



# **NCLA DISTRICT MEETING, CHARLOTTE, OCTOBER 17, 1922**

*Tell us if we're wrong:* Seated, Miss Nellie Rowe, Greensboro; Dr. E. F. Shewmake, Davidson College; unknown. First lady on left unidentified, behind her Miss Lottie Blake, Gastonia; then towards right, Miss Mary B. Palmer, Raleigh; Miss Anne Pierce, Charlotte; next two unidentified; Louis R. Wilson, Chapel Hill; J. Frank Wilkes, Charlotte; and Donald Gillis, Asheville on bottom step at right. Top row from left: Miss Cornelia Shaw, Davidson College; unknown; Mrs. Latta Johnston, Mr. Charles R. Brockman and Mrs. Gordon M. Finger, all Trustees of the Charlotte library; and Mr. H. P. Harding, superintendent of schools in Charlotte.



## DISTRICT MEETINGS OF NCLA

The picture on the opposite page was taken at a meeting of District One of NCLA on October 17, 1922. The practice of holding smaller meetings between the annual meetings of the Association was begun in 1915 when three district chairmen were appointed. The meetings were successful and the number of districts was soon increased to seven.

The minutes of the District One meeting in 1922, chaired by Miss Anne Pierce, are reprinted below:

"The North Carolina Library Association convened at the Carnegie Library in Charlotte on October 17th for its third District meeting. Mr. H. P. Harding, Superintendent of City Schools, presided over the meeting. The day's program began at 11 o'clock with notable addresses, the first being by Mr. Donald Gillis of Asheville, who made an interesting talk on 'Library Publicity' in which he told how fiction could be used, through newspaper publicity, in drawing other people to the Library. He stated that advertising is as necessary to a Library's progress as it is to that of a store.

"Mr. A. M. Elliott, Principal of the Junior High School of Charlotte, spoke on how the Charlotte Library is a part of the public school system—how its resources are put into the schools of the city by different grades visiting the Library and becoming familiar with the classification and arrangement of books and how credit in English is given for work done in Library use.

"Dr. E. F. Shewmake, of Davidson College, spoke on the 'Standards and Tendencies in Contemporary American Fiction.' In an interesting way he told of the beginning of the English novel in 1740, the American novel in 1820, and how American fiction can be divided into three distinct periods. That of the time of Washington Irving was listed as the first period of the short story in America, and lasted from 1820 to 1835. The Poe and Hawthorne period followed as the second division, and lasted 15 years as did the first. By the middle of the century the third period commenced. This he labeled as the 'dawning of definiteness.' At this time came the modern magazine and the demand for something more definite than the sketchy short story. By 1861, he said, the movement toward realism was well under way. The modern short story began with the 20th century, Dr. Shewmake said, and, of the three types of novels, adventure, romance, and realism, the best work being done in America today is in the field of realism. In discussing the progress of the short story from Irving's time to the present, Dr. Shewmake expressed his belief that the success of the short story as a creative art is practically over.

"Dr. Louis R. Wilson, President of the North Carolina Library Association, spoke on the 'State's Challenge to its Public Libraries.' He stated that in the twenty-five years since the first library in the State was established by public tax, tremendous advance had been made, although the State is not the reading State, nor does it have the library facilities it should have.

"The members of the Association were entertained at the Rotary luncheon at one o'clock. An enjoyable feature of this hour was an address by Dr. Rondthaler of Salem Academy on 'Know North Carolina.'

"The trustees of the local Library carried the visitors on a sight-seeing tour of the city after a round-table discussion of library problems in the State which followed the luncheon.

"The resolutions adopted by the association were: 'Resolved, That Children's Book Week, November 12-18, be observed by all libraries and schools in the State.'

"'Resolved, that cities having public libraries adopt as their standard of support the expenditure of \$1 per capita. The present North Carolina average is 20 cents per capita. [The 1933 per capita average was forty-six cents. Ed.]

"'Resolved. That county and city boards of education set aside a definite fund in their budgets for the upbuilding of school libraries and that they cooperate with existing city libraries to this end.'"

RUBY MCWHIRTER, Secretary.



