

## *SLA at 100: Chapter 2 1876-1909*

### *The Establishment of Modern Librarianship in America*

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As we have seen, John Cotton Dana saw the need for a new kind of librarianship. What forces would have compelled a person such as Dana to embrace a campaign that would require strong and often competing forces to think about “doing things differently”? A clue can be found in Dana’s already quoted call for a “New Library Creed.” His thoughts on what made specialized librarianship are so important that they deserve to be quoted again: “select from the vast flood of print the things your constituency will find helpful, make them available with a minimum of expense, and discard them as soon as their usefulness is past.” These words clearly indicate that a new way of thinking about library service was being embraced by Dana with regard to librarians working with specific constituencies. It is interesting to note that if we substitute the words “information and knowledge sources” for “print,” Dana could easily be describing the work of today’s knowledge services professionals, as they seek to manage information, knowledge, and strategic learning for their employing organizations.

Others of the association’s founders—the leaders of the proposed new movement (as they called it)—agreed with Dana. Daniel N. Handy of The Insurance Library Association of Boston, Dr. John A. Lapp of the Indiana State Library (later to take on the editorial responsibilities for *Special Libraries* and to become famous as the originator of the specialist librarians’ motto, “Putting Knowledge to Work”), Guy E. Marion of Arthur D. Little, Sarah B. Ball and Beatrice Winsor, working with Dana at the Newark Public Library, and the other participants in the association’s founding were all seeking methods and techniques for providing better library services to their particular constituencies. These were people who were reacting to the times, when librarianship—a particularly American phenomenon—was coming into its own, so to speak.\* These people wanted to take librarianship further, to ensure that the techniques and practices of general “library economy” (as it was called in those days) could be put to particular use for the benefit of the organizations that employed them, or—if in public or academic libraries—for the benefit of library patrons who required a different kind of service delivery than was usually available in the larger profession.

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\* Although, to be sure, much of the effort had begun over a quarter of a century earlier in 1876—often considered the banner year for American librarianship. Four events of that year set the course of growth and development for American librarianship as a profession: the organization of the American Library Association, Melvil Dewey’s Decimal System of Classification, the establishment of *Library Journal*, and the publication of the special report of the U.S. Bureau of Education, *Public Libraries in the United States of America: Their History, Condition, and Management*, destined to become, as some scholars described it, “the standard handbook of library practice for years to come.”

Their goals were clear to them. Although there has always been—and was from the beginning of the movement—a considerable amount of difficulty (some would say even a considerable amount of confusion) in defining what a “special library” is, the running theme as the movement was being established was clear to these people: librarianship could offer better service delivery if the relationships between the library’s clients and the librarians were enhanced. And enhancing that role was exactly what the movement’s leaders were about. In today’s terms, they would certainly be described as “change agents,” for they were not at all uncomfortable with the role of change in their professional lives, a sentiment that has been a constant throughout the association’s history, up to and including the present day. That acknowledged strength—the ability to recognize societal change and to incorporate change into the organizational framework—has contributed significantly to the success of the Special Libraries Association. SLA began, remains, and continues to be recognized as the preeminent professional association for information and knowledge workers throughout the world because its founders understood and its members continue to understand that it is through change that specialized librarianship will thrive and prosper. Its strength in managing change is one of the association’s critical assets and of specialized librarianship at large, a strength that was clearly evident in the association’s early days.

Indeed, the association began with a need for change, and the question of whether to change was not a consideration. Major change was required, and it had even been anticipated before Dana and F. B. Deberard called a group of twenty librarians together on the verandah of the Mt. Washington Hotel in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire in 1909. On the occasion of SLA’s 50th anniversary in 1959, Elizabeth Ferguson described the meeting:

The participants in this “Verandah Conference,” as it has come to be known, decided that the demands of their jobs had actually created a new kind of librarianship—that of library service geared to meet the needs of specialized situations. These librarians were breaking completely new ground. There were no patterns to follow. They had to play it by ear—a challenging but often difficult feat. They felt that they had everything to gain by forming their own working group to tackle their problems cooperatively.

