

The Librarians of Nottingham Subscription Library

1816-1927

April 1816 – April 1819 William Hardy

He was the first librarian and was paid £30 per year plus a quarter of the fines collected.

He and his wife lived in the house at Carlton Street and then at Bromley House.

He was required to keep the Library and the Newsroom open every weekday until 9 or 10 p.m.

He was to negotiate with suppliers of the first £100 worth of books and must have introduced many of the Library's practices and implemented the rules and regulations.

From about 1816 up to his departure in about 1819 he witnessed the first 116 signatures on the *Library Rules* document.

The early catalogues may have been his work.

He was ill in 1817 and again in March 1818 when a boy was employed.

This may have prevented him from 'fully attending to the duties of his situation' (27/3/1818) and which may have delayed production of the second catalogue proposed in 1817 but not published until 1819 after William Hardy had left the Library.

In 1818 a boy was employed as an assistant and Mr & Mrs Hardy to continue in the House (30/10/1818).

April 1819 – 1820 Valentine Kirk

He was appointed as assistant librarian on 24/7/1818 and redesignated as a temporary librarian by October 1818 during the illness of William Hardy, then the librarian (30/10/1818). Kirk was confirmed as Librarian on 6/4/1819. He was paid £25 per year but did not receive the quarter of the fines that Hardy had (30/10/1818). Mr and Mrs Hardy continued to use the living accommodation at the Library at least initially after Kirk's appointment.

He received an extra £5 for attending the Library between 6.30 p.m. and closing time (16/4/1819). He may have worked on the 1819 catalogue but he resigned in May 1820 (1/5/1820) with effect of the end of June. He later became the librarian to the Artizans' Library after leaving Bromley House.

1820 – 1834 James Archer

The previous librarian, Valentine Kirk, had left in June 1820 and Archer was certainly appointed well before 1/3/1821 when all books were to be returned prior to

the move to Bromley House which opened in April 1821. The Librarian's salary had been confirmed as £35 per annum (3/10/1820) and he was to be on duty from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. with a break for his dinner from 2 to 3 p.m. and another break of 30 minutes for tea to be taken on the premises.

A minute of 3/10/1820 records a gift of the 4th volume of Walpole's works from the Librarian this having been damaged by a subscriber. On 4/9/1826 he was allowed 3 weeks leave to go to Edinburgh, but was to be back by Goose Fair, and this pattern of release was repeated over the years. In 1826 his place filled by Robert Hardy and Thomas Hawkesley who was appointed on a short term basis and who received 1 guinea on 4/12/1826.

From about 1820 up to about 1830 he was the witness to 78 signatures on the Library Rules document. He produced the Appendix to the Library Catalogue for 1824 and a supplement for 1825. Thomas Jowett supervised Archer's production of the *Appendix to the Library Catalogue* for the present year (1826) and an *Appendix to the Standfast Catalogue* of 1817. Archer seems not to have been involved with the 1829 catalogue.

Gifts:

- a map of Edinburgh - From his visit to Scotland (9/10/1826);
- a biography of the bank robber, James Mackcoull;
- Bertholet: *Essay on Chemical Statics* (5/2/1827);
- *The Scottish Tourist* (4/6/1827)
- Chalmers: *Traditions of Edinburgh* (2 vols.) (19/9/1827).

He again had three weeks leave granted on 1/8/1831 and on subsequent occasions but was expected to return before Goose Fair at the start of October.

The *Interest Book* has a number of receipt slips pasted inside its covers.

These acknowledge payments by James Archer (librarian) of interest on Bromley House Building shares.

On 25/7/1834 he was brought before a special meeting of the Committee as he had absented himself and 'conducted himself in a highly improper manner' and he was found to be 'unfit to retain his office'. He was discharged.

On 4/8/1834 the Committee received a letter from Archer asking to be reinstated.

On 5/11/1834 a special sub-committee wrote to members urging them not to support Archer, and shortly after that he wrote to state that he would not apply for the vacant post of Librarian.

A letter to James Archer

A letter to James Archer from a Willie Cameron dated 'Edinboro 21st Nov. 1813' was discovered in the Library in February 2008. In it Cameron exhorts Archer to come soon to Edinburgh and the two men were obviously great friends and drinking companions.