**OUR HONORARY MEMBERS**

During the early years of the North Carolina Library Association many of the out of state visitors to Conferences were elected to honorary membership "under suspension of the Constitution" which provided that honorary members were to be approved by the Executive Board. Perhaps this was a reflection of the gracious manners of the turn of the century; or simply the grateful acknowledgement of a young organization to important library leaders who came to North Carolina to encourage progress. But at the age of fifteen, in 1919, the Association decided to reserve this recognition for members who had made a definite contribution to library progress in the state, and amended the constitution to read: "Honorary members may be elected only by a majority vote of the Association at its annual meeting." Since that time sixteen persons have been elected to honorary membership; fourteen are living. For the benefit of newer members of the Association here are brief sketches of our honorary members. Some of them have sent us special messages for this Anniversary Issue:

**Mrs. Minnie Leatherman Blanton**

Minnie W. Leatherman was the first Secretary of the North Carolina Library Commission. She was appointed in 1909 and served until 1919. During her term of office the Commission's annual appropriation was raised from \$1,500 to \$8,000, "the largest appropriation of any Southern state." Mrs. Blanton organized the "traveling libraries" (packing cases of books) sent out to rural areas in the state beginning about 1910. She was elected an honorary member of NCLA in 1919 when she left the state.

**Mrs. M. D. Phillips**

(Mary B. Palmer)

Miss Mary B. Palmer was the sixth president of NCLA; she served as secretary from 1910 until 1915 when she became president. Miss Palmer was librarian of the Carnegie Library of Charlotte and taught at the Carnegie Library School in Atlanta before becoming Secretary and Director of the North Carolina Library Commission in 1919 where she served until 1923. At this time she left the state and the Association recognized her contribution to library development by electing her to honorary membership. She writes:

It would probably not mislead anyone for me to say that the North Carolina Library Association was organized before my arrival in the state. For many years the memory has lingered of my enjoyment of my early contacts with its members, and my appreciation of their help, especially in my work at the Library Commission.

Now that Mr. Phillips has retired, and we have returned to North Carolina to live, this year is an important one for us also, and I am happy to join in congratulations to the North Carolina Library Association on its Fiftieth Anniversary.

**Miss Annie F. Petty**

Miss Annie F. Petty is one of the founders of NCLA; she was on the first executive board, served as a vice president in 1907, and became the second president in 1908. She was again elected as the fifth president in 1913. Miss Petty was the first professionally trained librarian in North Carolina. She was librarian of the State Normal and Industrial College (now the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina) where the organizational meeting of NCLA was held in May of 1904. She was elected to honorary membership in 1939.



**Mr. Charles Whedbee**

The late Mr. Charles Whedbee of Hertford was made an honorary member of NCLA in 1943. The action was a recognition of his untiring efforts to obtain state aid for the public libraries of the state. As legislative chairman of NCLA he visited almost every legislator prior to the 1941 session of the General Assembly and discussed the need for state aid in that representative's own county.

**Mr. Joseph Penn Breedlove**

Mr. Breedlove is one of the founders of NCLA; he served on the executive board for the first decade of the Association, and was the fourth president from 1911 to 1913. As librarian of Trinity College (later Duke University) he continued as an active supporter of library progress in the state. He was elected to honorary membership in 1947.

**Dr. Louis R. Wilson**

Dr. Wilson, the dean of North Carolina librarians, is too well known to the membership of NCLA to need identification here. One of the founders of the Association; the only person to serve three times as President (1910, 1912-23, 1929-31); member of the first North Carolina Library Commission; builder of the University of North Carolina Library; Dr. Wilson has served his state and profession well. He played a key role in the first years of NCLA which he describes elsewhere in this publication. After an absence at the Graduate Library School in Chicago he returned to continue efforts for library development. He not only remembers more of the past in the library world than most of us; he also sees farther into the future. His honorary membership was voted in 1947.

**Mr. J. Frank Wilkes**

The late Mr. J. F. Wilkes was an active member of NCLA during its early years. He served as treasurer from 1907 to 1909, and vice president in 1910. He served as chairman of the legislative committee of NCLA which was instrumental in having the General Assembly establish the North Carolina Library Commission in 1909. As a Trustee of the Carnegie Library of Charlotte, Mr. Wilkes exemplified the importance of trustee members of NCLA. He was elected to honorary membership in 1949.

