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Helen Marot : Librarian 1865-1901

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HELEN MAROT

Librarian 1865-1901

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Library and Information Science

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

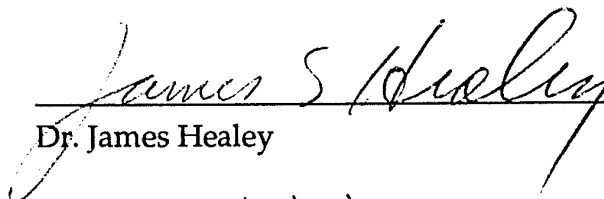
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by

Madeline Gaudioso

August, 1992

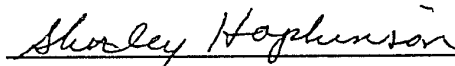
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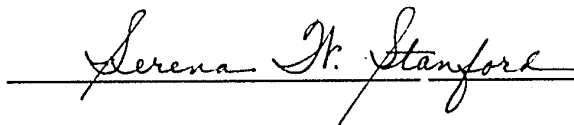


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ABSTRACT

HELEN MAROT

LIBRARIAN 1865-1901

by Madeline Guadoso

Helen Marot was deeply dedicated to the social reform movement of the nineteenth century. Her aim was to educate the middle class to transform society for the betterment of all. Because of her activities in later years, Helen Marot is best known as a social reformer, a labor investigator, a writer, and an editor; but she is not widely known for being a librarian. Like many librarians of her time, she conceived her role to be that of an active participant in social changes. She saw the *raison d'être* of libraries to be that of the "poor people's universities."

Helen Marot left neither an autobiography nor diaries; only a few of her letters remain. She was a private person who "shunned publicity and self-aggrandizement." This thesis reveals obscure facets of Marot's life and her contribution to modern library science.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| Abstract..... | iii |
| Introduction | 1 |
| 1 Childhood and Quaker Background | 9 |
| 2 Formal Education and Early Employment..... | 15 |
| 3 The Free Library of Economics and Political Science..... | 28 |
| 4 Handbook of Labor Literature | 39 |
| 5 Marot's View of an Economic Library | 45 |
| Conclusion..... | 51 |
| Bibliography..... | 53 |

INTRODUCTION

This study will examine Helen Marot's career as a librarian, a facet of her life not widely known.

In the course of her personal growth, Marot's socio-political philosophy became the base for how she would practice her profession as a librarian. Influenced by the Quaker's ethical commitment to serve humanity, she became deeply involved in the middle-class reform movement of her time. Encouraged by her father early in life to think for herself, she came in contact with new ideas contained in philosophical and political discussions at her father's shop that influenced her thinking along socialist lines.

Her other inspiration came from the English Fabian Society, the Christian socialist movement, and the Social Gospel movement. The ideas expressed in Comte's Positivism; the study of political science, economics, and sociology; and the reinterpretation of the ideas of Social Darwinism also touched her. These various groups believed in an equitable society based on cooperation, not competition; education for social change, not conformity; equality of opportunity, not plutocracy; harmony between people, not antagonism; peace, not war. The duty and obligation of every person, they maintained, was to help their fellow man reach full potential and to reform society peacefully, gradually, and democratically.

Marot's participation required that she educate herself in economics and politics, and use that knowledge to promote social change. An important part of Marot's means of using that knowledge was her work in the establishment and promotion of libraries.

The reason for choosing Helen Marot is her belief that education is the precursor to social change. In the complex and technological world of the nineteenth century, industrialized countries, such as the United States, needed skilled workers to successfully compete with other nations. This meant that the spread of education at whatever level and under whatever auspices became the national priority. In place of the dying apprenticeship system, other forms of education were needed to give training in the technical, scientific, and artistic fields.

Libraries and a variety of educational institutions responded to this need by opening their doors to meet the growing demand for self improvement. Librarians, too, like Marot, had to learn new methods of classification and organization; thus the need for library schools.

The value of this study is to aid librarians today as they confront social problems of our information society. Education, as Marot maintained, can still be an effective tool for self improvement and emancipation from poverty, isolation, and insecurity. At a time when the role of libraries is being questioned, librarians, who hold the key to the treasures of the past and the present, can once again play a leading role in assisting displaced workers to adapt themselves to the new technologies.

To learn about Helen Marot, all the available works written by Helen Marot were read. Sol Cohen's chapter, "Helen Marot," in Edward T. James, Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary and Cohen's unpublished article provided by Mrs. Bigelow proved most useful.

Woman's Who's Who of America, 1914-1915; Who's Who in America 1920-1921; Who's Who in New York, 1929, 1938; Who Was Who in America,

Vol., I, 1942; and the Encyclopedia Americana, 1941, provided biological data on Helen Marot.

William Wade Hinshaw, Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy, Vol. II; Frederick A. Verkus, The Compendium of American Genealogy: First Families of America, Vol. IV; and William H. Egle, Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series, Vol. XVII, provided geneological and family background.

Richard H. Wilson, Philadelphia Quakers 1681-1981 and Robert W. Doherty, The Hicksite Separation: A Sociological Analyses of Religious Schism in Early Nineteenth Century America were useful in understanding the Quaker's influence on Helen Marot.

Philip S. Benjamin, The Philadelphia Quakers in the Industrial Age 1865-1920 and Mari Jo Buhle, Women and American Socialism 1879-1920 described Marot's early participation and her later involvement with the socialist movement.

James Dombrowski, The Early Days of Christian Socialism in America and Howard J. Quint, The Forging of American Socialism provided the socio-political background that influenced Helen Marot.

K. G. Walsh and Matthew J. Watson, History and Organization of Education in Pennsylvania and Thomas A. Woody, Early Quaker Education in Pennsylvania gave the educational background for women.

Thomas Kelly, A History of Adult Education in Great Britain; Malcolm S. Knowles, The Adult Education Movement in the United States, Arena, Forum, Citizen; and the University Extension Bulletin described the traveling libraries and the American University Extension Program.

Gerald Bramley, A History of Library Education and Laura M. Janozow, The Library Without Walls gave the philosophical attitude of libraries of the nineteenth century.

Mrs. Jane Cunningham Croley, The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America and Eleanor Flexner, Century of Struggle: The Women's Rights Movement in the United States described the woman's club and feminist activities.

Claudia LoBushman, So Laudable an Undertaking: The Wilmington Library 1788-1988; William Kerr, Business Response to Urban Needs in the Late Nineteenth Century Delaware; and John P. Nields, The Wilmington Library and the New Castle County Free Library gave a history of the Wilmington Library where Marot was employed.

Sir Sydney Cain, The History of the Foundation of the London School of Economics and Political Science; Janet Beveridge, An Epic of Clare Market: Birth and Early Days of the London School of Economics; and Edward R. Pease, The History of the Fabian Society described the development and activities of the Fabian Society, and the library, and School of Economics and Political Science.

Caroline Pratt, I Learn from Children: An Adventure in Progressive Education and Mary Patricia Carlton, Caroline Pratt: A Biography described Marot's participation in organizing the Free Library of Economics and Political Science.

In the course of this study, the author reviewed these works and journals to familiarize herself with the Quakers, the social reform movement, the schools and their role in educating women, the women's

clubs, the University Extension Program and adult education movement, the traveling library, and the library school movement.

Correspondence was established with public and private libraries of Philadelphia, the state library of Pennsylvania, Quaker schools in Philadelphia and surrounding vicinity, the Board of Education of Philadelphia, the Library of Congress, the Library Association, the Fabian Society of England, the library schools of Pennsylvania, and the King Library of the Church of the Redeemer in Pennsylvania.

Marot's descendants were contacted, as well as Sol Cohen at UCLA, Mary Patricia Carlton, Caroline Pratt's relatives, and the librarian of the City and Country School in New York.

A visit was made to Wilmington and to Philadelphia to learn about Helen Marot: where she lived, what schools she attended, what jobs she held as a librarian, and what role she played in organizing a library.

All of these sources provided certain details that made it possible to piece together Marot's formative years and her activities as a librarian. However, since her personal papers were destroyed, this study is not a biography. Nor does it deal with the socio-political background that influenced Marot as well as some of her countrymen toward social reform. The author's emphasis is on how Marot's philosophy directed her professional career as a librarian.

In collecting the data, the author visited the Swarthmore College Friend's Historical Library where she examined the Philadelphia Monthly Meetings of the Hicksite Quakers, newspaper accounts, and other unpublished materials on Marot. These records detailed the birth of the

Marot family, their membership in the Hicksite Meetings, education, and participation in community activities. The Marots' birth records and family wills were also located at the Archives of the State Building of Philadelphia.