The letter is addressed to Archer at 'Mrs Harpham's, Fletcher gate'. Curiously the letter was written more than two years before the foundation of the Library and some seven years before Archer began his employment there.

1834 – 1857 John Walton

He was described as 'of Grantham' when appointed rather quickly as Librarian to replace James Archer (25/7/1834).

He and his wife were provided with a residence, but had to provide a £100 security payment, which was offered by **Thomas Burgess** of Grantham (7/12/1835). He was granted two weeks leave (3/8/1835) and agreed to whitewash the dwelling (5/6/1837).

His salary, initially £50 per annum, rose to £65 in 1846 and to £70 in 1849. In 1845 the Committee agreed to increase his 'Christmas box' from £5 to £10 (7/4/1845).

In 1849 the Committee decided that his kitchen was to be cleaned (2/7/1849).

An innovation in the Library organisation occurred in 1851 when he was entrusted with £20 as petty cash (7/7/1851). He was responsible for the preparation of three catalogues in the 1850s and received an extra payment of £3 3s 0d for his work on the revised catalogue on 7/2/1853.

The poor quality of the 1857 supplement to the catalogue may be an indication of his failing health (Hoare, 1991). His sudden death was reported on 19/10/1857.

1857 – 1867 Count Ubaldo Marioni

Address: Park Row (1858); Canning Street (1862); Forest Road (1864); Arboretum Street (1866).

Of the 39 candidates who applied to replace John Walton as librarian in 1857, twelve made the first short-list and then six were on a second list, of which Ubaldo Marioni was one, and who received detailed consideration.

He was appointed at £100 per annum after a ballot against William Richardson held on 11/12/1857.

Count Ubaldo Marioni had come to England as a political refugee after the occupation of his native Perugia by the Austrians in 1849. Perugia is in central Italy and about 100 miles north of Rome. His family had lived there for many generations and were of some importance.

He was named after St Ubaldo, a 12th century Bishop of Gubbio. Gubbio is a town about 25 miles north of Perugia and Ubaldo's family had connections there.

In May 1849 Ubaldo came to London as an envoy of Giuseppe Mazzini's Roman Republic and had accreditation from Carlo Rusconi, the foreign secretary of his native republic and he had been a member of its assembly before the invasion by the French troops.

Marioni stayed in London with Thomas and Jane Carlyle at their residence in Cheyne Row, Chelsea and it is possible that Joseph Neuberg, a Bavarian merchant, Bromley House subscriber and resident of The Park, and his sister, who were friends of the Carlyles, introduced Marioni to Nottingham.

The Library was not particularly strong in the literature of the Italian political struggle as might have been expected with a librarian with these origins.

He seems to have been a satisfactory, if not outstanding, librarian not taking his duties more seriously than was strictly necessary.

Although the Library was open from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays to Saturdays he left at 8.20 in the evening and at 3.30 p.m. on Saturdays, returning at 10.30 a.m. on Mondays.

His two weeks of holiday became extended to a month (Taylor, 1988).

'Slow but steady progress is making in the formation of a New Catalogue' was reported to the 1863 General Meeting and a year later the catalogue was due 'in a few weeks'.

On 1/8/1864 he received £3. 3s. 0d (increased to £6 6s. 0d on 5/9/1864) for work on the catalogue, but there is reason to believe that much of the work was done by John Banwell, the assistant librarian.

However, in March 1867 the combined salaries of £152 per year for librarians Count Marioni and John Banwell caused a protest from subscribers.

A document of which the following is a copy was affixed in the Library on the 2nd day of March 1867.

Bromley House Library

Pursuant to the 25th Rule notice is hereby given that at the annual general meeting of the

Shareholders to be holden on the first Tuesday in April 1867 the following resolution will be proposed for adoption. - Viz. -

That in the opinion of this meeting the expenditure in Salaries and Wages is excessive, and that the Committee be, and are hereby requested to take immediate steps to reduce the same and at the same time secure greater efficiency in the service of the Library.

No mention of this protest is made in the minutes of the 1867 Annual General Meeting.

Obviously Count Marioni was out of favour with some subscribers and in the Spring of 1867 he had resigned.

