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Samuel Swett Green  
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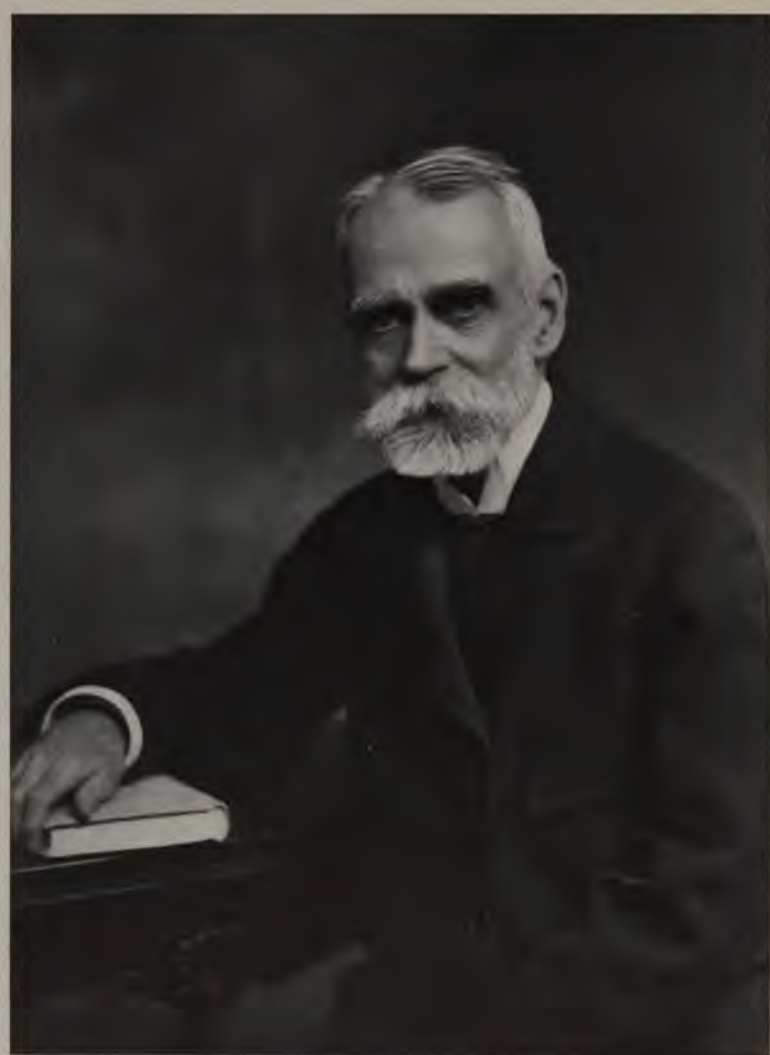
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# Samuel Swett Green

## Worcester Free Public Library Worcester, Mass.

Director  
1867 - 1871

Librarian  
1871 - 1909

Worcester, Mass.

Press of F. S. Blanchard & Co.

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УТБЕВУ

At the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Worcester Free Public Library held Jan. 12, 1909, the Board, accepting the resignation of Mr. Samuel Swett Green as Librarian, after a service as Director and Librarian covering forty-two years, voted that a memorial in recognition of Mr. Green's long and faithful service be prepared by Professor Zelotes Wood Coombs, and spread upon the records of the Board. In accordance with this vote the following memorial was prepared and adopted by the Board at its meeting Feb. 9, 1909. A subsequent vote authorized the publication of the memorial in the present form.





## SAMUEL SWETT GREEN.

The resignation of Samuel S. Green as Librarian of the Worcester Free Public Library marks an epoch in the intellectual life not only of the city of Worcester, but of the entire country. For forty-two years Mr. Green has been connected with this library—four years as a member of the Board of Directors, thirty-eight as Librarian. During this time he has seen the growth and development of the modern public library as one of the most potent factors in the intellectual life of this country. In this growth and development Mr. Green and—under him—the Worcester Free Public Library have been leaders.