The Race Street Meeting of Philadelphia revealed Marot's membership in this Meeting until 1912.

At the Board of Education in Philadelphia, the author reviewed Annual Reports and Minutes of Monthly Meeting School Committees that described the Normal School, but that made no mention of Marot's activities as a teacher. Prior to 1900, no attendance records exist. This information was provided by Helen Marot in the Annual Report of the Women's Trade Union League, 1907-1908.

The Archives of the Hagerty Library of the Drexel Institute provided the unpublished thesis by Mary E. Nehling that described the library school that Marot attended. In addition, Marot's graduation records were checked, and the unpublished Library School Register of Graduates 1893-1904 revealed all that is known about her activities as a librarian.

The Civic Club's "Directory of the Charitable, Social Improvement, Educational, and Religious Associations and Churches of Philadelphia," located at the Free Library of Philadelphia revealed Marot's engagement in this woman's club and her participation in the preparation of the directory.

The librarian of the Ladies' Home Journal provided the Journals that indicated the position of the literary editor.

At the Wilmington Institute Library, the author examined the Annual Reports that revealed that Marot worked there for three years—not one year, as indicated by Sol Cohen in his article.

The Fabian Society Archives in Nuttfield, England, provided unpublished materials showing Marot's participation in the Society until 1912.

The Archives of the Free Library of Philadelphia made available the Committee on Library Report that indicated their refusal to establish a branch library of economics and political science with Helen Marot. The Fifth and Sixth Annual Reports of the Free Library of Philadelphia showed Marot's donation of books and pamphlets to its traveling library. The Ten Year's Report of the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching provided information of the Society, but no records were found for Marot's participation.

Charles Henry Marot's publication of the Gardener's Monthly and Horticultural Advertiser was uncovered as well as maps showing the residence of the Marots and their neighbors. The Philadelphia City Directory provided information as to Marot's birthplace and residence in later years, also the occupations of members of her library staff.

The activities of the library and reading center were described by Marot in her First Annual Report of the Free Library of Economics and Political Science. No other annual reports were found. The local Philadelphia newspapers, The Evening Public Ledger, City and State, The Evening Telegraph, and the Philadelphia Record gave various reviews of her library.

The Political Science Quarterly, the American Journal of Sociology, the Journal of Political Economy, the Annals of the American Academy, the American Journal of Sociology, the Commons, the Library Journal, the American Fabian, and the Fabian News reviewed Marot's Handbook of Labor

Literature. Marot's views on economics library organization were provided in her article for the Commons.

At the University of Pennsylvania, the author found the Catalog of Matriculate that showed the graduation of Marot's brother; and the Special Collection had letters between Marot and Lewis Mumford. Although Mumford knew her later in life, his letters, his autobiography, and his wife's personal comments added new insights into Marot's personality. This was augmented by Mrs. Elizabeth Marot Bigelow, a niece, who provided pictures of Helen Marot, registration of her Handbook of Labor Literature with the Library of Congress, as well as newspaper articles and the unpublished version of Sol Cohen's article on Helen Marot.

CHILDHOOD AND QUAKER BACKGROUND

Helen Marot was born in Philadelphia¹ on June 9, 1865. Helen's father, Charles Henry Marot, a Quaker, traced his ancestry to Pierre Marot,² a French immigrant who arrived in Philadelphia on September 18, 1733. According to family lore, the Marots were descended from Clement Marot, a sixteenth-century French poet.³

Helen Marot grew up in a comfortable and cultured family, sharing a secure and contented childhood with such friends as Jessie Willcox Smith, Maxfield Parrish,⁴ the children of steam engine tycoon Coleman Sellers, and the children of the wealthy and well-educated Clement Biddle. These

¹ The Philadelphia's Birth Registration Records of 1865 shows on page 157 Dr. John M. Adler as the attending physician. William Wade Hinshaw, ed., Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy, 3 vols. (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Edwards Brothers, 1938), 2:808.

² Frederick A. Virkus, ed., The Compendium of American Genealogy: First Families of America, 7 vols. (Chicago: A.N. Marquis, 1925-42), 4:91-94; William H. Egle, ed., Pennsylvania Archives, Second Series, 19 vols. (Harrisburg: E.K. Meyers, 1890), 17:376.

³ Sol Cohen, "Helen Marot," in Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary, 3 vols., ed. Edward T. James, et al. (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), 2:499; family genealogy made by J. Joshua Fish in 1819.

⁴ James, Notable American Women, p. 499; Isaac Costa, Philadelphia City Directory (Philadelphia: James Gopsill, 1883); Charles Moritz, ed., Current Biography Yearbook (New York: H.W. Wilson, 1965), p. 314; Who Was Who in America, vol. 1 (1897-1942) (Chicago: A.N. Marquis, 1943) 1:1145. Smith and Parrish studied under Howard Pyle at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and became renowned painters and illustrators. Parrish lived four houses from the Marots. He was a birthright Quaker and a member of the Race Street Meeting.

families were known as the "Lancaster Avenue's Quaker mixture,"⁵ named after residents of or near Lancaster Avenue, one of the oldest roads in West Philadelphia.

Helen's father, Charles Henry Marot, made his living as a bookseller and bookbinder. Influenced by the ideas of the liberal-radical tradition of the eighteenth century and by a long tradition of learning associated with the bookbinding profession, he was the essence of a liberal Hicksite Quaker. His wife, Hannah Griscom Marot was as strong a Quaker as he. One of her ancestors was Elizabeth Griscom (Betsy) Ross.⁶

Helen was the fourth of five children and the youngest of four daughters. Her older sister, Sarah, died at the age of eighteen months.⁷

Mary Stuart Marot, five years Helen's senior, attended Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, and became well known in the fields of social work

⁵ James, Notable American Women 1607-1950, p. 499; Inventory of Church Archives (Philadelphia: Friends' Historical Society, 1941), pp. 275-276.

⁶ Robert H. Wilson, Philadelphia Quakers 1681-1981 (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends, 1981), p. 51; John T. Faris, Old Churches and Meeting Houses In and Around Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1926), pp. 222-227. Elizabeth Griscom Ross sewed the first Stars and Stripes. A birthright Quaker, she was "read out" of her Meeting "on account of her marriage to (John Ross) a person of another religious persuasion." She joined the Free Quakers whose members had been disowned by Quakers for participating in civil and military duties.

⁷ Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy, p. 808.

and education, promoting the school social worker or "visiting teacher" program at Hartley House in New York.⁸

Helen's other sister, Elizabeth Griscom Marot, became a bookbinder. After attending the Friends' Central School, Elizabeth studied at the School of Industrial Arts and the Academy of Fine Arts before opening her own shop at 209 South Eleventh Street, Philadelphia. In 1901, she went to London and Paris to refine her skills of bookbinding and tooling. When she returned to the United States, Elizabeth taught bookbinding at a school run by a cousin in Dayton, Ohio, and at the Worcester Art Museum in Worcester, Massachusetts.⁹

The youngest member of the family was their brother William Griscom Marot, who attended Swarthmore College and the University of Pennsylvania, where he was graduated in 1895 as an electrical engineer.¹⁰

A major influence in Helen Marot's life was her parents' active membership in the Race Street Meeting of the Society of Friends. Their participation in educational meetings provided early direction for self

⁸ Roy Lubove, The Professional Altruist: The Emergence of Social Work as a Career 1880-1930 (New York: Atheneum, 1971), p. 36; Chauncy S. Truax, "Hartley House: Social Justice in the Making" (Masters thesis, Columbia University, 1937), pp. 144-145; Swarthmore College Alumni Register.

⁹ Dorye E. Tollin, "Her Life's Work: Marot Collection of Rare Books Given to Swarthmore," The Chester Times, 4 December 1948. Elizabeth Marot donated to Swarthmore College a collection of rare books issued by late nineteenth century private presses and bound by her.