**Mrs. Ethel Taylor Crittenden**

Mrs. Ethel T. Crittenden was for thirty-one years librarian of Wake Forest College and is now librarian emeritus. She was the eighth president of NCLA and took active part in the Association during her library career. Her contributions were recognized by honorary membership in 1951.

**Mrs. Nellie Rowe Jones**

Mrs. Nellie Rowe Jones was librarian of the Greensboro Public Library from 1920 through 1949. She developed the collection of O. Henryana and the valuable local history collection now in the library. She was president of NCLA from 1925 to 1927 during which period the Association collected funds with which to purchase a bookmobile for the North Carolina Library Commission. Mrs. Jones is an author as well as



a librarian and has published stories, articles and books. To fill a real need she wrote *Discovering North Carolina* (1933) which will probably be found in every library in North Carolina. Honorary membership was conferred on Mrs. Jones in 1951. From her home in Greensboro Mrs. Jones writes:

As an honorary member of the North Carolina Library Association I send my warmest greetings to each member on the Golden Anniversary.

Looking back through the many years when I was an active member it is a source of great satisfaction to note the wonderful growth of this splendid organization and its contribution to our State.

Please let me assure you of my deep and abiding interest in the future of our beloved North Carolina Library Association.

### **Miss Katherine C. Ricks**

Miss Ricks was librarian of the Guilford College Library from 1922 to 1949. During her tenure the book collection was increased from eight thousand to over thirty-two thousand books, and she built up the famous Quaker collection at Guilford. An active member of NCLA, Miss Ricks was a vice president from 1925 to 1927 and secretary of the Association from 1931 to 1935. When she retired as librarian at Guilford College in 1949, becoming librarian emeritus, she continued as hostess in the alumni house until 1953 when she moved to Richmond, Virginia. Miss Ricks was elected to honorary membership in 1951.

### **Mrs. Lillian B. Griggs**

Mrs. Griggs was the seventh and fourteenth president of NCLA, serving in that capacity from 1918 to 1919, and 1931 to 1933. She served as treasurer of the Association from 1913 to 1917. Mrs. Griggs was librarian of the Durham Public Library from 1911 to 1923; Secretary and Director of the North Carolina Library Commission from 1924 to 1930; and librarian of the Woman's College of Duke University from 1930 until 1949. She was elected an honorary member of NCLA in 1951.

### **Miss Marjorie Beal**

Marjorie Beal and State Aid for Public Libraries in North Carolina are almost synonymous. As Secretary and Director of the North Carolina Library Commission from 1930 to 1950, Miss Beal crusaded with untiring energy and unwavering faith for more county libraries to serve the rural people of the state. The population of the state with access to a library tripled during her administration. Largely through her vision in a period of national depression North Carolina had more federally paid workers in the library field than any other state in the union. Honorary membership in NCLA was awarded Miss Beal in 1951. She sends the following message from Waynesville where she now lives:

I am honored to be an Honorary Member of the North Carolina Library Association. To me it means the happy co-operation of all the North Carolina librarians and a continuation of never-to-be-forgotten friendships and understanding.

To look back numerous occasions stand out, some appalling, some gladsome but always the friends of library progress stand foremost. What would North Carolina have done without Dr. Louis R. Wilson, Dr. Frank P. Graham, William T. Polk, Charles Whedbee and hundreds of others who helped convince the people that books and reading were essential to the betterment of their State?



### **The Honorable Graham Arthur Barden**

Mr. Barden, United States Congressman from North Carolina, was made an honorary member of NCLA in 1953. During his many years of public service Mr. Barden has supported legislation to promote better library service and sought the support of others in The Congress. He has been active in the fight to keep the postal rate for books low, and to secure Federal Aid for public libraries.