Worcester has been peculiarly fortunate in having been able to command the services of Mr. Green for this long period. Famed for its educational institutions, from the lowest grade of public schools up through its secondary schools, public and private, its colleges, technical and academic, to its university, it must have had a public library adequate to its needs, and wisely directed, or have fallen short of its present position. The city was fortunate in the first instance that it had a generous founder to make the first beginnings of the Free Public Library; it was equally fortunate in that a member of this founder's family so soon took up the administration of his uncle's gift, guided the embryo institution through the formative period, later through the time of growing strength and widening influence to the present.

The past is certainly secure. The standing of our Free Public Library during the last thirty years, and, to a large degree, the reputation of the city itself among men of learning here and abroad, are due to the labors of Mr. Green in his chosen field of work.

That he was a Worcester man, born and bred, strong in love for his native town and endeared to it by generations of family traditions, proud moreover of its intellectual prestige, broadened himself by education, by travel, by intercourse with leading men everywhere; deeply interested, too, in carrying to success the gift of his uncle, all these facts may explain some of the results that he has attained during his long administration now ended, but they are none the less cause for congratulation on the part of the citizens of Worcester. They and their city owe Mr. Green a debt of gratitude that no financial return can ever pay. Their interest has been his and he has given ungrudgingly of his time and of his energy to all who asked.

Samuel Swett Green was born in Worcester, Feb. 20, 1837. His father was James Green of Worcester, his grandfather Dr. John Green, his great-grandfather, Dr. John Green, and his great-great-grandfather, Dr. Thomas Green of Leicester, who was also a clergyman. Dr. Thomas Green later brought his son, the first Dr. John Green, to Worcester, purchasing the original Green Hill estate. Samuel Green's uncle, the founder of the Worcester Free Public Library, was Dr. John Green, and at the present time, Mr. Green has a brother and nephew, each Dr. John Green, well-known physicians of St. Louis. The tendency in the Green family toward the medical profession has certainly been strong.

Thomas Green, great-grandfather of the Rev. and Dr. Thomas Green above mentioned, the progenitor of the family in this country, was born in England about 1600. Coming to America about 1635, he settled in Lynn or Ipswich, afterward in Malden. Through Mr. Green's

mother, Elizabeth Swett of Boston and Dedham, whose mother was a daughter of Dr. John Sprague of Boston, Mr. Green can trace his ancestry to Ralph Sprague, who came to Charlestown in 1629 from Devonshire. One of Mr. Green's great-great-grandfathers was Gen. Timothy Ruggles of Sandwich and Hardwick, a distinguished lawyer, judge, statesman and soldier. He was opposed to the Revolution, and has come down in history as "Massachusetts' great loyalist." Through General Ruggles the line of descent runs back to Gov. Thomas Dudley, second Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony; to Rev. John Woodbridge, brother of the man whose name stands first on the list of graduates of Harvard College, and to John Tilley and his wife and daughter, Elizabeth, wife of John Howland. These four ancestors came over in the Mayflower.

Mr. Green began school in the infant school kept by Mrs. Levi Heywood. Later he attended the school of Mrs. Sarah B. Wood. From there he was admitted by examination to the Thomas-street Grammar School, then under Caleb B. Metcalf as principal. Mr. Green entered the high school of the city in 1849, graduating in 1854. He graduated from Harvard College in 1858, and from the Harvard Divinity School in 1864. One of his classmates at Harvard was Thomas Jefferson Spurr, mortally wounded at Antietam. In 1870 Mr. Green received the degree of master of arts from Harvard University, and in 1877 was chosen an honorary member of the Harvard Chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. Previously, in 1859, he had taken the voyage to Smyrna in a sailing vessel, and while away visited Constantinople.

Two years he was obliged to pass in Worcester, owing to ill health, before he entered the Divinity School, and this ill health prevented him from serving in the Civil War. Since his first trip to foreign parts, Mr. Green has visited Europe many times, besides traveling extensively in this country and going to Alaska in 1905.

