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**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SECRETARY OF THE  
ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY,  
MAY, 1910—MAY, 1911.**

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Springfield, Illinois, May 18, 1911.

*To the Board of Directors of the Illinois State Historical Society:*

GENTLEMEN—In my report made to you a year ago, I spoke of the steady gain in the membership and influence of the Society, and the experience of the past year has been of a continued onward and upward march. Our membership, however, ought to be much larger than it is. Few of our members have sought to gain new members for the Society. Some notable and honorable exceptions to this rule can be given, chief among whom may be mentioned, Mr. Wm. A. Meese, Mr. Wm. R. Sandham, Dr. W. H. Stennett, Mr. I. S. Blackwelder, Mr. Wm. G. Edens, Dr. Daniel Berry, and others. Had we each one secured as many new members as these gentlemen our Society would number thousands instead of hundreds. We have now more than 1,200 members of all classes:

22 honorary members,

8 life members,

47 newspaper members,

1163 active annual members.

A total membership of 1240.

We have lost by death a number of our members, who are, as far as known to me, namely:

John W. Good, Moline, Ill. . . . .deceased April 22, 1910

Wm. R. Head, Chicago, Ill. . . . .deceased May 10, 1910

Henry Hall, Jacksonville, Ill. . . . .deceased May 29, 1910

Rev. John Fairbanks, Jacksonville, Ill. . . .deceased 1910

C. J. McManis, Princeton, Ill. . . . .deceased 1910

H. G. McPike, Alton, Ill. ....deceased 1910  
 J. M. Pearson, Godfrey, Ill. ....deceased 1910  
 Luke Dickerman, Stillman Valley, Ill. ....  
 ....deceased July 4, 1910  
 Legh K. Brainerd, Springfield, Ill. .deceased Dec. 3, 1910  
 Thomas J. Crowder, Springfield, Ill. ....  
 ....deceased Feb. 22, 1911  
 James S. Culver, Springfield, Ill. ....  
 ....deceased March 17, 1911  
 Hally Haight, Naperville, Ill. ....deceased May 3, 1911  
 Mrs. Harriet Rumsey Taylor, Springfield, Ill. ....  
 ....deceased May 15, 1911

I again urge you to notify the Secretary of the Society of deaths in our membership. It is not possible for me to learn of them unless notice is sent me. We wish to publish brief notices in the Journal and to keep our records accurate. Please bear this in mind.

#### LEGISLATIVE WORK.

The present General Assembly just drawing to a close has enacted considerable legislation in relation to historical matters. Mr. Meese, Chairman of our Legislative Committee, and to whose efficient labors is largely due the result, will tell you of the important step which this General Assembly has taken in the creation of a commission to prepare plans looking toward the erection of a building for the Historical Society and Library and some kindred interests. This bill passed the Senate some days ago and I hope by this time it has passed the House, as we had the promise of House leaders that it would.

In 1912, next year, Madison county will celebrate her centennial anniversary, it having been set off as a separate county by proclamation of Gov. Ninian Edwards in 1812. Madison county has asked an appropriation of \$5,000 to erect a monument near Edwardsville, the county seat, to the memory of Gov. Edwards, Gov. Coles, and the

pioneers who took part in the border warfare, when Fort Russell, near the present Edwardsville, was one of the principal frontier forts.

In 1812 Illinois territory became a territory of the second grade and in that year the first territorial legislature was held. Madison county will include in its celebration, the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the beginning of representative government in Illinois. This bill has passed the Senate.

A bill has also passed the Senate appropriating money for the purchase of the site of Fort Chartres, one of the most important of the early French posts. A joint resolution has been passed asking the board of trustees of the Historical Library to attempt to decide upon the route traveled by the family of Mr. Lincoln in its migration from Kentucky to Illinois by way of Indiana. The Governor in his message recommended that this be done, and that the route be suitably marked and called the "Lincoln Way."

The most ambitious of the historical plans has been the attempt to secure an appropriation for the purchase of Starved Rock and vicinity, about 1,100 acres. A bill carrying an appropriation of \$225,000 has passed the House and has yet to be acted upon by the Senate. To the indefatigable labors of Prof. J. A. James is largely due the sentiment throughout the State demanding the preservation of Starved Rock as a State park. To this end Professor James, the chairman of the State Park Commission, has labored in season and out of season, written letters, given addresses, interviewed influential persons, furnished historical arguments to other speakers, for the past two years, and when, as a result of the labors of the State Park Commission, the plan was embodied in a bill and presented to the present session of the General Assembly, Professor James used every effort to place the matter before the members of the General Assembly,

and he delivered strong, forceful and logical arguments, full of historical information, before the appropriation committees of each branch of the General Assembly, with the result that the State will have a magnificent park in that beautiful and truly historic country. Professor James was ably assisted by Mr. A. Richards, the secretary, who did much practical work of great value, as well as by the other members of the Commission.

#### THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL.

The Quarterly Journal of the Society meets with favor from the Society and from all persons interested in the cause of State History. It is quoted very freely by the newspapers of the State and we have daily requests for copies of it and for permission to reprint articles from its columns. You are again urged to contribute to it items of historical interest or original material.

The Secretary appeared before the appropriation committees of the legislature in the interest of a bill for an appropriation for a new building for the Library and Society. She took as her principal text the burning of the capitol at Albany and the destruction of priceless records and the present defenseless condition of our own records, and the committees were impressed with the necessity of providing better quarters, with proper means of caring for our records and other historical treasures, and have created the commission already mentioned.

We are so crowded in our present quarters that it really seems that the limit of the storing capacity of our rooms has been reached. I would like each one of you to see for himself the congested condition of our rooms. We can no longer keep an even fairly tidy appearance. Tables and floor must be kept loaded. Our wall space for pictures is all used and our shelves for books and newspaper files are all overloaded. No plan has been advanced which tells us what we can do until the new building is a reality.

The 1909 transactions of the Society have been printed and will reach you I hope within a short time. A new edition of fifteen thousand copies of the Lincoln-Douglas Debate volume has been printed and distributed. The demand for this volume has been surprising and it has not abated.

The History of Illinois newspapers, 1814-1879, edited by Mr. F. W. Scott and published as Illinois Historical Collections, Vol. 6, has been distributed. It is an admirable and useful volume, and receives high commendation from the press and interested parties generally. Vol. 7 of the Collections, the second of the executive series of Governors' Letter Books, has also been issued, Mr. C. M. Thompson and Prof. E. B. Greene being the editors. Its introductory chapters present a most interesting history of the time covered by the State papers, and throw much light upon the internal improvement scheme which so nearly wrecked the State, and upon the Mormon question. The George Rogers Clark Papers, edited by Prof. J. A. James, will probably be the next of the Collections to be issued. Professor James has devoted several years of patient, scholarly labor to the preparation of this volume, and it will probably be, next to the Lincoln-Douglas Debate volume, No. 3 of the Collections, the most popular of the series, as all of our people are interested in the adventures and services of Colonel George Rogers Clark.

#### SPECIAL MEETINGS.

The membership of the Society is so large that it seems that the one annual meeting gives hardly enough opportunity for the members to meet, and it seems that the members in the different localities of the State can and ought to aid local societies or committees to observe local historical events. I suggest that a committee be appointed to consider a plan for such special meetings. The secretary of the Society attended the celebration of

the 70th anniversary of the organization of Woodford county. This was held under the auspices of the Woodford County Historical Society, February 27, 1911. The meeting was a very successful one. Addresses were made by pioneers of the county and everyone present seemed to enjoy the exercises and appreciate the work that the Woodford County Society is doing. I hope we will have a report of this celebration from a delegate from the Society and that other societies may be represented at this meeting and give us some account of their activities.

The Colored Historical Society of Illinois, located at Springfield, has asked me to report for it that it has sixty active members who are much interested in preserving the history of their race in its struggles for growth and betterment. I believe this is the only colored historical society in the State.

We have received some gifts for which we desire to express our thanks. Members of the Society are urged to help in the collection of local historical material. A circular letter was sent you some time ago asking such materials. We are very anxious to obtain old letters which describe early conditions in the localities of the State, the pioneers' manner of living, modes of transportation, cost of commodities, etc. If you know of any such local material we will be glad to be informed of it. We will gladly have copies made of historical documents if the originals can not be obtained.

Miss Louise I. Enos, a member of the Society, has presented on behalf of her father's heirs, a valuable Lincoln document. It is an original surveying paper. It was mentioned in the April Journal of the Society. The Hon. Norman G. Flagg has a collection of early Illinois letters written mostly by his father. He has allowed the Society to publish them and they will be edited by Mr. S. J. Buck and published in the transactions of the Society.

Such material is of the greatest value and interest. Please help the Society and Library in the collection of such material.

Governor Richard Yates has presented the Society with a manuscript record book containing the earliest military orders of his father, the great War Governor. There are not many entries but what there are are of the greatest interest.

We acknowledge gifts in the Journal, and so I will not take your time by enumerating them now.

On April 14, the Society held a meeting in commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the breaking out of the war between the States. The meeting was one of the most interesting we have ever held and the attendance was as large as we have ever had. Addresses were made by Colonel Carr, Gen. Smith D. Atkins, Mr. Eugene F. Baldwin and Col. Bluford Wilson at the afternoon meeting, and in the evening Judge Marcus Kavanagh delivered an address. The old war time music was sung. The patriotic societies were invited and were well represented. It shows what can be done in the way of a special meeting to commemorate an historic event.

Our committees will, I hope, report on their activities. I urge greater activity among the members of the committees.

Respectfully submitted,  
JESSIE PALMER WEBER,  
Secretary Illinois State Historical Society.