Early on, the cooperative focus was put forward as one of the group’s specific attributes, and the inclusiveness and diversity of SLA’s membership was clearly established as a singular characteristic of the association, as is demonstrated in the association’s Constitution (adopted at Bretton Woods on July 2, 1909):

The object of the Association is to promote the interests of the commercial, industrial, technical, civic, municipal, and legislative reference libraries, the special departments of the public libraries, universities, welfare associations, and business organizations.

In any transitional period, it is the case that those who are involved in managing and implementing change do not think that what they are doing is all that unusual. Or, if

the activities leading to change are perceived as unusual, it is because they are necessitated in response to particular conditions in society and/or the environment in which the activities take place, and which they are expected to affect. That was the case with the founders of the association. Dana made it clear at the time and in his later writings that the special libraries movement was in response to a need. The philosophy that guided general library practice in 1909 was not appropriate for meeting the demands of specific patrons who required information for totally practical—and not necessarily altruistic, intellectual, or recreational—purposes. Dana was disappointed that the “New Library Creed” that he had identified as being required for these patrons “has been as yet adopted by very few practicing librarians.” He was also quick to state that “it is gaining followers, however, in the fields of research and industry whose leaders are rapidly and inevitably learning that only by having accessible all the records of experiment, exploration, and discovery pertaining to their own expertise, wherever made, can they hope to avoid mistakes, escape needless expenditures, and make profitable advances in any department of science or in any kind of industrial social work.”

Nor should it be assumed that that verandah in New Hampshire was the only place where the necessity for addressing practical information needs had been discussed by librarians. Even Melvil Dewey had something to say in this matter. As libraries grew in numbers and, particularly, in size, more was required of librarians as information providers, and obviously a certain level of specialization would be brought forward. Dewey was aware of this trend, and even seemed to be leaning toward recognizing that some library patrons would require a different type and level of service delivery. As he put it: “Librarians are rapidly taking on their proper functions as book experts for their various constituencies. But the librarian is rapidly outgrowing the idea that he is concerned with books alone. The public pays its money, not to dignify books as such, but because it wishes information....” Thus even for Dewey the connection between libraries and practical information delivery was there. But Dewey, being a citizen of his times, and an active proponent of the “up-lifting” role of libraries, naturally felt a connection between that role and the provision of materials for “inspiration” and “innocent recreation” also provided by libraries.

Not so the founders of the Special Libraries Association. As several of them looked back on the early years, in a special “symposium” published by the association in 1932, they were asked to identify what they thought were their “most distinctive” contributions to the specialized libraries movement. Each of them, the editor commented, answered in his own way, “much too modestly, we fear.”

First of all, these men and women established that the founding of the association and of the movement to specialized service delivery for a library’s user was, above all, a collaborative endeavor. Lapp, especially, had some difficulty taking credit for all that he did (and for what he would be remembered for):

It is not easy in retrospect to separate one’s own part in a movement from that of his associates who shared the responsibilities and the satisfactions of a new achievement. I do not know what was my most

distinctive contribution to the Special Libraries Association, for, when I suggest to myself any particular thing which I did, there comes the memory of the parts played by others in that very respect. Perhaps no one alone was ever responsible for any particular thing. I begin to doubt the one man idea so prevalent in history.

Certain it is that the creation of the Special Libraries Association was the work of a group, each member of which helped in substantial ways but mostly in concert. I would give the credit to John Cotton Dana, Robert H. Whitten, Guy E. Marion, George W. Lee, D.N. Handy, George S. Godard, and Herbert O. Brigham, backed by such sterling supports as H.H.B. Meyer, W.S. Cutter, and C.F.D. Belden. In the background of the movement for specialized libraries stood Charles McCarthy of Wisconsin, but so far as I know he took no part in the Special Libraries Association.

My own part began with the first regular meeting held at the Merchants' Association in New York [on November 5, 1909]. A small group had resolved at the American Library Association Conference in Bretton Woods in 1909 that a special association should be created and had issued a call for the late fall. The response was gratifying; the first meeting was a decided success, due to the work of Anna Sears of the Merchants' Association, who was destined to be a leader but who left the field shortly afterwards. On my own part I recall a keen interest, but am not aware of any contribution of mine at the first meeting. Perhaps my presence all the way from Indiana served to emphasize the wider possibilities of the plan.