In 1864 Mr. Green became bookkeeper in the Mechanics National Bank. A few months later he was made teller of the Worcester National Bank, a position which he held several years. He was offered the position of cashier of the Citizens' National Bank, to succeed the late John C. Ripley, also a place in the Worcester County Institution for Savings, both of which he declined.

Mr. Green became on Jan. 1, 1867, a director of the Free Public Library. Four years later, Jan. 15, 1871, he was elected Librarian of the same institution. This position he is resigning after thirty-eight years of continuous service.

The Worcester Free Public Library had been founded by Dr. John Green, uncle of Samuel Green. Dr. Green gave his library to the city, Dec. 27, 1859, by a deed of gift. This library consisted of about 7000 volumes, which had been collected during many years, at a cost of not less than \$10,000. The city government by ordinance, dated Dec. 23, 1859, had accepted the gift with the conditions imposed. At the same time the Worcester Lyceum and Library Association gave to the city its collection of 4500 volumes, which had belonged to the Young Men's Library Association, the Young Men's Rhetorical Society and the old Worcester Lyceum.

The Free Public Library was opened to the public April 30, 1860, in the Worcester Bank block on Foster Street. In 1865 reading-rooms were established in connection with the library, a fund for their endowment being raised largely through the efforts of Hon. George F. Hoar. Before Dr. Green died, in 1865, he gave to the library 4968 volumes in addition to the 7000 contributed at the start.

The first building of its own occupied by the library was erected at a cost of \$30,000 in 1861, in accordance with an agreement made with Dr. Green. This is the old part of the present library building on Elm Street. The new part was erected in 1891, at a cost of \$143,000.

The first librarian was Zephaniah Baker, who held office from 1860 to 1871. Mr. Green followed him.

The management of the library was by the founder vested in a board of directors, who must be citizens of Worcester. On this board many of the prominent citizens of Worcester have been proud to serve. The following names of former presidents of the board will prove this: Hon. A. H. Bullock, Hon. W. W. Rice, Hon. Stephen Salisbury, Hon. George F. Hoar, Hon. T. L. Nelson, Hon. P. C. Bacon, J. Evarts Greene, Esq., Rev. Dr. W. R. Huntington, Hon. F. H. Dewey, Hon. F. A. Gaskill, Principal E. Harlow Russell, A. George Bullock, Esq., Hon. E. T. Marble and others.

During his thirty-eight years as Librarian, Mr. Green has been a pioneer in a multitude of library reforms and usages. Naturally he introduced many of these into the Worcester Library. One feature of this library has been the remarkably large proportion of books employed for study and purposes of reference. Another, in which Mr. Green is an authority, is in respect to the use of libraries as popular educational institutions and the establishment of close relations between libraries and schools.

Mr. Green has been a pioneer in bringing about the present system of inter-library loans and in the large use of photographs and engravings in supplementing the value of books. The new library building, opened in 1891, was designed with special reference to such displays of photographs and illustrative material, and the exhibitions held in its rooms have been most interesting and of great educational value. Under Mr. Green the Worcester Public Library has set the example of having in the library rooms talks about books on specified subjects, while here constant effort has been made to develop the children's department and to bring the children and the users of the circulating department under the influence of the best works of art.

During the long term of service of Mr. Green, he has naturally been best known, both in Worcester and outside, as a librarian. His activity along the lines of library work has been ceaseless, and it has met with recognition not only here, but abroad as well.

Mr. Green was one of the founders of the American Library Association, and is a life fellow of that organization. He was for several years Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Association, and Vice-president in 1887-1889, and again in 1892-1893. In 1891 he was chosen President, and presided at the annual meeting of that year at San Francisco. In 1896 he was the first President of the Council. He is an original fellow of the Library Institute, founded in 1905, and limited in membership to the most prominent librarians in the country.

In 1879 Mr. Green was a delegate of the American Library Association to the International Congress of Librarians in October of that year, in London. He was a member of the Council of that Congress, and took an active part in the discussions. When, during the sessions of the Congress, the Library Association of the United Kingdom was formed, Mr. Green was chosen an honorary member in July, 1878.