Sir

You are aware that I some time ago placed my Resignation as Librarian in your hands but with the view that its acceptance by the Committee should be deferred until Xmas next.

Finding however that dissatisfaction exists amongst some of the Subscribers who might become an increasing source of unpleasant feeling between me and them I have reflected that I should best consult the interests of the Institution and my own character as a Gentleman by requesting you to accept my resignation.

At the same time permit me to say with all sincerity and activated by the single desire that the Institution of the Library should not suffer I will cheerfully if it be the wish of the Committee continue my service for another 3 months, i.e. until 1st July when I should respectfully beg to retire.

With the warmest feeling of respect to you and the Committee and of thankfulness for the kindness I have invariably received at their hands during the 9 past years of my office.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

Marioni

However, at the 1867 Annual General Meeting Colonel Wright proposed and J. Bishop seconded a vote of thanks to Count Marioni and this was carried 'by a large majority' which was perhaps indicative of the antipathy towards him from some subscribers.

The following is a copy of the memorial referred to in the last resolution

To the Committee of Bromley House Library

We the undersigned Shareholders earnestly desire that Count Marioni may be requested to retain office as Librarian until the end of the present year.

From the letter of the Count entered in the Committee Minute Book it appears that when he several months ago placed his resignation in the hands of the President, he expressed the

wish to remain in Office until next december, when he would have completed ten years service.

We feel confident that if this wish had been mentioned at the Annual Meeting it would have met with a hearty response and remembering the Count's long, faithful and able services (to which the Committee and Shareholders have recently borne testimony) we desire that effect should now be given to the Count's wish and that such arrangement should be made by the Committee as well secures to the Library the advantage of his services, until the close of the present year.

However, despite this strength of support, which included the Duke of Newcastle, Marioni left and on 1/7/1867 John Banwell was promoted from assistant to Librarian.

The Count, who it seems never married, died aged 82 at Woodhouse Eaves on 6 October 1886.

The Nottinghamshire Archives contains 36 letters (M5805 to M5840) written by Marioni between September 1881 and August 1882 from Woodhouse Eaves, near Loughborough, to Richard Enfield, the Nottingham solicitor Low Pavement.

Count Marioni was making payments to support a school for orphan girls in Naples and these were handled by Madame Julie Salis Schwabe (1819-1896).

Transcripts of these 36 letters and a brief account of the life and work of Julie Salis Schwabe can be found in *The Marioni Letters* (Priestland, 2007).

1867 – 1893 John Cummings Banwell

In 1861 he was appointed as Library porter (4/12/1861).

When Alloway left, Banwell was appointed to replace him as under-Librarian (3/2/1862) and his salary was increased to 20s 0d per week (1/4/1862). On 1/8/1864 he received £3. 3s. 0d for work on the catalogue. Although this was really the responsibility of the Librarian, Count Ubaldo Marioni, it seems likely that most of the work was done by Banwell.

In August 1866 he received an increase of £10 8s 0d per year, taking his pay to £62 8s 0d per year)(7/8/1866).

He was promoted to Librarian to replace Marioni at a salary of £100 per annum plus the use of the house (1/7/1867). The Committee agreed that his kitchen be cleaned (3/10/1870) and that he receive a gratuity of £5 for his help in cleaning the Library.

His salary was still £120 per annum in 1893 and paid quarterly.

In 1881 the Committee agreed that he get £50 and 14 days holiday in consideration of his work on the catalogue (5/4/1881) and he was also paid £1 for each new share he could sell (5/1/1885).

He, and Edmund Percy, the President, planted six plane trees in the garden (3/11/1875).

In 1916 Russell reported that only three of these survived, but that they had grown into large specimens. They are still here and even larger.

The Library Association held its Annual General Meeting in Nottingham in September 1891 and it may be that Banwell, librarian, and J. William Moore, assistant librarian, attended [Peter Hoare].

In the 1870s and 1880s he was in favour with the Committee but the 1890s saw a downturn of the relationship. Banwell was criticised for slackness concerning the supply of books by Mudie (3/1/1893) and on 7/2/1893 he asked for a testimonial.

A special meeting of the Committee was held at the offices of H.E. Hubbart, the Honorary Secretary, at 10 South Parade at 5 p.m. on Monday 10/7/1893. This was the first meeting of the Committee to be held outside Bromley House since the Library moved there in 1820.