Handy, too, was typical in refusing to take credit for himself:

The difficulty one faces who tries to answer the question "What do I regard as my chief contribution to the Special Libraries Association?" arises from the fact that if he is frank he will know that real "contributions" are seldom in the power of one individual. Whatever is done is done in association with others. If one proposes, another begins. If one begins, still another carries through. And all are helped and encouraged by a multitude of co-laborers whose share in the final accomplishment is as indispensable as that of the author of the project, or of the one who chances to occupy the more conspicuous place of leadership when the work lies finished and approved. Compared with the work of several whose names will occur to all of us, my own contribution, even when qualified, seems small.

So collaborate they did, for they were bound together by a sense of purpose which, although difficult for them to describe, was a guiding principle that Dana and they had recognized. They knew that the profession of librarianship, as it was being developed and established throughout America at that particular time, was falling short of what business, industry, science, government, and many other research

agencies required. These people recognized that it was the practical use of information that motivated many to use a library at all. While they struggled to position themselves on and place themselves in that expanding continuum of service delivery for what we today refer to as knowledge services, they drove themselves and their movement forward.

But their intentions were not always clear. In his history of business and industrial libraries, Anthony T. Kruzas, who should properly be identified as the first true historian of specialized librarianship, found it unsettling and somewhat difficult to describe that the movement's leaders could not articulate their objectives more clearly. In his study, Kruzas notes that "...in the early days there was neither a well developed core idea nor any core group."

We can take issue with this assertion. The fact that the founders of SLA sought to identify a subset of libraries from the larger field of librarianship and the fact that they encountered some difficulties in defining precisely what constituted that subset does not mean that they lacked a "core idea" or were unable to bring together a "core group." As we have seen, there were many who responded to the call that emanated from Bretton Woods.

This is not to say that there were not those who felt that the new approach to practical service delivery reduced the profession from one of lofty ideals to a level that was mundane and pragmatic. Lapp himself, in his modest remembrance, demonstrated that for most of SLA's founders, what they were trying to do was not as problematic as others might make of it. His description of what specialized librarianship was about was contained in his comments about the early days of the association's journal:

A short time after the New York meeting the first issue of *Special Libraries* appeared under the guidance of the Executive Committee. I had no part in formulating the plan for the magazine, but gave it an enthusiastic reception. Perhaps it was my enthusiasm which caused the Committee to leave the magazine on my doorstep. At any rate I was duly installed as Editor of *Special Libraries* with the second issue. It was a doubtful honor, for we then had sixty members at two dollars each. However, the magazine prospered and grew from eight pages to sixteen, and sometimes to a greatly enlarged edition on some special subject. Let me hasten to say, however, that the success was due more to Guy E. Marion, Secretary Treasurer and promoter extraordinary, than to myself.

For about eight years *Special Libraries* appeared under my editorship. The magazine included some valuable material for the time. But most of all, in papers and editorials, it held up the true conception of a special library. There was, indeed, very much confusion on this subject and long and heated were the verbal controversies about it. The general librarians both in our ranks and outside could not see that we were any more than specialized reference librarians. We were that, but

we claimed, and I think proved, that we were more. We used materials for reference to be sure, but we conceived our function to be to draw off from the sources the kind of information our clients needed. We might hand a client a book to read, but more likely we handed him a digest, and if we could not find a digest we made one. It was a part of our business to ransack everything and distill the needed information either to meet a direct inquiry or in anticipation of one. I believe that the great contribution of Special Libraries in its early days was in keeping our purpose and our function clear. It was then that I used the phrase, "Put Knowledge to Work," which has been flying on the masthead since.

Our chief battle in the early days was to keep our association from being absorbed in the American Library Association. We had nothing against that Association and, in fact, always had our meetings with it. But we did not believe that the general librarians had any clear idea of the place which the specialized library filled. There were not more than seventy-five special libraries in the country. A large portion of our own membership was more general than special in outlook, and each year we had to contend for our existence. We succeeded, and the clear-cut specialized movement of today is the result. There are still those who believe that a special library is merely a specialized collection of books, but the great majority know that it is something more than that.

