁴ and 187 in 1935.³⁵ By 1927, Clara saw the county library as the long-term solution to the rural public library problem. The county could levy a

one-mill property tax on all county property not already taxed for libraries. The money raised could either be used to create a county library or to provide county residents with access to a nearby city public library. Ramsey County was already doing this through the St. Paul Public Library and contracts with rural schools.³⁶

In the 1930s, with budgetary difficulties from the depression, Clara must have felt that times were changing. The files show cuts in the Library Division budgets and further savings when Clara omitted travel that was still authorized. Questions arose as to whether the traveling libraries were still needed.³⁷

Clara was sixty-five years old in March 1936. Perhaps, she was not unhappy to retire.

Personal and Later Life

Though very business-like, Clara Baldwin was not without her playful side. Over the years, she kept a small journal in connection with the traveling libraries. It was captioned: "How Would You Like To Be the Reference Librarian Of A Traveling Library?" Inside the cover, she wrote a poem:

Suppose you sat at a desk piled high
With notes and letters and such,
And looked around at your empty shelves
For the books you needed so much.

Suppose every letter asked for some book
You had sent out the previous mail,
And every note was an urgent request
To be sent "by next post without fail."

Suppose at the end of a long weary day
You still are trying to please,
And as you open a new stack of mail
You are met with such letters as these.

A few, of many examples will suffice. "Can you kindly give me some information on inventions? Is it true that the only article invented by woman is the 'spoon'?" "Please send us material on 'launched but not anchored.'" "I have chosen as my subject for an essay 'Crowns of gold on heads of bone.' Please send me the material at once." "Please send material for debate; Resolved: That modern dress causes more harm than tobacco." "Please send me five cents worth of art." And finally,



A 1917 portrait of Gratia A. Countryman.
Photo by Lee Brothers, Minnesota Historical Society.

"We are thinking of giving a little play in our school and should be very glad to get your help. We haven't any suitable play and don't know where to get it. It is to be given not by the school children but by the grown-ups, this time, and we are so few. I hope to get the three teachers of the district and one other girl; but can't think that we have another woman who has the chance to take part. Our men are a great big farmer of 40, another smaller one of the same age who is quiet, one somewhat younger and very active, a young quiet boy and perhaps one or two more. None but our very active man has tried before. We prefer a short play."³⁸ There is no record of Clara's response, but we may be sure that she tried.

Clara never married. She lived with her parents until sometime just before 1910, and then in a series of apartments at 561 Laurel Avenue, 605 Portland Avenue, and 679 Lincoln Avenue. In 1929, she moved to the home of her sister, Mabel Merrill, at 707 Goodrich Avenue, St. Paul. She lived there for the rest of her life, surrounded by eight, appreciative, Twin Cities great nieces and nephews, three of whom lived in the same house with her. She was frequently available for driving outings,

shopping trips, and games. She delighted in getting library cards for these children, reading to them, and always gave them books for birthdays and Christmas.

After her retirement in 1936, Clara also occupied her time with library association affairs, travel, and writing on library topics. She was a member of Delta Gamma, the Schubert Club, and the St. Paul Women's City Club.³⁹

Clara's great nieces and nephews remember her as a formidable woman. She is also remembered as a willing but erratic driver. She and her sister had a serious automobile accident in the mid-1940s, on the Kellogg Boulevard viaduct, in which she suffered a broken arm.

Clara suffered a severe stroke in June 1949. Although she wrote Gratia Countryman that she was "coming on well,"⁴⁰ this was not really the case, as she lived the rest of her life in a nursing home. Clara died March 8, 1951, one day short of her eightieth birthday.

Years after, in placing Clara on its National Advocacy Honor Roll, the American Library Association, stated, "Clara Baldwin's pioneering work in Minnesota extended library service to citizens throughout the state through the traveling library program and her work in promoting the establishment of local public libraries. She is recognized for her

role in the work of public library commissions throughout the United States."⁴¹

Gratia Countryman gave the tribute at Clara's funeral. Gratia read, in part, "Minnesota, too, has lost a valued pioneer librarian who laid permanent foundations upon which we will long be building. Clara Baldwin was the library movement, planning and directing it. Clara Baldwin, almost single-handedly, and with pitifully limited means, directed the work of the Minnesota Library Commission, a job of pioneering in a wide undeveloped area."⁴²

Robert Garland is a frequent contributor to Ramsey County History and a member of the Ramsey County Historical Society's board of directors. A retired financial executive and freelance writer, he is also the author of mystery novels, some of which are set in St. Paul. The latest, Tradedown, appeared in 2006.

Acknowledgments and Sources

This story of our great aunt is based in part on the personal recollections of some of her great nieces and nephews, including Connie Murray, Jean Murray, Don Garland, and the author. I always wondered what a state librarian did. Now, I know.

Other sources on Clara Baldwin include certain Merrill and Baldwin family

papers in the possession of Connie Murray of Richfield, Minnesota; the archives of the Ramsey County Historical Society; and especially the archives of the Minnesota Historical Society.

As to the latter, it should be noted that as to the Minnesota Library Commission and the early days of the Division of Libraries, the detailed correspondence files apparently survive only for the year 1915. These are of great interest, but are probably only a representative sample of the original papers describing the work being done in those early days. While all researchers recognize that not every paper can be kept, one wishes that a few more years of correspondence files had also been given to the Minnesota Historical Society.

Fortunately, the Library Commission's Minute Book, kept in the personal handwriting of Gratia Countryman, certain subject files, and the files containing the initial applications for the traveling libraries, and related correspondence, are still available.

Readers interested in another, though unpublished, essay on early Minnesota libraries, may wish to read "Free to All: Minnesota's Public Library Movement," by Anna M. Rice, available at her family's website at <http://www.section216.com/history/minlib.pdf>.

Notes

1. Dorothy L. Sayers, *Gaudy Night* (New York: Avon Books, 1936), 40.
2. Jane Pejsa, *Gratia Countryman: Her Life, Her Loves, and Her Library*. (Minneapolis: Nodin Press, 1995), 69–73.
3. Pejsa, 91.
4. Gratia A. Countryman, letter, August 11, 1896, in the Gratia A. Countryman and Family Papers, 1861–1953, Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minn. (hereinafter referred to as Countryman Papers).
5. Gratia A. Countryman, letter, September 22, 1896, Countryman Papers, Minnesota Historical Society.
6. Pejsa, 102.
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A postcard view from about 1909 showing the Carnegie Library in Spring Valley, Minnesota. For more on Clara F. Baldwin and her role in the Public Library movement in Minnesota, see Robert Garland's article beginning on page 4. Photo courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

R.C.H.S.
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