¹⁰ Encyclopedia of American Quaker Genealogy, p. 808; University of Pennsylvania Biographical Catalog of the Matriculate, 1895.

improvement and independent thinking to the whole family.¹¹ It was they who imparted to Helen an:

Intrinsic love of the subject-matter of the books—the large amount of knowledge derived from the reading of them—the association and communion with the great minds of the past and the present—all of which tend to elevate the mind, the development of higher moral tone, and the pleasures of intellectual growth."¹²

Attached to the Race Street Meeting was the school. Quaker education emphasized moral, religious, and vocational training. Children were taught reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, grammar, and sewing, along with love and respect for community, pacifism, equality, and simplicity. Books read by Quaker children contained no dramatic or poetic selections, descriptions of war, nor plural forms of address. The school played a prominent role not only for their own children's education, but also for Negroes, Indians, and other disadvantaged children.¹³

The Quaker concept of equality led to a liberal attitude toward the education of girls. In the home, women were seen as equal to men. Neither one "assumed authority, admitted inferiority or [gave a] promise of obedi-

¹¹Philadelphia Monthly Meeting. Monthly Meeting School Committee Minutes 1883-1905: October 1883, pp. 235-237; December 1884, p. 247; January 1884, p. 255; July, 1884, p. 287; October 1884, p. 299; February 1885, p. 343; April 1885, p. 357; February 1886, p. 13; March 1886, p. 21; November 2, 1898, p. 74.

¹² William Brotherhead, Forty Years Among the Old Booksellers of Philadelphia (Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1881), pp. 66-67.

¹³ Society of Friends in Pennsylvania, pp. 269-283. Joseph J. Baily, "100th Anniversary at West Philadelphia," The Friends Intelligencer 19 (18 May 1937). p. 327.

ence."¹⁴ In the outside world, women as well as men were free to minister, to dispense charity, and to participate in social causes. Schools were open to girls as well as boys:

At a time when the Philadelphia public schools segregated the sexes on the high school level and in many elementary schools, this distinctiveness was significant.¹⁵

Her formative years and the influence of Quaker thoughts were certainly responsible for the uniqueness of Helen Marot's character. True to the liberal concepts of her father and to the ideals of Quakerism, friends and relatives described Marot thus:

She was intolerant of sham or hypocrisy of any kind. Wealth and social standing she scorned as 'props'; she judged people on their deeds. Extremely even-tempered and possessed of an enviable inner tranquility, she was seemingly disturbed only by the problems and troubles of others. She made a lasting impression on those who knew her by her bracing intellect and uncompromising integrity.¹⁶

Committed to the principles of religious freedom, social equality, and the possibility and responsibility to improve the human condition, Charles Henry Marot became increasingly concerned that these values and commitments were being threatened by wealth as a measure of secular

¹⁴ Lucretia Mott in Josephine Elizabeth Butler, ed., Woman's Work and Women's Culture: A Series of Essays (London: Macmillan, 1869), pp. 45-48.

¹⁵ Board of Education, First School District of Pennsylvania, comprising the City of Philadelphia 72nd Annual Report, (Philadelphia: Burk and McFatrige Co., 1891), pp. 38-317.

¹⁶ Unpublished version of Sol Cohen's "Helen Marot," in James, Notable American Women 1607-1950, p. 500.

success and by class structured society. Acting as "witness" for society, he began to question the abuses and injustices of the present industrial society, and to look for alternative answers in the socialist movement.¹⁷

Until his death in 1887,¹⁸ Charles Marot exposed Helen to yet another educational experience which influenced her political and professional development:

The only clear socialist product of Philadelphia Quakerism, she became part of a small coterie of philosophical anarchists, socialists, and other dissenters who met at [her] father's shop.¹⁹

This experience and the Quaker liberals' obligation to her fellows predisposed Marot to later accept the middle-class reform movement which was a political extension of her religious conviction.

¹⁷ John R. Commons and Associates, History of Labour in the United States, 4 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1918-1935), 1:88-107, 185-231. Because of these ideas, many Hicksites became interested in the secular reform activities of people like Robert Owen and in improving the conditions of farmers, journeymen, and artisans, whose skills were being by passed by economic changes of the Industrial Revolution.

¹⁸ Green Street Burial Records, Philadelphia, p. 318.

¹⁹ Philip S. Benjamin, The Philadelphia Quakers in the Industrial Age 1865-1920 (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1976), p. 163.

FORMAL EDUCATION AND EARLY EMPLOYMENT

By the 1880s more than half of the Hicksite children, including Helen Marot, attended the public schools in Philadelphia. She benefited from the educational reforms made during the early nineteenth century. Public education and education for women had become a standard, rather than a privilege of the wealthy.

Having received a practical education at the Friend's school, Helen Marot attended the Girls' High and Normal School at Seventeenth and Spring Garden Streets. In Philadelphia, girls were admitted at the age of twelve, after passing an entrance examination; they would remain in the high school for four years. At sixteen, they would enroll in a two-year course at the teachers' seminary. Marot and other girls who attended the Normal School¹ were required to teach for two years in the school district at the minimum salary.

The first-year curriculum at the Normal School consisted of a review of elementary and high school studies, the principles of education, and occasional practice teaching. The second year continued with more review, but primary attention was given to "lectures on the science and art of teaching," with practice in the various departments of the Model School as well as in the lower classes of the High School.

¹ Catalogue of Pupils of the Philadelphia Normal School for Girls and Rules Governing Their Admission, Promotion and Graduation, etc., 1882 and 1883 (Philadelphia: E.C. Markley & Son, 1882), p. 7; The Annual Report of the Women's Trade Union League, 1907-1908, p. 12, shows Helen Marot as a graduate of the Normal School of Philadelphia.

Following a teaching career,² Marot became involved in the 1890s with the traveling library of the American Society for the Extension of University Teaching. The university extension program was the "offspring of Christian Socialism"³ whose aim was to "restore communication between classes and to revive the humanistic and aesthetic aspects of life."⁴ The program was developed in England and adopted by Philadelphia and other cities to bring university education through classes, lectures, and discussions. Concerned with promoting education for the working class, Marot found the traveling library of the University Extension Program the best means to bring

² Teaching remained an essential part of Marot's activities throughout her life. Compulsory education was enforced thanks to the ongoing pressure by "progressive" educators. In 1903, Marot's investigation of child labor for the New York Child Labor Committee led to the enactment of the Compulsory Education Act. In 1904, as secretary of the Pennsylvania Child Labor Committee, she pushed for a child labor law that brought it in line with New York. In 1905, as chair of the School Visiting Committee of the Public Education Association of New York, she continued to agitate for tighter enforcement of the compulsory education law.

Marot became involved in diverse experimental schools such as the Bureau of Educational Experiments with Eveley Dewey and with Caroline Pratt, she took part in the "Play School" or what later became known as the City and Country School. In an article entitled, "The Play School: An Experiment" (in New Republic 5 (6 November 1915, p. 16), Marot introduced Pratt's educational ideas to progressives in New York. Sol Cohen, Progressives and Urban School Reform: The Public Education Association of New York City 1895-1954 (New York: Teachers College Press, 1964); p. 68; Josephine Goldmark, Impatient Crusader (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1953), p. 81.

³ Thomas Kelly, A History of Adult Education in Great Britain (London: Liverpool University Press, 1970), p. 239.

⁴ Allen F. Davis, Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement 1890-1914 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 7.

university education and books to "people when, under our social and economic relations, they are unable to go to the Universities."⁵

The traveling library of Philadelphia brought twenty-five to fifty volumes of recommended books to small libraries, schools, fire and police stations, railroad and telegraph stations, post offices, and trade unions. Charges for the service covered transportation plus a fee of thirty cents a volume, with the provision that they be made accessible to the students and returned in good condition at the end of the course. This service was crucial to students, since most of them were unable to purchase these expensive books which were not readily available at their local libraries.⁶

The traveling library was compared with the Maudie's Circulating Library of England.⁷ Its image of bringing the library to the people did much to dispel from the public mind the old stereotype of places where

Books were jealously guarded by a sour-visaged curator: who were little more than mummies, the embalmed relics of a dead past. Books were not for practical use, but were so many gathered treasures for the museum of antiquity.⁸

⁵ George Francis James, "What Is University Extension?" Handbook of University Extension (Philadelphia: American Society for the University of Extension Teaching, 1893), p. 55; Sol Cohen, "Helen Marot," in Notable American Women, 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary, 3 vols., ed. Edward T. James, et al. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 2:499.

⁶ Katharine L. Sharp, "Local Public Libraries and Their Relation to University Extension" University Extension Bulletin 4 (November 1892), pp. 156-157.

⁷ Guinevere L. Griest, Mudie's Circulating Library and the Victorian Novel (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1970), pp. 1-14. In 1842 Charles Edward Mudie organized the Mudie's Select Library where the public would borrow; not buy, original editions of novels. Its symbol was a three-decker novel that sold for a guinea and half. It became the leading circulating library in England.