For a day he presided at the World's Congress of Librarians at Chicago in 1893, and presided also at a meeting of the American Library Association at Chicago University the same year. Mr. Green was a Vice-president of the International Congress of Librarians in London in 1897. In 1890 he was appointed by the Governor of Massachusetts an original member of the Free Public Library Commission of the Commonwealth, and was re-appointed in 1894, 1899 and 1904.

He was one of the founders and the original first Vice-president of the Massachusetts Library Club. For many years he was a member of the Committee of the Overseers of Harvard University to make an annual examination of the Library of the University, and he oc-

cupied a similar position in connection with the Boston Public Library. In 1887 he began to deliver annual courses of lectures on "Public Libraries as Popular Educational Institutions" to the students of the School of Library Economy connected with Columbia University, New York city, and later at the Albany Library School after it had become a State institution. He was also chosen a member of a committee to examine this school.

As Librarian of the Worcester Free Public Library, Mr. Green has gained for himself and for his library a wide reputation. His purpose was from the first "to make the public library an instrument for popular education, a practical power in the community." That purpose he has never lost sight of and his efforts to realize it have not only brought results in Worcester, but have influenced to a marked degree library methods and administration in the entire country.

The Worcester Library and its methods have been studied by European countries. The Department of the Seine, which includes Paris, investigated the plan and operation of the Worcester Library; so, too, the educational department of the English government, while a German expert described at length the work done by the Worcester Free Public Library as in many respects a model for popular libraries to be introduced into Germany. Denmark, through its Free Public Library Commission, has used for illustration the interior of the children's room of the Worcester Library.

Mr. Green has been a constant writer on library subjects. He sent an article to the first number of the *Library Journal* and was a constant contributor thereafter. He has also written frequently for the *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society*, for the *American Journal of Social Science*, the *Sunday Review of London*, and other periodicals. Two books by him were published by the late Frederick Leypoldt of New York, "Library Aids" and "Libraries and Schools," both in

1883. The former work, in a less complete form, had previously been issued by the United States Bureau of Education as a circular of information.

At the request of the Secretary of the Board of Education of Massachusetts, Mr. Green wrote an appendix to the forty-eighth annual report of the board on "Public Libraries and Schools." This essay was afterward reprinted as a separate pamphlet. A paper, by Mr. Green, on "The Use of Pictures in the Public Libraries of Massachusetts," was printed as an appendix to the eighth annual report of the Free Public Library Commission of Massachusetts.

Mr. Green has made a number of addresses and read a number of papers on library and other subjects. Among the earliest of these was "Personal Relations Between Librarians and Readers," a paper presented at a meeting of librarians who came together in October, 1876, at Philadelphia, and formed the American Library Association. Of this paper two editions have been printed and exhausted. This paper was widely discussed in the press and the plans of conducting a library suggested were regarded at the time as novel and admirable.

In July, 1879, Mr. Green read a paper on "Sensational Fiction in Public Libraries," at the meeting of the American Library Association in Boston. This paper was also reprinted in pamphlet form and widely distributed. "The Relations of the Public Library to the Public Schools" was read before the American Social Science Association in September, 1880, at Saratoga. This paper was circulated in pamphlet form and awakened a wide interest in the work discussed. Papers were read or addresses given on similar subjects at meetings of the American Library Association in successive years at the various annual meetings, also at a meeting of the library section of the National Education Association at Washington.

Other important papers by Mr. Green on questions of



library economy are: "The Library in its Relation to Persons Engaged in Industrial Pursuits," "Opening Libraries on Sunday," "The Duties of Trustees and their Relations to Librarians," "Address as President of the American Library Association," "Inter-library Loans in Reference Work," "Adaptation of Libraries to Constituencies," printed in Volume I of the Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1892-3; "How to Encourage the Foundation of Libraries in Small Towns," and three closely connected papers, "Discrimination Regarding Open Shelves," "What Classes of Persons, if any, Should Have Access to the Shelves in Large Libraries," and "Lead Us Not into Temptation."