Later, in the same memoir, Lapp concluded by noting that "The achievements of the Special Libraries Association with its greatly enlarged membership and resources of recent years may make the early days seem poor and meager. But pioneer days in any movement are days of relatively greater progress. *We think we cut down the forest or at least blazed the trail for the march of the idea that knowledge stored up in books should be brought into use, that channels should be opened up and kept clear from the library shelf to the user of knowledge, and that knowledge should be focused at the point where it is needed and at the time needed.*" (emphasis added)

So the concept of modern librarianship was being established, one that was clear to the association's founders. They recognized that a practical version of librarianship was required, one that, while building on the concepts and methodologies of librarianship then being practiced, would be directed toward and focus on the particular and specific needs of those who were seeking information, knowledge, and strategic learning in pursuit of their practical goals. As it happened, the founders of Dana's movement were not alone in looking toward a modern librarianship that separates what might be thought of as its "idealistic" and its "pragmatic" parts. In fact, they might be thought of as simply enlarging or enhancing a version of librarianship that was already being tested, for both the Association of Medical Librarians (now the Medical Library Association)—founded in 1898—and the American Association of Law Librarians—founded in 1906—had preceded the Special Libraries Association. As modern librarianship in America advanced—with its separation into distinct branches—tensions were naturally created, the kinds of

tensions that come up when any major change is recognized and acted upon. Lapp, in his sweet remembrance noted above, referred to the unease that some of the profession's practitioners experienced. Even D.N. Handy at one point (oddly enough, in an early "appreciation" of Lapp as the editor of *Special Libraries*) stated concern with the situation: "The ties uniting special librarians at the outset were largely negative. They were dissatisfied with the American Library Association, but it must be admitted that they had little that was constructive to offer instead. There was a noticeable lack of libraries which were essentially 'special.'"

Although it is impossible from this point in time to reconstruct specifics, there are clearly enough allusions to the difficulties to establish that there were, as Lapp put it, "long and heated verbal controversies." Dennis Thomison, in his history of the American Library Association, also repeats Handy's comment and speculates that "perhaps dissatisfaction with ALA was a common bond," but in spite of this dissatisfaction, "there continued to be a strong desire to maintain a close relationship with the larger organization."

Interestingly, this "dissatisfaction with ALA" just might have resulted from changes that ALA itself was undergoing in the period just prior to the founding of SLA. According to Thomison, ALA "was engaged in constitutional reform" during this period, and many of its members felt that the association's constitution left them powerless. Despite the approval of the reform constitution in 1909, discontent continued. One member—according to Thomison—went so far as to call the "The most autocratic constitution I have ever heard of outside of Russia."

As we think about the SLA's origins, we cannot help but speculate about Dana and his role—or more interestingly—his response to this upheaval at ALA. To be sure, Dana—who had served as ALA's President in 1895-1896—was familiar with that association and its players. We have seen, though, that there was interest in creating a new branch of librarianship that addressed the specialized needs of particular users, so it is likely, then, that dissatisfaction with ALA and its constitutional crisis of 1908-1909 was a catalyst rather than a cause for the founding of SLA.

But these thoughts can only be speculation, for the establishment of a branch of librarianship that would provide practical and utilitarian information and the founding of SLA as an organization to serve that branch of librarianship together define an idea whose time had come. While Dana himself had pursued the idea with much vigor throughout his career, there were other elements that also set the stage for this new type of information delivery. By the time SLA was founded in 1909, according to Kruzas's research, some 114 company libraries had been identified, and of these 51 had been established between 1905 and 1909. These 114 company libraries were in commercial banks, investment-banking firms, consulting and engineering firms, insurance companies, manufacturing companies (including pharmaceutical, chemical, and a large number of "miscellaneous" manufacturing companies), public utility companies, merchandising firms, accounting firms, and companies offering business services.