⁸ Francis W. Shepardson, "The Traveling Library," Forum (July 1891), p. 87.

Although they were small, traveling libraries were most successful with courses in political and social science because they used many current, free public documents. The limited resources of traveling libraries were put to the best use and "went hand-in-hand in opening the road for the future of education in Philadelphia."⁹ Traveling libraries also influenced local public libraries to open their bookshelves to the public, to set up reading rooms, and to prepare bibliographies.

The traveling library's new dynamic role as educator appealed to Marot, for it coincided with her Quaker tradition and Fabian belief to use education as the base for social reform. Her experience with the traveling library made her aware of the best literature that existed within a specific subject, a useful tool when she started her own library and again when she published the Handbook on Labor. In addition, she became acquainted with many professors and reform-minded people from women's clubs, charity organizations, and settlement houses who were to support her own library and were sympathetic to the socialist cause.¹⁰

Benefiting from this experience, Marot went on to library school to learn the skills of the trade. In 1894, she enrolled in the third library class of Drexel Institute Library School in Philadelphia. Her training class consisted of

⁹ Ten Years Report of the ASUET, 1890-1900, p. 9. In 1896, the Free Library of Philadelphia took over the function of the traveling libraries.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-29, 16-21. Among the 115 professors were some of the most prominent scholars, liberals, Christian socialists, Fabian socialists, and ministers associated with the Social Gospel movement, such as John C. Adams, Hilaire Belloc, Edward P. Cheyney, Edward T. Devine, Franklin H. Giddings, Joseph French Johnson, John Bach McMaster, Richard G. Moulton, Homer B. Sprague, Robert Ellis Thompson, Woodrow Wilson, John R. MacDonald, and Graham Wallas.

nineteen students, at a cost of \$20 per term. The admission requirement was "a good English education, equivalent to the diploma of a high school or college of good standing." An entrance examination was required unless the applicant was a college graduate.¹¹ The curriculum was practical and theoretical, similar to that of Dewey's first year at Columbia: "lectures and actual library work," under supervision.¹²

On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Marot attended a technical course in "library economy" or library science. The course was composed of discussions of the object, scope and usefulness of libraries, organizing and extension of branch libraries, location and provision for growth, supervision of staff, care of physical facilities, qualification and duties of personnel, regulations for readers, professional literature, children's reading, and the history of books and printing.¹³ Some of the subjects were:

accession and order department, library handwriting, classification, shelf-listing, alphabating, mechanical preparation of books for the shelves, care of periodicals and pamphlets, shelf-arrangement, stocktaking, binding, charging-out systems, refer-

¹¹ Drexel Institute, Circular of Information, 1892-93, pp. 661-663. At the same time that Marot attended the two terms at the library school, her friends Maxfield Parrish and Jessie Willcox Smith studied illustration under Howard Pyle at the Drexel Institution. These classes influenced a whole generation of American artists. Pyle and Nathaniel C. Wyeth were later the founders of the Brandywine School, south of Philadelphia.

¹² Columbia University, School of Library Service, School of Library Economy of Columbia College 1887-1898: Documents for a History, 1937, pp. 88, 99-102.

¹³ A special award was given to Dr. James MacAlister who had lectured on the History of Books and Printing since the school began in 1892. Library Journal 19 (July 1895), p. 62c.

ence service, business forms, correspondence, proof-reading, typewriting and statistics.¹⁴

On Tuesday and Thursday Marot attended a class in cataloging that included "general bibliography and classification." The method was based upon the rules the American Library Association Dictionary Catalog and the Cutter's Rules for a Dictionary Catalogue.¹⁵ In addition to the technical education, Marot and other students took courses in literature and bibliography. Three days a week, a course was given in the history of English literature and modern European authors.

For each library student to become familiar with the duties of library management, practical work in the various departments of the Drexel Library of the Institute was required during the months of April and May.¹⁶ Students learned the operation of the library, the location of its 22,000 books, methods of ordering, lending, and borrowing books. In addition they cataloged and classified a private collection of several hundred books that had been received as gifts.¹⁷

Visits were made to public and private libraries in Philadelphia and in New York City so that students could compare the various systems of cataloging, classification, and other library procedures with those of Drexel.¹⁸ The

¹⁴ Mary E. Nehlig, The History and Development of the Drexel Institute Library School, 1892-1914 (unpublished M.S. thesis, the Drexel Institute of Technology, 1945), p. 7; Library Journal 23 (November 1896), p. 612.

¹⁵ Drexel Institute of Arts, Science, and Industry, Circular of Information, 1894-95.

¹⁶ Drexel Institute of Art, Science, and Industry, Circular of Information, 1893-94.

¹⁷ Library Journal 23 (November 1896), pp. 612-614.

¹⁸ Library Journal 19 (May 1894), p. 179.

director of the library school felt that one year was not sufficient time to give proper attention to all the various phases of librarianship. Further study was encouraged in the area of one's specialty. The goal of the library school was to make each student "earnest," "conscientious," and "thorough" in the subject of which he or she was most interested.¹⁹ Every student, before graduation, was required to submit a reading list or reference list on a selected topic.

Helen Marot graduated from the Drexel Institute Library School on June 13, 1895, receiving her library certificate with honorable mention.²⁰ This training provided her with not only the ability to earn a living but the means to pursue social causes. It gave her information and knowledge to be of use in helping others for their self-improvement and emancipation.

Following her graduation from Drexel, Marot worked as a cataloguer for the New Century Club Library.²¹ The library was part of the New Century, the first Philadelphia women's club founded in 1877 by members of the Women's Centennial Committee of the Philadelphia Exposition.²² The \$80,000 four-story club house was designed and paid for by women. It contained a parlor, a library, reading rooms, offices, a drawing room or auditorium with a seating capacity of five hundred, a dining room, a tea

¹⁹ Library Journal 23 (November 1896), pp. 612-614.

²⁰ Library Journal 20 (July 1895), p. 247.

²¹ Drexel Institute of Art, Science, and Industry. Library School Register of Graduates 1893-1904, p. 21.

²² L.E. Preston, "Speakers for Women's Right in Pennsylvania," The Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine 54 (July 1971), p. 252.

room, ladies' dressing rooms fitted with folding beds, and kitchens.²³ The club had a special interest in working women. Its 700 members worked closely with the Association of Working Women's Societies, a nonsectarian and self-governing organization of 4,400 members that rendered relief, legal assistance, and employment referrals.²⁴ To make women economically, politically, and socially independent, the club sponsored lectures and cultural activities, held evening classes in dressmaking, sewing, embroidery, cooking, stenography, typing, bookkeeping, and edited and published a paper called "The New Century for Women."

Out of the evening classes came a New Century Guild of Working Women to serve as a working women's university. Beside classes and lectures, the Guild sponsored concerts, dances, printed the Working Woman's Journal and managed a library of 2,000 volumes, 12 monthly magazines, and 23 periodicals.

For many women, the New Century Club was one of the few places where they could go to learn a skill, socialize, read, and work for equal rights;

²³ Russell F. Weighley, ed., Philadelphia: A 300-Year History (New York: W.W. Norton, 1982), p. 520; J.C. Croly, The History of the Women's Club Movement in America (New York: Henry G. Allen, 1898), pp. 1021-1028.

²⁴ Sheila M. Rothman, Woman's Proper Place: A History of Changing Ideals and Practices 1870 to the Present (New York: Basic Books, 1978), pp. 74-81, 85-93; Eleanor Flexner, Century of Struggle: The Women's Rights Movement in the United States (New York: Atheneum, 1972), pp. 205-206. The Working Women's Society was the forerunner of the Consumers' League and the Women's Trade League. It believed that through unionization, women could increase their wages and improve their working conditions.

"to make woman a self-supporting, dignified, independent, equal partner with man in the state, the church, the home."²⁵

Following her work with the Century Club Library, Helen Marot held two brief jobs before she settled on a permanent one. Other than teaching, writing was one of the most socially acceptable occupations for women. The middle-class found the growing number of women's magazines to be an invaluable guide to fashionable behavior. Readers learned what the best dressed people were wearing, what they were reading, what music they enjoyed, and what houses they were building and how they were furnishing these houses—all presented with illustrations that were often works of art.