J.B. Hutchinson proposed and G.N. Berry seconded a motion 'that it is desirable to remove Mr Banwell from the office of Librarian'.

No reason for this drastic step was given, nor did one later emerge.

A second motion proposed by Samuel H. Sands and seconded by W.W. Lewis offered Banwell £70 for the first year, £50 for the second year and £30 for the third year should he agree to resign.

This he did in a letter to the Honorary Secretary dated ten days later on 12 July 1893.

At the same meeting H. Dixon proposed with Samuel H. Sands as seconder that the post of Librarian go to William Moore.

Three years later (3/11/1896) the Committee considered a plea from Banwell to continue their support of him as agreed when he resigned. He felt that at the age of 72 he had little hope of any further employment. The Committee referred this matter to the next General Meeting to be held in six months time in April 1897 but nothing seems to have been decided there.

His age and his date of death are not known.

1893-1899 J William Moore

He was appointed as assistant librarian on 1/7/1867 at 6s 0d per week and in 1893 he was being paid £2 14s 0d fortnightly.

The Library Association held its Annual General Meeting in Nottingham in September 1891 and it may be that Banwell (librarian), and Moore (assistant librarian) attended it [Peter Hoare].

At a special Committee meeting held on Monday 10 July 1893 at 5 p.m. at the offices of the Honorary Secretary (H.E. Hubbart) at 10 South Parade, J.C. Banwell was to be asked to resign as Librarian. H. Dixon proposed, with S.H. Sands as seconder, that the post go to William Moore at a salary of £90 per annum with the residence at Bromley House and with gas, coal and water provided and taxes paid. He would be paid fortnightly and there would be three months notice on either side. Moore's acceptance letter is recorded for 12 July 1893.

So he had gone from £15 12s 0d per year in 1867 to £90 0s 0d in 1893 26 years later.

He was given leave and £4 to attend a meeting of the Library Association in Cardiff from 10 to 13 September 1895 (13/8/1895).

This meeting proved useful as on 8/10/1895 the Committee considered a long and detailed letter from Moore making recommendations about the use of subscription libraries based on discussions he had had with other librarians at the Cardiff meeting.

He went to London (3/12/1895) to seek further information.

Christmas boxes

The Account Books show the seasonal generosity of the Library and Moore, as assistant librarian, regularly received a Christmas bonus which was about equal to his weekly wage.

The Librarian was presumably considered to be above such matters.

Moore was paid his last weekly wage of £1 7s 0d on 29/10/1892 and then received £27 0s 0d to cover the 18 week period from 5/11/1892 to 10/3/1893 (i.e. £1 10s 0d per week or £78 0s 0d per year).

Further salary increases

His salary was increased to £120 per year on 6/6/1896 and two months later (11/8/1896) his holiday allowance was increased to 14 days to be taken without inconvenience to the Library.

He was given permission to attend the Library Association meeting again, this time

in Preston but with only £2 10s 0d as expenses.

The Committee meeting of 6/7/1897 agreed a payment of £5 for Moore to attend the International Libraries Conference along with the President, William Bradshaw. This conference was held in the Council Chamber of the Corporation of London and was attended by some 641 delegates, 21 of whom were from abroad including Melvil Dewey [Peter Hoare].

At this time (5/10/1897) Moore was honorary librarian to the Nottingham Naturalists Society and on 7/6/1898 it was agreed that he receive an extra 10s 0d per week for cleaning the Library and seeing that it was kept in good order.

The doorway to the house he used at Angel Row was made satisfactory (5/7/1898).

Moore's wife was unwell and the Committee paid him £15 towards the doctor's bills and for a subsequent period of convalescence away from Nottingham (5/7/1898).

A month later they awarded him £5 to attend the meeting of the [Library Association](#) in Southport (9/8/1898).

The Library Committee obviously thought highly of Moore and showed this in their financial, personal and profession support.

However, all was not right. On 6/4/1899 Moore was suspended and Arthur Lineker, the assistant librarian, took on his duties. A week later Moore, who lived at Bromley House, was to be ejected from the premises (12/4/1899) and the matter was reported to the General Meeting of 1/5/1899.