### **Dr. Frank Porter Graham**

Dr. Graham has been a consistent friend of libraries. It was his challenge to the NCLA at the meeting in Charlotte in 1927 which set off the Citizens' Library Movement in North Carolina. As President of the University of North Carolina he was influential in gaining support for public libraries of the state. He and members of the faculty of the University were members of the speakers bureau which gained support of individuals and groups to the Movement. Dr. Graham was elected to honorary membership in 1953. From his present post as a mediator for the United Nations Dr. Graham sends the following telegram:

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ON ITS FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY AND TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE ON THE SERVICES OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR ITS CONSTRUCTIVE PART: IN INCREASING THE READING AND CIRCULATION OF BOOKS AMONG THE PEOPLE; THE FOUNDING OF MANY LIBRARIES; THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARY COMMISSION; FOUNDING AND PROMOTIONAL WORK OF THE CITIZENS' LIBRARY MOVEMENT; THE ESTABLISHMENT AND WINNING STATE SUPPORT OF THE COUNTYWIDE PUBLIC LIBRARIES; COOPERATION WITH THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND FOR THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE EXPERT TRAINING, HIGH STANDARDS, PROFESSIONAL MORALE AND PUBLIC SERVICE OF LIBRARIANS IN NORTH CAROLINA. THESE AND MANY OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS AND VALUES ARE A PART OF MEMORABLE WORK OF THE ASSOCIATION WHICH IS NOW A VITAL PART OF FIFTY YEARS OF THE LIFE OF A GRATEFUL PEOPLE. MAY THE COMMEMORATION OF THIS FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY BECOME A REDEDICATION OF THE ASSOCIATION TO THE READING AND CIRCULATION OF BOOKS WITH ALL THEIR PERSONAL, CIVIC, ECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND SPIRITUAL VALUE TO THE PEOPLE OF NORTH CAROLINA.

### **Mr. William T. Polk**

Mr. Polk is a warrior for library development. His sword is his pen which he has used generously. As Chairman of the Citizens' Library Movement Mr. Polk was responsible for much of the success of that organization whose activities are described elsewhere in this issue. Through editorials in the *Greensboro Daily News* of which paper Mr. Polk is Associate Editor the public is kept aware of the progress of libraries and the need for increasing support. Mr. Polk was elected to honorary membership in 1953. His greeting and challenge follows:

Salutations and congratulations to the North Carolina Library Association on its first 50 years, which I am sure will be the hardest ones.

The story of the steady movement toward better library service for more and more Tar Heels over the last half century—and especially the past 30 years—is a significant and inspiring one.



## NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES

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Three decades ago this state was on rock bottom among the list of states in library service to its people. Today, thanks largely to the NCLA, nearly all citizens of this state have access to some public library. This coverage may be thin and leave much to be desired in many places, but it has had a tremendous and gratifying expansion.

Nobody knows what may come of it when a boy or a girl, a man or a woman, takes a book out of a library, because the opportunities for increased information, education, recreation, wisdom and joy are infinite.

A community which has no public library is, as Gilbert Highet puts it, "only half alive." The NCLA has done a magnificent work in bringing life in rich abundance to all parts of this state.

Many happy returns—we are just getting started.

### Mr. Joseph Ruzicka

Mr. Ruzicka is head of a bookbinding firm which has done much for libraries in general and North Carolina libraries in particular. For him the craft of binding, fine workmanship and service to libraries have come before business profits. He has been honored by the American Bookbinders' Institute for his contributions to the high standards now demanded in Class A binding. He and his son, the late J. Vernon Ruzicka, agreed to underwrite *North Carolina Libraries* when the Association was financially unable to carry this expense, and his grandson, Joseph V. Ruzicka, Jr., is continuing this generous action. As a recognition of his service and that of his family and firm, Mr. Joseph Ruzicka was elected to honorary membership in 1953. From Baltimore Mr. Ruzicka writes:

An Anniversary should be a celebration of a period of achievement and a Golden Anniversary is usually a climax of hopes fulfilled. Certainly this is true of the North Carolina Library Association.

The pioneers back there in 1904 had a germ of an idea—a desire for substantial libraries, a dream which soon became a need. This need produced more ideas, and dreams grew into realities, nurtured as they were by that unbeatable combination of serious thought and hard work. The North Carolina Library Association can claim much of the credit for the great progress made in library service, personnel and architecture; and North Carolina can well be proud of the example that has been set for many other states to follow.

May the growth of libraries in North Carolina continue and may all those responsible for the spread of knowledge, culture and reading pleasure through library faculties, continue to derive great satisfaction from their inestimable public service.