From November 1895 to April 1896 she was literary editor of the Ladies' Home Journal with duties in researching and answering literary queries.²⁶ For readers who wanted to purchase books, she compiled a 288-page reader's guide to the best 5000 books, with 170 portraits of authors.²⁷ The Ladies' Home Journal began in December, 1883, when the woman's department of the Tribune and Farmer, a weekly paper owned and edited by Cyrus H.K. Curtis (Curtis Publishing Company), grew to an eight-page publication under the guidance of his wife, Louisa. Within a few years, the

²⁵ Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Anniversary of the National Suffrage Association," Revolution, 19 May 1870, p. 306. Their political effort bore fruit a quarter century later when in 1920, Congress adopted the Nineteenth Amendment giving women the right to vote.

²⁶ Drexel Institute of Art, Science, and Industry, Library School Register of Graduates 1893-1904, p. 21. The "Literary Queries" column ran from August, 1890 to April 1903, not every month and in some years only once.

²⁷ Ladies' Home Journal (Christmas 1895).

Journal had an extensive readership.²⁸ Marot's friends, Jessie Willcox Smith and Maxfield Parrish, designed and painted covers for the Journal.²⁹

The Ladies' Home Journal reflected the genteel ideal of womanhood: altruistic, modest, virtuous, charming, delicate, and passive. It advocated the social and intellectual advancement of women by encouraging and supporting women writers, but it opposed women's suffrage.

She left the Journal in April, 1896, to organize the King Library of the Church of the Redeemer in Andalusia, Pennsylvania.³⁰ In September 1896, she accepted a position as cataloguer at the Wilmington Institute Library on Eighth and Market Streets, in Wilmington, Delaware.

Founded in 1787 by businessmen, industrialists, and Quakers, the Library Company³¹ emphasized scientific and literary studies. Frustrated by constant debts, mergers, moves, and failure to attract new subscribers, the members of the Wilmington Institute sought to make the library free to the public.

²⁸ The magazines with the largest circulation were: Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book, (1830-1898), edited by Sarah J. Hale, who published the first woman's periodical in America—the Boston "Ladies Magazine" in 1827; Peterson's Lady's National Magazine (1842-1898), published by Charles J. Peterson (former partner in the ownership of the Saturday Evening Post and Graham's and edited by Mrs. Ann S. Stephens, an established writer of serialized fiction; the monthly Arthur's Home Magazine (1852-1898), published by Eliza Leslie and Timothy Shay Arthur.

²⁹ S. Michael Schnessle, Jessie Willcox Smith (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1834), p. 28.

³⁰ Drexel Institute of Art, Science and Technology, Library School Register of Graduates 1893-1904, p. 21.

³¹ Delawareans were influenced by Benjamin Franklin's Library Company of Philadelphia, a subscription library which he had created in 1731. The first known evidence of the existence of a subscription library dates to 1763. Claudia L. Bushman, So Laudable an Undertaking: The Wilmington Library, 1788-1988 (Wilmington: Delaware Heritage Press, 1988), pp. 4-5.

As early as 1877, W.S. Auchincloss, the president of the board stated:

Many states in our Union take the greatest delight in establishing free libraries, in their principal cities, and support with unstinted measure. Such a course exerts the most powerful influence toward the repression of crime, and teaches the juvenile portion of the community habits of order, politeness, and industry. A ten fold result is eventually felt from such influences, and the demand for large police forces, reformatory schools, and prisons, is diminished.³²

In 1893, William Poole Bancroft, a wealthy Quaker cotton manufacturer proposed to pay the interest on the present \$20,000 debt with the understanding that "the library and reading rooms be free to all...the means of the Institute be supplemented by annual contribution from the city."³³

Bancroft, like Andrew Carnegie, felt that a free library was a worthy cause deserving his philanthropic aid. He was guided by his beliefs of self-help, individualism, and laissez-faire.³⁴

On April 25, 1893, the Wilmington Institute became a free library. The library became a professional institution as the management began to focus on improving long-neglected services such as remaining open for longer periods, improving circulation and book collection, initiating outreach programs, and hiring additional staff.

³² Annual Report of the Wilmington Institute Library, Wilmington, 1877, p. 22.

³³ Nields, John P., The Wilmington Public Library and the New Castle County Free Library: A Historical Sketch, (Wilmington, Delaware: The Wilmington Institute, 1943), p. 8.

³⁴ *Ibid.*; William Kerr, Business Response to Urban Needs in Late Nineteenth Century Delaware: Two Case Studies, vol. 13, no. 13, (Wilmington, Delaware: Historical Society of Delaware, 1969), p. 279. The "stewardship" concept affirmed the belief that men must act as trustee for their wealth by wisely distributing their gains for the most good. Carnegie offered to finance the building of libraries for communities that would guarantee 10% of the building cost for annual upkeep. By 1917, he had financed 1,679 libraries.

In 1895, the library circulated 137,215 books, had a collection of 23,817 volumes, spent \$3,000 for additional books, subscribed to 155 periodicals, including 22 daily papers, and issued 9,127 cards to library patrons. By 1897, the circulation of books increased to 435,129 and the library registered 10,761 borrowers.³⁵ As a result of these feverish activities, the library was in urgent need of a cataloguer. Regarding her hiring, the Wilmington library report had this to say:

We were exceedingly fortunate in securing for this important position Helen Marot of Philadelphia, a graduate of the Library Training School of the Drexel Institute, who both by natural qualifications and training is admirably fitted for this work.³⁶

Helen Marot began to work as a cataloguer in August 1896. Assisting her was the "accession clerk and typewriter," Irene D. Hillegas. The head librarian, Willis F. Sewall, gave total credit for the new card catalog to them; to Marot for its subject matter, to Hillegas for its appearance.³⁷ She classified books and oversaw the cataloging for one year but remained at the library for an additional two years. During this period she established her own library and began to compile a bibliography of some of the best works written on the subject of labor.

³⁵ Annual Report of the Wilmington Institute Library, Wilmington, 1895, p. 20; 1897, p. 20.

³⁶ Annual Report of the Wilmington Institute, Wilmington, 1896-1897, p. 19.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

Her work at the Wilmington library, was described by Enos L. Doan, the head librarian, as:

Eminently satisfactory. She brought to it taste and literary discrimination of a high order—qualities which, in addition to her thorough technical training, gave her unusual efficiency in the performance of her duties.³⁸

³⁸ Annual Report of the Wilmington Institute Library, Wilmington, 1899-1900, p. 15.

THE FREE LIBRARY OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

Helen Marot, Dr. George M. Gould, and Innes Forbes formed the Free Library of Economics and Political Science in 1897, with the assistance of some of Philadelphia's most noted liberal reformers. Two events occurred in the 1890s that influenced Helen Marot in the formation of this library. The first came from England, when in 1895, the English Fabian Society established the London School of Economics and Political Science. The Fabians had become increasingly concerned over the lack of scientific teaching and research by universities in the areas of economics and political science:

Only in this path of scientific study, said Beatrice Webb, lies any hope of remedying social evils, or relieving individual misery. I am furious, she added when I read of bequests to the Poor Box, or the Lifeboat Society, or the Hospital—it is worth more to discover one tiny improvement that will permanently change conditions ever so little for the better than to assuage momentarily the woes of thousands.¹

A trust from Henry Hunt Hutchinson and proceeds from a state license fee to sell liquor² allowed the opening of the London School of Economics and Political Science.³ It offered evening classes at low fees to men and

¹ Sir Sydney Caine, The History of the Foundation of the London School of Economics and Political Science, (London: G. Bell Sons Ltd., 1963), p. 95.

² The popular saying was: "to distil wisdom out of whisky, genius out of gin, and capacity for business out of beer." Janet Beveridge, An Epic of Clare Market: Birth and Early Days of the London School of Economics (London: G. Bell & Sons Ltd., 1960), p. 22.

³ Edward R. Pease, The History of the Fabian Society, (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1963), pp. 123-125. The first students were five women and four men; one of whom was the future Lord Snell; another was Dr. Max Beer who became a well-known Marxist writer in Germany. In

women who were interested in the study of historic, ethical, and economic aspects of man and society. Sidney Webb, a "profound believer in knowledge and science," was confident that this impartial school would show that his views as a socialist would prevail:

I believe, he said, that research and new discoveries will prove some, at any rate, of my views and policy to be right, but that, if they prove the contrary I shall count it all the more gain to have prevented error, and shall cheerfully abandon my own policy.⁴

Furthermore, he sought to organize the study of economics on a scientific basis, "free from metaphysic and shoddy history."⁵

In 1896 the Library of Political Science was added to the school. The library contained a collection of 25,000 items of material pertaining to economic, political, and social problems.⁶ The Fabians had long provided circulating book-boxes to socialist societies, trade unions, cooperative societies, worker's clubs, and mutual improvement societies. Another of their practices was to permeate free libraries with their writings. In addition, the Fabian

1902 the school won university rank, and today is considered an institution of international renown.