Dana's involvement in all this activity was not entirely coincidental. The connection between business libraries, company libraries, and the movement toward specialized librarianship can be particularly demonstrated when we consider how Dana himself was motivated to work with business people and do what he could to see that their information requirements were given the level of attention they deserved. In 1897, Dana had moved from Denver, where he had been the city librarian, to Springfield, Massachusetts to manage the public library there for the next five years. In Springfield—probably through his own promotional efforts (for he was known for asserting his ideas about specialized librarianship to anyone who would listen)—Dana's work gained the recognition of the business leaders of the city. Kruzas has written that Dana questioned hundreds of them personally, with the substance of his inquiries being summarized in two questions: "What use do you make of the Public Library?" and, "What changes in its management would make increased use possible?" Later on, after he had been at Newark Public Library for a while, Dana noted that it was his conclusion that businessmen are too busy to read, and he had a ready response (we can just hear him saying this to his business patrons!): "I am not asking the businessman to read books. I am suggesting that we persuade him to use some of them." As Kruzas notes in his history, "A vital distinction had been made."

No longer could librarianship be seen as a monolith (even with its constituent parts). A new paradigm had come into being. Dana's "vital distinction" provided the impetus and the direction for the future of specialized librarianship and marked the birth of America's two-part system of librarianship. There would be no turning back. In recognizing that business people require specific information, and not instruction on how to use the artifacts that contain the information, and in recognizing that business people do not have the luxury of time to seek their own information, Dana and his colleagues were moving totally away from that authoritarian and missionary cast that had characterized American public librarianship in the nineteenth century and was threatening to continue to influence service delivery among librarians for the foreseeable future.

The specifics of the actual founding of SLA have been often (and well) recorded. As noted earlier, we know that at the "verandah conference" at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, some twenty people came together to discuss what they were seeing as a new kind of librarianship, one that would take a different approach to service delivery from that practiced in the (by now) well-established profession of librarianship. These people agreed to form their own organization, as described in *The Library Journal* (as the title was then written):

A Special Libraries Association was organized at Bretton Woods, July 2, the plan of its organization being proposed and outlined by Mr. John Cotton Dana, of Newark, who spoke on this subject at the fourth general session of the conference. The "special libraries" for the benefit of which the Association is planned are municipal legislative reference, commercial, technical, and public welfare libraries.

The object of the Association, as stated in the constitution, is “to promote the interest of special libraries.” It is hoped, by cooperation, that the duplication of unnecessary work may be eliminated. Bibliographies giving the location of books will be published—that is, for instance, a list of books on insurance may be compiled by several of the insurance companies and societies.

A meeting of the Association is planned in the fall at the rooms of the Merchants’ Association of New York.

The following officers for the year were elected: president, John Cotton Dana; vice-president, Robert Whitten, Public Service Commission, New York City; secretary-treasurer, Miss Anna Sears, Merchants’ Association, New York City. The executive committee includes officers and two elective members. These two are George W. Lee, Stone & Webster, Boston, Mass., and Herbert O. Brigham, Rhode Island State Library, Providence.

With respect to the name, although there are many, many versions of the phrase, and many interpretations about just what a “special library” is (and, as noted earlier, some not-so-small controversy about the terminology), there was apparently no problem in actually making the decision. Whether apocryphal or not, there is a delightful story told by Rose L. Vormelker:

After an evening board meeting at SLA’s fortieth anniversary conference in Los Angeles in 1949, I found a letter waiting for me at the desk. It was signed Sarah B. Ball. In it, she said she had come to our hotel in the morning and noticed the sign at our Registration Desk and wondered if we were the same organization for which she and Anna B. Sears had sent out invitations 41 years ago at John Cotton Dana’s suggestion. I immediately called her, imploring her to come to our meeting the next day, but she declined because she was checking out very early the next morning. Since I was sure some attendees were still “up and around,” I asked if she would meet with those whom we could gather together. Later that evening Sarah reminisced about the early 1900s and explained how SLA got its name. Someone in the 1909 group referred the question, “What shall we call ourselves?” to John Cotton Dana. He said, “Well, since you are all doing some special work in libraries, why not Special Libraries Association?”