With his steadily growing reputation, it is natural that Mr. Green should have been invited to deliver the addresses at the opening of library buildings and the dedication of libraries. Such addresses, later printed in pamphlet form, were delivered at Newark, N. J.; Rindge, N. H.; North Brookfield and Oxford, Mass. At the dedication of the library building of Clark University in 1904 Mr. Green gave the address of welcome, which was printed later in the "Publications" of the library.

In several addresses Mr. Green favored buying books for grown-up immigrants in their native languages. He wrote "A History of the Public Libraries of Worcester" for the "Worcester of 1898," and earlier for Hurd's "History of Worcester County." He was chairman of a committee to supervise the portion of that history relating to the town and city of Worcester.

The first account of the methods introduced by Mr. Green in the conduct of the Worcester Free Public Library was presented as an appendix in his annual report as Librarian for the year 1874-5. This was reprinted in pamphlet form and copies were sent to the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876. Afterward it was reprinted at the request of the directors of the Free Public Library for distribution.

In the fourth report of the Free Public Library Commission of Massachusetts Mr. Green wrote on "Libraries and Schools." In the fifth report he wrote on "Loaning Reference Books to Small Libraries;" in the seventh on "The Use of Libraries by Children," and in the eighth "The Use of Pictures in Libraries." While a director of the library Mr. Green wrote portions of the reports of the Free Public Library of Worcester, and while Librarian he has written nearly all of the reports except that made by the President of the board.

For the Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society he wrote sketches of the lives of William Frederick Poole and John Fiske. The above-mentioned papers connected with library matters show the tendency which Mr. Green's activity has taken while he has been Librarian, especially along the line of the library as an educational factor, the library as an art centre, and the relation of the library and the school.

But his activity has not by any means been confined to library matters. His interest in historical subjects has resulted in the publication of many papers of a historical nature and in his election to various historical societies in this country and abroad. In May, 1879, he was chosen a fellow of the Royal Historical Society of Great Britain, and in 1880 a member of the American Antiquarian Society. Since 1883 he has been a member of the council of the latter organization. He was also elected a member of the American Historical Association immediately after its formation. He was early a member of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts and the American organization known as the Descendants of Colonial Governors. Mr. Green is a life member of the New England Historic-Genealogical Society, was for some years a member of the Archæological Institute of America, and is a member of the Committee on the School for Classical Studies at Rome. He is a member of the Bunker Hill Association, has been a Manager of the Sons of the Revolution, and

was a charter member and the first Lieutenant-governor of the Society of Colonial Wars in Massachusetts, presiding at its first general court and at the dinner following it. Mr. Green is a member of the Society of Mayflower Descendants and of the Old Planters' Society.

Among the more elaborate historical papers that he has written may be mentioned "Gleanings from the Sources of the History of the Second Parish," which was read at a meeting of the American Antiquarian Society, at Boston, April 25, 1883; also, "The Use of the Voluntary System in the Maintenance of Ministers in the Colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay," an essay forming the historical portion of the report of the Council of the American Antiquarian Society, which Mr. Green presented to the society at its meeting in Boston April 28, 1886. These two papers have been printed in pamphlet form and have been praised by distinguished ecclesiastical authorities. Other historical papers of interest and value by Mr. Green are "Bathsheba Spooner," "The Scotch-Irish in America," "The Craigie House," and "Some Roman Remains in Britain." He has also written for the Antiquarian Society and the Colonial Society elaborate sketches of the lives of Pliny Earle Chase, George Bancroft, Edward Griffin Porter, Andrew Haswell Green and Benjamin Franklin Stevens.

Mr. Green was invited by the late Justin Winsor to write a chapter in the "Narrative and Critical History of the United States," but had to decline the invitation for lack of time and strength.

Deeply interested in art and the cause of art, Mr. Green has worked quietly but consistently to further this cause in every way. His activity in promoting interest in fine arts in Worcester by means of exhibitions which he began in the Public Library has already been emphasized. This work has been of incalculable value to the cause of art among Worcester people, and the idea has been copied and developed in other cities. To carry out

the plan a large collection of the best photographs of the old and more modern masterpieces in painting and sculpture has been made in the Public Library, and this collection is being constantly enlarged.

