

## Indiana Historical Society

BY CHRISTOPHER B. COLEMAN

An agreement has been effected between the Indiana Library and Historical Board and the Indiana Historical Society by which the William Henry Smith Memorial Library is to be located in the future State Library and Historical Building. It is expected that an earlier arrangement by which the library was to go into the main building of the Indiana World War Memorial will be modified so that a historical museum will be developed in the World War Memorial. The obvious advantages of having the manuscripts and books which the memorial library has, and will accumulate, in a building in which a well organized library and a trained staff is operating make the agreement recently arrived at very desirable.

The William Henry Smith Memorial Library, bequeathed to the Society by the late Delavan Smith, together with an endowment which after the payment of inheritance taxes amounted to \$120,000, has been in storage for five years pending the occupation of permanent quarters by the Society. While at present it consists principally of standard works of literature and the correspondence of William Henry Smith, father of Delavan Smith, the Society has the right to sell or exchange books, and expects to develop a specialized historical library. The Smith Memorial Library and the State Library will thus be mutually supplementary.

---

The selection of a site and the construction of the State Library and Historical Building is entrusted by law to a board of nine members, consisting of Arthur R. Baxter, Indianapolis, chairman; Charles N. Thompson and William M. Taylor, also of Indianapolis; Arthur B. Ayres, Newcastle; Mrs. Elizabeth Claypool Earl, Muncie; Mrs. Frank J. Sheehan, Gary; C. Herman Pell, Carbon; Herbert P. Kenney, New Albany; James R. McCann, Lebanon. Louis J. Bailey, director of the State Library, Indianapolis, is secretary ex-officio.

The Commission has selected the quarter-block at the southwest corner of Senate Avenue and Ohio Street and is in the midst of condemnation proceedings brought in order to clear the title. According to the Act creating the Commission, the architect is to be selected by competition. For the purchase of the site and the erection of the building, a tax of one-half of one cent on each one hundred dollars of taxable property for each of the years 1929 and 1930 and a tax of one cent on each one hundred dollars of taxable property for the year 1931 was levied. The Commission now [June, 1931] has available the first of these levies, or approximately \$250,000. The whole proceeds will not be available until January 1, 1933. It is planned, however, to publish a program of competition as soon as the condemnation proceedings are completed which will probably be late in July.

---

The Society has already begun a few enterprises in the development of the library. Copies of maps in certain French archives, duplicates of those secured for several other libraries in the United States, were purchased several years ago from Professor Louis C. Karpinski of the University of Michigan. Photostats of seventeen letters of Judge Law in the Draper collection at Madison, Wisconsin, were purchased last year. Before the building of the old School for the Blind on the present World War Memorial site was torn down, detailed measurements and drawings were made by an architect, and a book of measurements, drawings, and photographs has been made from which the building could be reproduced. It was probably the best example of a public edifice designed by Francis Costigan in the period before the Civil War. At the Centennial dinner of the Indiana Historical Society signatures of those present were secured on sheets of parchment; these with a list of the founders of the Society and other interesting material have been worked into a "Golden Book" with lettering and illumination by Frederick Polley. When the library is in its permanent quarters it will be in a position to add to its collection rare and valuable items which should be preserved in the state but which would not come within the scope of the other libraries.

The membership of the Society for the year 1930 reached a total of 1155, including six honorary and ten life members. The present total membership, June 3, is 1053, including seven honorary and eleven life members. The falling off of membership after the special occasion of the Centennial can be avoided only by renewed efforts of our constituency to bring into the Society and keep in the Society all of those who should be members. While membership is limited to those interested in Indiana history and of good standing in their community, the number eligible is certainly much greater than the present membership. The Society might well be enlarged to at least two thousand without lowering in any respect the high character of membership which it has hitherto maintained.