So the group had its name. John Cotton Dana had seen to that. And they had their constitution, a masterpiece of brevity in codifying the requirements for simple governance.

In the first printed version of the Special Libraries Association Constitution, published in the first issue of *Special Libraries* the following January, an impressive list of committees was also included, indicating that several of these founding members of the association had been hard at work since their July gathering in New Hampshire. The committees were:

Agricultural libraries  
Commercial associations  
Insurance libraries  
Legislative/municipal reference libraries  
Membership  
Public utility libraries  
Publication  
Publicity  
Sociological libraries  
Technology libraries

SIDEBAR (include in text if not separated out as a sidebar)

**Constitution of the Special Libraries Association**

Name. This Association shall be known as the Special Libraries Association.

Object. The object of this Association is to promote the interests of the commercial, industrial, technical, civic, municipal and legislative reference libraries, the special departments of public libraries, universities, welfare associations, and business organizations.

Officers. The officers of the Association shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer. They shall hold office for one year or until their successors shall have been elected.

Executive Board. The Executive Board shall consist of the President, Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer, and two other members, elected by the Association.

Membership. Any person, firm, or organization may become a member upon payment of the annual dues.

Dues. The annual dues shall be two (2) dollars.

Meetings. Annual meetings shall be held at the time and place named by the Executive Board, who shall have power to call such other meetings as may be necessary.

Quorum. Eleven members shall constitute a quorum.

Vacancies. The Executive Board shall have a power to fill all vacancies.

Amendments. This Constitution may be amended by a three-fourths vote of those present and voting at any meeting of the Association. Notice of proposed amendments shall be sent to each member of the Association at least two weeks before adoption.

On November 5, 1909, the Special Libraries Association held its "First Annual Conference" at the Merchants' Association of New York. One can only imagine the level of enthusiasm, excitement, and, not to put too fine a point on it, the amount of hard work that went into organizing the activities of the group, particularly the planning that took place between the organizational meeting in New Hampshire and their first conference just five months later. The meeting was, according to the extant records we

have of it, a resounding success. As described in that first issue of *Special Libraries*:

The Special Libraries Association held its first meeting on November 5th, in the assembly room of the Merchants' Association of New York City. About forty members were present. Mr. Dana, president, called the meeting to order, drew attention to the importance of special libraries, to their rapid increase in number, and to the fact that they indicated that the habit is growing among men of affairs to look to books and periodicals and printed materials in general for direct help in the solution of the questions that are continually confronting them. Mr. Mead, secretary of the Merchants' Association, welcomed the Association and spoke briefly of the value to his Association of its special library. The program was as follows:

Development of special libraries, by Dr. Robert H. Whitten, Librarian Public Service Commission, First District, New York

Some aspects of a financial library, by Beatrice Carr, Statistician, Fisk & Robinson, New York

Co-operation between special libraries, by Herbert O. Brigham, Librarian, Rhode Island State Library, Providence

Specialized municipal libraries, by Milo R. Maltbie, Commissioner, Public Service Commission, First District, New York

Maps and atlases, by Miss Sarah Ball, Librarian, Business Men's Branch, Free Public Library, Newark

Co-operation in the publication of lists, by George W. Lee, Librarian, Stone & Webster, Boston

The general discussion which followed the formal program was of great interest, and showed that many of those present were heartily in sympathy with the plan of greater cooperation between special libraries....

The President's Opening Remarks on such an auspicious occasion captured the flavor of the attendees' intentions:

The special library, in that meaning of the phrase which we have had in mind in organizing this Association of special libraries, is an institution of very recent development. We may venture to define it as "the library of a modern man of affairs." This definition is not sufficiently inclusive, however;

as is shown by my own experience in the matter. I have had the wish, for nearly all of the twenty years that I have been engaged in library work, to establish in the business center of the city in which the library I was managing was situated, a business men's branch; located on the ground floor, opening on the busiest office street of the city, not the busiest shopping street, large, well lighted and fully equipped with all the books which experience should prove to be of interest to men engaged in commerce, manufacture, finance, and kindred matters. In Newark I have had at last the opportunity to carry out in a small way this idea, and to see a modest business men's branch in the center of the town. This branch is fairly successful along the business line, and its success in this direction has something to do with the existence of this Association....

