

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PREDECESSORS OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Before considering the public library movement that emerged in the middle of the nineteenth century, a movement that defined the nature of librarianship in America, an orderly and chronological treatment of sources requires attention to those types of libraries that in some way

communities (1952, **4.197**), and Elizabeth Welborn, again on South Carolina (1956, **4.221**; 1959, **4.234**). Jane Flener has studied developments in Tennessee (1963, **4.241**), Ray Held the early period in California (1963, **4.242**

a more recent case study of a single such library in post-Civil War Austin, Texas (1986, 4.352). Phillip B. Eppard has studied the demise of the modern rental library (1986, 4.351).

Although Sunday school libraries have been a popular topic for some historians, substantive work remains to be done. General studies of particular interest include the work of Frank K. Walter (1942, 4.329), M. E. Hand (1950, 4.331), Maxine B. Fedder (1951, 4.333), Alice B. Cushman (1957, 4.338), F. A. Briggs (1961, 4.343), and Ellen Shaffer (1966, 3.342; listed in Chapter 3, "Private Libraries and Reading Tastes").

School district libraries are covered in Sidney Ditzion's classic article (1940, 4.325). More specialized studies include Helen M. Wilcox on the early development of this type of library (1953, 4.336) and state treatments of the early periods in New York by Alice C. Dodge (1944, 4.330) and in California by Ray Held (1959, 4.341).

YMCA libraries that emerged just before the Civil War and flourished afterward have not received detailed attention. However, several useful essays on the subject have appeared, including those by Doris Fletcher (1957, 4.339) and Joe W. Kraus (1975, 4.349). Since the precursors to the modern public library are such a diverse group of libraries, users of this bibliography would do well to examine the entries in the preceding chapter, especially those dealing with reading tastes and private book collections. Many articles in the following chapter, which deals with public libraries, will have relevant information that relates to the predecessors of individual libraries and to groups of social libraries that merged with the new tax-supported institutions. Finally, Chapter 9, "Special Libraries," contains a subdivision on historical society, museum, and institute libraries that includes relevant material, since some social libraries developed into these types of libraries as they matured or changed direction.

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## 1972-1986

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### Circulating, Sunday School, School District, and YMCA Libraries

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