Moore had worked for the Library for 33 years with the last six being as librarian. However, he had abused the confidence placed in him and he did not account for all the subscriptions and rents that he had dealt with and £103 18s 2d was found to be missing from the accounts. He had kept the payments for five shares he had sold. A written confession was forthcoming and a motion to prosecute Moore was defeated, perhaps because the Library subscribers were embarrassed at being duped in this way.

The five deluded subscribers were added to the list. Share certificates, to be signed by five people, were initiated after this.

It seems that the Library did not recover any of the embezzled money.

1899-1926 Arthur Lineker

In the 1896 the Committee increased his holiday allowance to 14 days to be taken without inconvenience to the Library (11/8/1896).

On 6/4/1899 William Moore was dismissed and Lineker was immediately appointed to replace him as Librarian. He was a young man, aged only 21, and his parents, Charles and Emma, lived with him in the accommodation at Bromley House Library. His salary was agreed at £80 per year plus the house, coal, gas, water and taxes.

Rather surprisingly the Committee refused permission for the North Midlands Libraries Association to use the Reading Room for four hours on Thursday 2/10/1902 for their general meeting despite Lineker being that Association's honorary treasurer. He was later its secretary (Kelly, 1904).

His holiday entitlement of 14 days was confirmed (31/7/1900) and his salary was increased to £100 per year on 12/2/1901 and another increase of £10 came on 14/7/1903. However, his request for a further increase was declined on 6/6/1905.

On 1/5/1906 the Committee decided that the Librarian need not live at Bromley House and so Lineker and his family moved out. This released their accommodation to be rented out. His salary was revised to £150 per annum.

He, the assistant librarian and two unnamed charwomen were to be insured to cover liability under the Employers' Liability Act (2/7/1907)

He was given an extra week's holiday in 1911. Another increase of salary of £10 came on 7/1/1913 giving him an income of £160 per annum and he was given a £10 'War Bonus' on 7/12/1915.

He was the photographer responsible for many of the illustrations in Russell's centenary history of the Library published in 1916. His photograph is in the Ellen Harrington Room (2006).

He was a good professional librarian becoming a Fellow of the Library Association in 1914. Keen to modernise he introduced the typewriter in 1902 and began the conversion of the catalogue to cards. His slowness with this task earned a rebuke from the Committee when it was still incomplete in 1907 (8/1/1907). He was

questioned further on its incomplete state on 7/1/1908 and 3/11/1908. However, he was able to report its completion on 2/2/1909.

The Committee decided that the Librarian was to take no part in the sale of shares (5/1/1909) perhaps indicating a suspicion of some irregularity. On 6/12/1910 the Committee clearly stated that the Librarian must not act as any form of agent in the matter of tenancy agreements.

A letter was received from a Mr **Hill** (9/9/1913) regarding the unsuitability of Hall Cain's *The Woman Thou Gavest Me* and Lineker, as the librarian, received implied criticism for ordering it. This book is still in the collection at Dc 5463.

In late 1905 he visited London, receiving 30s 0d as expenses. This visit was in connection with the reorganisation of the library subscriptions (Mudie, Westerton, W.H. Smith & Son and the London Libraries) (5/12/1905).

He was able to report that in 1914 only 20 volumes out of a holding of 30,800 were unaccounted for (1/9/1914). In October 1914 he was sent to London to negotiate with W.H. Smith on the subscription. The cost of borrowing 500 volumes was increased from £130 to £187 (5s 2d to 7s 6d per volume). As a result of these negotiations the Library agreed to 450 volumes at a cost of £168 15s (7s 6d per volume) - that is fewer volumes at the same until price.

He went to London in the spring of 1916 and reported (7/3/1916) that W.H. Smith were not to renew the subscription. Days Library Ltd. were found to be the best value offering 300 volumes for £130 (8s 8d per volume). A long letter setting out the terms of this arrangement was copied into the Minute Book and signed by John C. Williams. The first payment of £130 was made on 4/4/1916.

He, and five others, signed share certificates such as that issued to John Holland Walker on 9/4/1907.

He was to serve the Library for 27 years up to 1926 when he contracted scarlet fever and was then dismissed for misappropriation of funds.