The rapid development of this institution for bringing to the aid of modern industry whatever the student or the practitioner may have thought fit to put into type is very significant. It means that here in the opening years of the Twentieth Century, 550 years after the invention of printing, men of affairs are for the first time beginning to see clearly that collections and printed materials are not, as they were long held to be by most, for the use simply of the scholar, the student, the reader, and the devotee of belles lettres, but are useful tools, needing only the care and skill of a curator, of a kind of living index thereto, as it were, to be of the greatest possible help in promoting business efficiency.

To say this again in a little different way: The man of affairs has just begun to realize how important and helpful to him may be material found in books, proceedings, and periodicals and how readily it may be brought to his hand.

The library idea has always been more or less academic, monastic, classic. The impression has prevailed that the library appeals first of all to the reader of polite literature, to the student, the philosopher, the man of letters. This modern rapid development of special libraries managed by experts who endeavor from day to day to gather together the latest things on the topic to which his library is devoted, to present to the firm and employees, is simply an outward manifestation of the fact that the man of affairs has come to realize that printed things form the most useful and most important tools of his business, no matter what that business may be.

We may look forward to see very wide and rapid development of libraries of all kinds in the next few years.

Similar inspirational and practical points were made by several of the speakers, including George W. Lee who, in speaking on "Cooperation in the Publication of Lists," remarked that "The business world, after the manner of the scientific world, is ready for a clearing house of information...."

Herbert O. Brigham spoke even more passionately about special libraries and how they must work together, to ensure mutual success in their efforts. In a talk entitled, "Cooperation Between Special Libraries," Brigham urged that

Coordination, which might be a sub-title to this paper, may be attained by attempting to harmonize the widely varying types which compose this Association. In other words, the various libraries may be divided into groups....

...I urge upon you to give this Association your hearty support. Go away from this meeting with some definite line of action formulated. Do your part, aye, do more than your part. Give us your counsel and your suggestion. Help to make this Association, which is entering onto untrodden paths, a strong factor in the library movement. Preach the doctrine of enthusiasm. Not the type that like some forms of emotional religion has a deleterious effect, but the hearty, sincere enthusiasm that cheerily accepts a duty, that in spite of harping criticism performs an allotted task and firm in the belief of work well done faces the future. This is true cooperation.

In April, 1939, some unheralded enthusiast compiled a list of attendees at that first meeting (possibly in anticipation of a thirtieth-anniversary observance of some sort but we have no record of any such celebration), identifying them as "Charter Members" of the association. They were:

Sarah B. Ball	Librarian, Business Men's Branch Newark Free Library, Newark, NJ
Helen Page Bates	New York School of Philanthropy, New York, NY
Ernest Bruncken	Library of Congress, Washington, DC
Beatrice E. Carr	Fisk & Robinson, New York, NY
Frederick W. Faxon	Editor, Boston Bulletin of Bibliography, Boston, MA
Anna Fossler	Columbia University, New York
Mabel R. Haines	The Library Journal, New York, NY
Daniel N. Handy	The Insurance Library Association of Boston, Boston, MA
Miss L.E. Howard	United Engineering Society, New York, NY
Dr. Frederic C. Hicks	Columbia University, New York, NY

Dr. Frank Pierce Hill	Brooklyn, NY
Eleanor Kemp	Blair & Company, New York, NY
Dr. John A. Lapp	Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN
Clarence B. Lester	New York State Library, Albany, NY
Miss Mari Fay	
Lindholm	Public Service Commission, New York, NY
Dr. Harry Miller	
Lydenbert	New York Public Library, New York, NY
John J. Macfarlane	Philadelphia Commercial Museum, Philadelphia, PA
Guy E. Marion	Arthur D. Little, Boston, MA
A.C. Pleydell	New York Tax Reform Association, New York, NY
Ida M. Thiele	Association of Life Insurance Presidents, New York, NY
Miss M.F. Warner	Plant Industry Bureau, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC
Dr. Joseph L.	
Wheeler	Public Library of the District of Columbia, Washington, DC
Beatrice Winsler	Free Public Library, Newark, NJ

Additional names are listed in the association records as "charter members," and these, too, are included here. Records do not indicate why their names are not on the 1939 compilation, but it is probably because that list was a compilation of attendees at the meeting, and these others were people who had signed up either at the Bretton Woods meeting or had come in as members before the first meeting, but could not attend the meeting. Others may have been unacknowledged speakers or simply interested parties.