⁴ Fabian News 5 (August 1895), p. 22.

⁵ Caine, History of the Foundation of the London School of Economics and Political Science, p. 11.

⁶ Beatrice P. Webb, Our Partnership, ed. Barbara Drake and Margaret I. Cole (London: Longmans, Green, 1948), p. 195. In 1900 the Royal Commission of London University declared economics a science.

Society sent their reports and documents to libraries abroad, including Helen Marot's library.⁷

The second event happened in the United States in 1895. The social reformer W.D.P. Bliss organized the American Fabian League, the Fabian Society in Boston and edited its twenty-page monthly magazine, The American Fabian.⁸

The object of the Society was to bring together divergent reformers to bring about a gradual approach to socialism.⁹

A Fabian Society was organized in Philadelphia on November 11, 1895. The group consisted of "thinking and studying" people¹⁰ who would meet on Monday nights to "sing socialist songs, chat, and socialize." They visited every house in the ward to distribute socialist literature and discuss it with the families. They also collected books for donation to public libraries, and gave speeches to debating classes and young men's improvement societies.¹¹ To further advance the socialist cause, American Fabians were active supporters of the People's Party.

⁷ Fabian News 4 (February 1895):47.

⁸ Bellamy Review 1 (February 1901), p. 338. For over forty years, Bliss made speeches, organized, and was a member of numerous organizations, including the Mission of the Carpenter, CAIL, Society of Christian Socialists, Nationalist Club, Union Reform League, and Brotherhood of the Kingdom. Also editor of Social Gospel and Dawn.

⁹ The American Fabian 2 (March 1896), p. 6; 2 (January, 1897), p. 6.

¹⁰ The American Fabian 1 (November 1895), p. 10; (December 1895), p. 6.

¹¹ Many clubs continued until 1905 when Upton Sinclair revived the Fabian socialist movement by organizing the Intercollegiate Socialist Society. Mina Weisenberg, The LID: Fifty Years of Education, 1905-1955 (New York: League for Industrial Democracy, 1955), p. 5.

The defeat of General James Baird Weaver in 1892 and of William Jennings Bryan in 1896 caused American Fabians to become disillusioned with the feasibility of achieving reform and social change through the means of a political party. "When one American in five hundred was even remotely aware of what socialism involved, what possible chance of success had a socialist party."¹² The result of this experience led them to renounce political party activity in favor of social and political reform through education.

It was in response to the American Fabians' new ideas of educating people in social and political reform that Helen Marot decided to establish her library. The reading rooms and library were housed on the second floor of a building owned by Isaac H. Clothier, a wealthy Hicksite Quaker of the Strawbridge and Clothier's department store. It was located at 1315-25 Filbert Street, near City Hall in Philadelphia.¹³

Marot received financial support and contributions of shelves, tables, chairs, and other furniture from women's rights organizations and women's clubs; and she established a variety of educational and professional relationships that she had formed. Contributors included William Pool Bancroft from the Wilmington Library, Dr. W. S. Forbes, Dr. Thomas S. K. Morton; Dr. C. F. Taylor, former member of the Philadelphian Nationalist club; Dr. Elizabeth W. Griscom, Dr. Mary H. Stillwell, Dr. Frances E. White, Rev. C. H. Wood, Mary Canning Wister, Mrs. Lucretia Blankenburg, and Rachel Foster

¹² Coming Nation (28 November 1896), p. 6.

¹³ Alfred Lief, Family Business: A Century in the Life and Times of Strawbridge and Clothier (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), p. 80.

Avery. Within six months of its existence, a permanent board of directors was recruited, consisting primarily of professionals and educators: Dr. Daniel G. Brinton, professor at the University of Pennsylvania; Dr. Solomon Solis-Cohen, physician; Dr. George M. Gould, physician; Joseph French Johnson, professor at the University of Pennsylvania; George Gluyas Mercer, lawyer; Henry R. Seager, professor; Frederic W. Speirs, professor at Drexel; Louis C. Vanuxem, lawyer; Innes Forbes, secretary; and Helen Marot, librarian.¹⁴

The Free Library of Economics and Political Science was a unique institution covering an important and hitherto untried field of work:

Philadelphia has been enriched with a library distinctively modern and progressive in spirit... The new library forms an important supplement to the municipal system, since the topics of the day and the problems of the industrial and sociological world cannot be thoroughly followed by an institution for the general circulation of books. With its proposed technical classification of magazine literature and an accessible collection of pamphlets and volumes, the Library of Economics should become a powerful factor for civic and social education in the community and Commonwealth.¹⁵

It was opened to meet what was recognized as a "small but all-important demand"—a center to investigate and to find answers to industrial and political problems. Marot explained:

It was founded on the idea that freely offered opportunities from education in economics and political science make directly for a more intelligent public opinion and a higher citizenship.¹⁶

¹⁴ The Free Library of Economics and Political Science, First Annual Report, 1897-1898, p. 4; Gopsill's Philadelphia City Directory of 1896.

¹⁵ Philadelphia Record, 15 June 1897.

¹⁶ Helen Marot, "The Value of an Economic Library," Commons 7 (August 1902), p. 2.

She warned of the dangers to democracy if the masses left the affairs of state to a few, become apathetic toward local elections and remained ignorant of economic issues. She further recognized the danger to national welfare of increased 'yellow journalism' and the preference for cheap sensationalism:

So much more imperative it is on this account for us to open the way for the few private citizens who in their social usefulness are searching for accurate statements and truthful deductions.¹⁷

Marot had seen the effect of the depression of 1893 upon the city of Philadelphia. She hoped that the demand for an economic library from reform-minded citizens would help to advance the welfare of the country and awaken in the people a sense of social responsibility:

They have now as never before the need for definite and reliable information concerning the elementary principles of the production of wealth and public action and the close relationship between the two.¹⁸

When writing about Helen's library, the Evening Telegraph said:

Many people have heretofore been discouraged in their attempts to acquire even a superficial understanding of these topics. Not only has it been difficult to secure books, but almost impossible for those having but little time for reading to obtain the briefer literary matter upon the subject.¹⁹

If the public, she concluded, had access to the most recent books and reports in economic and political thought, it might prevent a similar state of

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁸ City and State, 24 February 1898.

¹⁹ The Evening Telegraph, 14 June 1897.

affairs from recurring. The other members of the board concurred with her views. They added their own concerns:

In addition to the perennial evils of ignorance and indifference, party feeling in politics and class prejudice in economics were beginning seriously to interfere with the impartial investigation of those issues which concern the well-being of the whole community.²⁰

To moderate these influences and educate the citizens in economics and political science, the Free Library of Economics and Political Science undertook active educational work by providing classes and lectures, published reports of investigations, cooperated with other similar educational organizations, and provided a meeting place for discussing solutions to economic and political problems. "The outline of the work as a whole was outside the province of any existing institution in the city."²¹

The collection included foreign and domestic literature. It consisted of six hundred books, over two thousand pamphlets, and ninety-one periodicals. This literature, more particularly the periodicals, was not found elsewhere and thus met a most specific community need.

The entire collection was donated by individuals and various organizations such as American Academy of Political and Social Science, Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences, Church Social Union, Civic Club of Philadelphia, Direct Legislation League, English Woman's Review, Fabian Society, Humboldt Publishing Company, Independent Labor Party (England), Indian Rights Association, Labor Exchange, Land Nationalization League

²⁰ The Free Library of Economics and Political Science, First Annual Report, p. 3.

²¹ City and State, 24 February 1898.

(English), Liberty Review, New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, New York Labor News Company, Personal Rights Association (English), Philadelphia Single Tax Society, Radical Library, Woman's Suffrage Association, and Dr. C.F. Taylor, W.D.P. Bliss, and Frank Hunter.²²

To keep up to date with current information, the library collected news clippings and government publications, reports of labor societies, and other similar works. Indeed, a considerable part of the collection consisted of government, state, and municipal reports received from the United States government, the different states, England, New Zealand, and New South Wales.²³ Although the collection was small, teachers, students, and library patrons found its classified and indexed pamphlets and magazine literature concerning present-day problems to be satisfactory. Marot said:

The usefulness of such a special collection of books on economics and political science was amply demonstrated by the number of readers who visited the library and the character of those who used the library...the more thoughtful members of every class in society.²⁴

In addition, the patrons could purchase books and were permitted to check out books when they were unable to come to the reading room during library hours. The library was open daily from 11 a.m. until 6 p.m. and on Sunday, until 10 p.m. The fact that most patrons came at noon, and just

²² Ibid., pp. 10-11. These socially-minded individuals and organizations were concerned with improving society and the conditions of the working class. For some of their publications, see Marot's book Handbook of Labor.

