

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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SEVENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

HOUSE

NO. 80

House of Representatives, Feb. 1, 1917.

Referred to Committee on Appropriations and Financial Affairs and one thousand copies ordered printed. Sent up for concurrence.

W. R. ROIX, Clerk.

Presented by Mr. Besse of Clinton.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD ONE THOUSAND NINE
HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN

RESOLVE in favor of purchasing a site and securing plans
for a State Library Building.

Resolved, That the Governor of the state and four others,
2 to be appointed by him, one of whom shall be an active libra-
3 rian, are hereby constituted a commission and are directed
4 to take immediate steps to secure the Blaine estate, located
5 at the corner of State and Capitol streets, Augusta, as a
6 site for a State Library Building, and are directed to obtain
7 plans and specifications for such building and to make report

8 to the next legislature. The sum of twenty thousand dol-
 9 lars is hereby appropriated for the purposes of this resolve
 10 to be expended under the direction of said commission and
 11 for the reasonable expenses of said commission, to be fixed
 12 and determined by the Governor and Council and audited
 13 by the State Auditor.

STATEMENT OF FACTS.

The great need of the Library is a new home. With available space in the old quarters filled nearly to full capacity, with more than half its books stored in attic and basement in locations so inaccessible as to be nearly useless, with a collection growing rapidly in size and increasing in usefulness each year, the Library has come to the point where its efficiency is vitally impaired and its development nearly at a standstill.

Various other considerations are pointing in the same direction; the Legislature and Departments actually need more space, which vacating the State Library quarters would give them. The large and increasing value of its books and other property make desirable the housing of the Library in a building more carefully safeguarded against fire than the Capitol can be with the multiplicity of offices and accumulation of inflammable material, while the enormous weight of the books is a special reason why they be stored in a building structurally suited for their handling, care and preservation.

A state library building should be convenient to the Capitol, of a style of architecture that is harmonious with it, so constructed as to house all the material belonging to it for a considerable period of years to come, and yet planned to allow indefinite extension in future without destroying the proportions.

If such a building is to be erected, it might be well to add still another feature, making Maine's State Library absolutely unique in the nation. The visitor to our capital city asks for the home and memorials of Blaine, Maine's great statesman, and is shown the unused mansion across the way from the State House. Perhaps such a one goes away with wonder that this should be the only visible reminder of "Blaine of Maine," the "Plumed Knight" of a generation ago. Why not accept the liberal offer of the Blaine family, purchase the lot and erect on it a building which shall be not merely an architectural triumph, but a structure planned by Maine architects, built by

Maine hands from Maine material as a perpetual and useful memorial to Maine's great son;—the Blaine Memorial Building, the home of the Maine State Library?

The following states have separate library buildings, usually the outcome of conditions similar to our own. Other states have the matter in consideration. Sometimes the building is occupied conjointly with other departments.

State	Cost	Completed
New Hampshire	\$250,000	1895
Connecticut	1,000,000	1910
New York	5,000,000	1912
Virginia	218,000	1895
Wisconsin	620,000	1901
Missouri	400,000	1907
Iowa	400,000	1908
California	2,000,000	In process