Clement W. Andrews	The John Crerar Library
Mary Eileen Ahern	Editor, Public Libraries
Andrew Linn Bostwick	St. Louis Municipal Reference Library
George F. Bowerman	Public Library of the District of Columbia
Richard Rogers Bowker	Editor, Library Journal
Herbert O. Brigham	Rhode Island State Library
Clara M. Clark	Bible Teachers Training School
John Cotton Dana	Newark Free Public Library
F.B. DeBerard	Merchants Association of NKy.
Dr. Horace E. Flack	Baltimore Legislative Reference Department
Marilla W. Freeman	Louisville Free Public Library
George W. Godard	Connecticut State Library
Miss L.E. Howard	United Engineering Society
Mrs. K.M. Howze	Commonwealth Edison Company
Jesse Fremont Hume	Queens Borough Public Library
Maude E. Inch	Insurance Society of New York
Florence Johnson	Boston Town Room Library
George W. Lee	Stone and Webster

Charles McCarthy	Wisconsin Free Library Commission
Milo Roy Maltbie	New York Public Service Commission
Grace W. Morse	Equitable Life Assurance Company
Edith Allen Phelps	Oklahoma City Public Library
George E. Plumb	Chicago Association of Commerce
Samuel R. Ranck	Grand Rapids Public Library
Frances L. (Mrs. Coe) Rathbone	East Orange Public Library
Mary M. Rosemond	Iowa State Library
Anna Sears	Merchants' Association of New York
F.O. Stetson	Newton, Mass.
Edward F. Stevens	Pratt Institute Free Library
William Franklyn Stevens	Carnegie Library
William Trelease	Missouri Botanical Garden
Henry M. Utley	Detroit Public Library
Mary S. Wallis (Mrs. Mary W. MacTarnaghan)	Baltimore Legislative Reference Bureau
Dr. Robert H. Whitten	New York Public Service Commission
T.J. Willis	Milwaukee Municipal Reference Library
F. Mabel Winchell	Manchester City Library

This record also notes that the following “who did not join the association” were in attendance at the first Annual Conference:

Mr. Frederick W. Allen	Law Reporting Company
Eleanor Kerr	Wm. R. Compton Co
Herbert O. Brigham	Rhode Island State Library*

As he conducted his research into the history of business and industrial libraries, Kruzas analyzed the affiliations of the attendees by looking at the types of organizations they represented. The list includes five commercial and industrial firms, three newspapers and publishing companies, six business and trade associations, two scientific societies and institutions, seventeen public libraries, four municipal agencies, nine state agencies, five colleges and universities, one museum, and two attendees whose affiliations were not specified (listed as “miscellaneous and undetermined”).

So specialized librarianship now existed, both as a movement in the larger world of professional librarianship, and as a discipline of its own. Specialized librarianship now had an organization created exclusively for its promotion, continuous improvement, and growth, and those founders who had embarked on this great venture knew that their work was only beginning. The early years of the Special Libraries Association would be

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\* This last name is listed in error in the historical document, as Brigham was one of SLA’s most active early members, and his wife became the association’s first Executive Secretary several years later, with the SLA mailing address to her in Rhode Island.

marked by both expansion and crisis, but for these people there was no going back. Specialized librarianship, from November 9, 1909 forward (if not, in fact, from July 2, 1909 forward) was now established in the world of libraries as a viable, real, and responsive discipline. Those who wanted to provide the highest levels of service to their identified clients now had the means for accomplishing that goal, and an association of like-minded colleagues who wanted the same. Modern librarianship in America had now been established, characterized henceforward as both a scholarly, educational, and “up-lifting” cultural institution, and as a practical and responsive provider of immediate and needed information.