²³ New Zealand and New South Wales were then undertaking daring socialist reforms.

²⁴ The Free Library of Economics and Political Science, First Annual Report, pp. 5-6.

before the hour of closing, suggested that the library needed to be open later in the evening. The success of the library of the London School of Economics had convinced Helen Marot that the people of a large city were interested in a collection of this special literature. At the end of the first year, she asked:

If in its present undeveloped condition our library is in such requisition, what might not be expected of a really complete library on economics and political science in Philadelphia?²⁵

The small library soon became "the center of liberal thought in Philadelphia"—a popular gathering place for Philadelphian reformers and socialists.²⁶ In addition to the usual work of a special library, public and private lectures and classes were given to different associations. Beside being the chairwoman of the library committee, Marot was also on the lectures committee, which were "all well attended, the rooms being, in fact, more than filled."²⁷

The first lecture addressed the topic of "The Economics of Socialism." It was given free on October 30, 1897 by James R. MacDonald of the London Fabian Society and future Prime Minister of England. At the second meeting, on February 8, 1898, Professor Joseph French Johnson, Dr. Henry R. Seager, Charles Richardson, and Professor William I. Hull discussed and lectured on "Education in Economics." On March 19, 1898 a lecture on "Economic Education, the Salvation of Society" was given by Dr. Daniel G. Brinton. Dr.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁶ Caroline Pratt, *I Learn from Children: An Adventure in Progressive Education* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1948), p. 24.

²⁷ The Free Library of Economics and Political Science, *First Annual Report*, pp. 6-7.

Solomon Solis-Cohen, Mrs. Burleigh, and Dr. Seager took part in the discussion.

In December 1897, a class was formed for the study in economics. It met on every Saturday evening and was conducted by different members of the lecture committee. The board made arrangement with the society for the Extension of University Teaching for a regular course of lectures on economics, to be given by Dr. Frederic W. Speirs of Drexel University and other specialists in economics. The committee and class rooms were also used for meetings and committee work by different societies involved in educational activities.²⁸

Caroline L. Pratt, a teacher at the prestigious Philadelphia Normal School for Girls, and later well known as the founder of the progressive City and Country School in New York, described Helen Marot as "a young librarian with a Quaker background and a profound concern for human values."²⁹

The Free Library of Economics and Political Science she described as:

People of all shades of radicalism came there—Single Taxers, Socialists, philosophical anarchists attracted by the unusual books and periodicals and no less by the opportunity for discussion. I took to spending a good deal of time there myself. With my own adventures in learning ever on my mind, I saw there still another aspect of education. Listening to these people, many of them graybeards, as they argued and studied, I began to see education not as an end in itself, but as the first step in a progress which should continue during a lifetime. Most people considered their education finished when they finished school.

²⁸ Mary Simmerson Logan, The Part Taken by Women in American History (Wilmington, Delaware: Perry-Nallen, 1912), p. 601.

²⁹ Pratt, I Learn from Children, p. 18. From this intellectual encounter grew a sisterly relationship that endured throughout their lives.

But it seemed to me that a school's job was quite the opposite—not to finish, but to begin education. A lifetime is not too long to spend in learning about the world...Looked at in this way, education became to me a new and living thing!³⁰

Through her library, Helen Marot participated in educating Philadelphians to social changes and pursued the socialist cause for building a more just and humane society with perseverance, courage, and a combination of "hardheaded realism and guileless romanticism."³¹

True socialism, said Victor Hugo, has for its end the education of the masses to the civic dignity, and that therefore, its principal care is for moral and intellectual cultivation.³²

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 18-19.

³¹ Lewis Mumford, Sketches from Life: The Early Years (New York: The Dial Press, 1928), p. 222.

³² W.D.P. Bliss, ed., Encyclopedia of Social Reform (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1897), p. 700.

HANDBOOK OF LABOR LITERATURE

In 1899, the Free Library of Economics and Political Science of Philadelphia published Helen Marot's work, A Hand Book of Labor Literature: Being a Classified and Annotated List of the More Important Books and Pamphlets in the English Language. To Marot, publication was yet another way—beside libraries, lectures, debates, conferences, discussions, and classes—to advance social, economic, and political awareness.

Her handbook followed the tradition of the London Fabian Society¹ whose publications were the result of study, research, and investigation of economic, political and social problems along socialist lines. The Fabians felt that the more the social conditions were scientifically and impartially studied, the stronger the case for socialism would become. Scientific study and unprejudiced and honest research based on social sciences would give reformers the tools to uproot misery and social evils. Hence, there was no reason for revolutionary propaganda and slogans; the facts would speak for themselves.²

Like the Fabians, Marot maintained that to be a socialist, a person must first understand the society he or she wanted to change. Reformers should have on hand statistical facts and other economic data before undertaking

¹ P. S. King & Son, Great Smith Street in Westminster, London, was the agent for Helen Marot's book. Copies of her book were on sale at the Fabian office in London. Fabian News 9 (July 1899), p. 20.

² Sir Sydney Caine, The History of the Foundation of the London School of Economics and Political Science (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1963), pp. 85-86.

educational and political activities aimed at legislative reforms. Due to the increasing complexity of the literature on the labor movement, it was difficult for the everyday person to have easy access to the major works without having to go through heavy and thorough bibliographies. As she said, "my intention was to first facilitate the search of information regarding the labor question and only second as a bibliographical contribution."³

The targeted audience of the handbook was not the academic or scholarly world but all persons, political or otherwise, who wished to learn more about the labor problem. Regardless, she said, of "whether {the labor question} is approached by a person who finds that things as they are are good enough, or by one who sees and is striving for a better industrial life,"⁴ they both needed to know the best books, reports and journals written in the economic and political field.

Marot brought together in her handbook her years of experience from the University Extension Program and as a cataloguer and librarian. There were no single-volume bibliographies at that time that covered the subjects so fully as this one. It included books of all known schools of reform and radical thought: industrial history, monopolies, land question (single tax), anarchism (communistic anarchy), individualism and adverse criticism of socialism, utopias, socialism, communistic societies, "how the other half lives," including the sweatshop system. Various aspects of the labor question were

³ Marot, Hand Book of Labor Literature, Introduction. The Fabian's stress that reformers' need to be educated was directly descended from the Marxian influence who maintained that revolution in the thoughts of people was a necessary precedent to a fundamental social change.

⁴ Ibid.

also included such as wages, cooperatives and profit sharing, trade unions, strikes, arbitration and conciliation, hours of labor, unemployment, women workers and child labor, industrial insurance and old age pensions, labor laws and factory acts, and Christianity and the labor question. Of particular interest was the list of labor songs and poetry.

The bibliography was useful in other ways, for it combined a number of publishers' catalogues and provided some special features, such as lists of economic monographs, labor periodicals, sociological journals, and reports published by labor bureaus in this country and overseas. Also given were the names and addresses of all of the publishers referred to in the handbook as well as the prices of most of the books. An index of authors, reference works, and bibliographies was also included. The thousand titles were well chosen and classified under some thirty headings. A few brief notes told the reader the general scope of each book. These annotations are interesting because they revealed the reason for having chosen them, although Marot avoided making judgments on the book.

Marot omitted the periodical literature because it was already so well indexed. "Poole's Index," she said "beginning with 1802 and brought down to the present time by the "Annual Literary Index," with the "Cumulative Index" and the index in each number of the "Review of Reviews" made the periodical literature always accessible down to the current month.⁵

Marot paid a great deal of attention to government documents because she felt that many libraries were not seriously collecting government publica-

⁵ Ibid., p. vi.

tions and pamphlet literature, which in many cases were free and provided much current information. To ensure that these publications were made more accessible to the general public, she attached at the end of the book a list of government agencies and their addresses.