Mr. Green has been President of the Worcester Art Society, an organization still active, which was for years the precursor of the Worcester Art Museum, and which started in a humble way the work of securing an art museum for Worcester. He was one of a committee of three invited by the late Hon. Stephen Salisbury to consult with him about arrangements for founding the present Worcester Art Museum, and to help him in the choice of the list of corporators. When the museum was organized, he was asked to become a trustee, but declined the invitation. Mr. Green has been from the beginning of the organization Secretary of the Art Commission of the St. Wulstan Society, and treasurer of the Worcester Public School Art League since its establishment in 1895.

With all the activity that has been set forth in the above enumeration of learned societies of which Mr. Green is a member, of papers that he has written, and of work in the responsible office to which he has given his best years, it may be questioned whether he has found time to accept other appointments to which he might be called by his fellow-citizens. The answer to this is the following: Twice, and for several years, Mr. Green was Treasurer of the Worcester Natural History Society; for many years he has been a trustee of the Worcester County Institution for Savings. A loyal Harvard man, he helped some years since to form a Harvard Club in Worcester; in 1903 he served as Second Vice-president; in 1904 as First Vice-president. For some years he has been a member of the corporation of the Home for Aged Men. He was an original member of the Worcester Club, of the St. Wulstan Society, and of the Worcester Economic Club. He is also a member of the old organization, the Worcester Association for Mutual Aid in Detecting

Thieves; he assisted in 1886 in forming the Worcester High School Association, was chosen its first President, and was re-elected to the same office in 1887. In 1886 he was chosen President of the Worcester Indian Association, having that office two years. In 1882 he was elected a member of the Board of Trustees of Leicester Academy.

Mr. Green was an original member of the University Club of Boston, for years a fellow of the American Geographical Society, and a member of the American Social Science Association.

The Worcester Free Public Library can never lose the imprint of character that Mr. Green's long service has left. He came to the post of Librarian when the city's population was 40,000; to-day it is nearly 140,000. Then there were some 20,000 volumes in the library; now there are nearly 170,000. In 1871 the library force, Librarian, assistants and janitor, numbered four; in 1908 that force numbers more than sixty. The first building erected for strictly library purposes, on Elm Street, not only housed the books in the collection at that time, but seemed to promise quarters for an indefinite period in the future; at present the old building and the large new addition are overcrowded, there are nine delivery stations in different parts of the city, and the demand is urgent for a new and much larger central building, as well as for a number of sub-libraries.

In all this growth Mr. Green has been the leader. He has constantly studied the situation, and has tried by his recommendations to the directors to keep the library abreast of the times. By his own reforms and improvements, as has been pointed out, he has in many ways been in advance of the times. He leaves a library well organized, well equipped and doing its important work satisfactorily under exacting conditions. He has served long and faithfully and has deserved and now deserves well at the hands of his fellow citizens.

No man is perfect in any work; Mr. Green has often enough aroused criticism of his methods, but he has always been armed with arguments to defend his course. At the same time he has always yielded to better or more persuasive counsel than he possessed, when such counsel was given him. To-day he can number his friends in Worcester and elsewhere by thousands; here, certainly, everybody who has ever used the Public Library, or who knows the work it has done, is his friend, and that means all of Worcester.

The Public Library can hardly be the same without the presence of the genial man who has so long presided over its destinies. But Mr. Green, like his distinguished friend, President Charles W. Eliot, can retire while his vigor, mental and physical, is unimpaired, while he is able to go upstairs two steps at a time. And, like President Eliot, he retires with a record of actual accomplishment of which any man might well be proud.

To him in his time of leisure, which he is to pass largely in Worcester, but by no means in idleness, go out the hearty and sincere thanks of thousands for his faithful service, with the best wishes of all for a rest, long, pleasant and profitable, which he has fairly earned.









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