The work, a critic maintained, "will prove a convenient supplement to the sections contained in the Reader's Hand Book of Political and Social Science, published by Mr. Bowker (Publisher) a few years ago."⁶

The selection of "the more important literature" gave Helen Marot the most difficulty. She sought outside help and received valuable suggestions for this book from Professors Jeremiah W. Jenks, Richard T. Ely, Edward W. Bemis and John R. Commons, James F. Rhodes, and Benjamin R. Tucker. She also received valuable assistance from Dr. Frederic W. Speirs, Dr. Henry R. Seager, and Morrison I. Swift.⁷ Marot had known many of these like-minded people from the University Extension days. They were defenders of labor, well known economists, Christian socialists, Fabian socialists, educators, and social reformers.

Since no two people select from the same point of view, it was easy for critics to find fault with this selective bibliography. Marot was criticized for her selection in areas which at the time were controversial and of intense social embarrassment. "How the other half lives" and the health conditions in the sweatshops was one good example. One critic said:

It seems to me that it would have been better to divide this into two topics, one relating to hygiene of occupation, the other to housing. I think also that the topic or topics relating to housing

⁶ Political Science Quarterly 14 (1899):566.

⁷ Marot, Hand Book of Labor Literature, p. vi.

and conditions of occupation might well be more fully represented. Such works as Octavia Hills's "Homes of the London Poor," Bowmaker's "Housing of the Working Classes," "The Poor in Great Cities", by Woods, "Report of the New York Tenement House Committee," "Report of the United States Labor Department on Housing of the Working People," would seem to deserve a place along with the titles which the compiler has included.⁸

The second area of criticism had to do with the alleged lack of scholarship. A critic said:

Altogether the work is well done: so well done that it is a pity that it is not better done. One hears continually preached the necessity of good workmanship even in the humbler mechanic arts. It would seem that a suspicion of slovenly workmanship is fully as reprehensible in the world of letters as in that of material production. It is regretted that in many cases the date of publication—so important an item—has been omitted, and the list of labor periodicals is of comparatively little use without some indication of the period during which the various journals have been published. The subscription price of periodicals, which the compiler omits, is as essential as the publication price of the books, which is generally given. It is also unfortunate to find an occasional slip in the name of an author.⁹

The errors found during the research for this paper were primarily typographical ones; the years given on page eight for the Reports of the Interstate Commerce Commission were 1897-98 instead of 1886-98; and an occasional misspelled name of an author, Malitesta rather than Malatesta; Kelly rather than Kelley. As for titles, Marot warned the readers not to accept her

⁸ American Journal of Sociology 5 (1899-1900), p. 127.

⁹ Journal of Political Economy 7 (1898-1899), p. 420.

list as final. Another omission was not mentioning any of the settlement-house literature.¹⁰

The bibliography, although selective and containing some minor typographical errors, on the whole, was well received, including by such journals as the Library Journal and The American Fabian.¹¹ An authority in the field of labor and political science said of Helen Marot that she:

Combined the trained ability of a librarian with the special knowledge of a student of the labor problem, and in her bibliography we have a work which will take rank beside the best bibliographies on German and French literature in the same field. Nothing comparable with it has preceded it in English, and it is a matter for special congratulation that this first essay at a comprehensive labor bibliography should be of such high merit.¹²

The handbook was practical and timely due to the great interest in this field. In a single volume, it provided all the major works written by those in the fields of political and social sciences. A reviewer summed up the importance of undertaking such a task by saying: "I fail to see how the book could be substantially improved, except by enlargements."¹³

¹⁰ Commons 57 (1899), p. 13.

¹¹ Library Journal (May 1899); The American Fabian 11 (December 1899), p. 13.

¹² Annals of the American Academy 14 (1899), p. 110.

¹³ American Journal of Sociology 5 (1899-1900), p. 127.

MAROT'S VIEW OF AN ECONOMIC LIBRARY

One of Helen Marot's primary concerns was the failure of libraries in large cities to take part in educational work along political and economic lines. Libraries in small cities were not expected to specialize in these subjects, except where the demand justified. This was not the case with the libraries of large cities. The whole nation, she said, expected from these urban areas, with sharp industrial pressure and active political struggle, leadership in the economic and political movements of the time. To meet such a need, every large city, she contended, should have such a department in their public libraries.

The collections of special libraries dealing with economics and political science should include the standard works of social economics and political science, both in theory and in history, as well as works in philosophy and science. An open mind should be maintained about works of a temporary nature, and in particular, pamphlets. The accumulation of this ephemeral literature and state reports should be in the hands of a librarian with a keen interest in public affairs, one who had a knack for discovering and collecting this particular kind of material. When making acquisitions, librarians generally relied upon advance notices of books, reviews,¹ and the reputation

¹ Library Journal 25 (April 1900), p. 158. In a letter to the Library Journal, Marot suggested that librarians let reviewers know what information they find useful when they use book reviews.

of the publishing house. Such assistance was lacking in the collection of pamphlets. A librarian who was knowledgeable in the subject matter knew the reputations of the authors of stray pamphlets. Also, when reading a daily paper, the librarian "instinctively discovered the incidental allusions to a new or stray publication."²

The continuous exchange of ideas with other librarians, in or out of the library, provided opportunities to discover new ones. Discrimination in the collection of state reports was the most perplexing part. These reports, she added, were issued in overwhelming quantities and varied in value as they might contain statements that were revolutionary in character or flagrant misstatements issued for partisan purposes.³

Marot felt that the cost of an experienced assistant to collect pamphlets and state reports would be offset by the small cost of the literature itself, in relation to its intrinsic value. Many political and economic associations issued their reports and other publications entirely free of charge. She added that "the importance of such literature, carefully classified and accessible to the general public, could not be overestimated."⁴ They provided valuable statistics and ideas for speeches and debates. Even if used by few patrons, she

² Helen Marot, "The Value of an Economic Library," Commons, 7 (August 1902): p. 4.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

maintained, they "would act as a leaven working towards a higher social plane."⁵

The administration of such a library should be in the hands of experienced librarians who are trained not only in library science, but the library's subject specialty, and who are "alive to public interests."⁶ Years later, Marot restated the need to satisfy one's "creative instinct" when dealing with people in libraries and industries:

The opportunity for self-expression, which is synonymous with joy in work . . . is something the workman is entitled to . . . we must think less of the science of material things and think more of the science of human relationships⁷

The staff of a Library of Economics often made as much difference to a patron as the collection of books themselves. Any one who has used a well conducted library, which specialized in some one subject, Marot observed, "will remember that there was something contagious in the atmosphere," and, if those in charge did not know the subject as well as the patrons, they at least "knew the literature far better and were able to help them to a further knowledge of what he wanted as well as to the books and papers."⁸

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Helen Marot, Creative Impulse in Industry: A Proposition for Educators (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1919), p. 137, 139.

⁸ Commons, p. 4.

When a topic was broad in scope, the patron's search through the card catalogue and bibliographical lists seldom uncovered the same materials that an experienced and resourceful librarian would. Even in those days, Marot admitted that the value of a card catalogue in special libraries, "was as much if not more for the use of the librarian than the patrons, an opinion in which the latter are generally glad to concur."⁹ Marot believed that librarians preferred the direct one-to-one contact with patrons. She felt this approach allowed the patrons to "broaden their knowledge and point of view for the direct benefit of the library."¹⁰

Marot viewed such a library, conducted on these principles and dealing with social problems, as a "bureau of information." The bulletin boards would display book lists, literature dealing with the issues of the day, and newly issued economic and political reports. The library would keep on file bibliographies for seldom-requested works. "It can hardly be doubted," she asserted, "that the very existence of such a library in a large city would stimulate interest and promote less biased thought."¹¹

To put into practice these ideas, she proposed to the Philadelphia Free Library to establish a branch library devoted to economics and political science. Marot felt that this library, which served greater Philadelphia, was the proper place to offer literature of public interest. The proposal stated the

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

following conditions: the Library of Economics and Political Science would contribute its 600 books, 2,000 pamphlets, 90 periodicals and news clippings, provide a supervisor, and pay the rent for a term of three years. For the same period, they would request from the Philadelphia Free Library an \$800 annual budget to purchase literature on economics and political sciences (to be selected by the board of the Free Library of Economics and Political Science), and to pay for equipment and an assistant librarian who would do cataloguing and reference work.

The proposal, she felt, would reduce the expenses of the Philadelphia Free Library to one-half of what it would have cost if they had to run the branch independently. The branch library would be managed by Helen Marot who possessed the rare combination of being knowledgeable of the literature of political economy and being able to manage a library.¹²

On April 13, 1898, the Committee on Library turned down the proposal:

It was not desirable, they said, to have a separate branch devoted to economics and that in no event would it be desirable to have a Branch Library so near to the Free Library as Filbert Street.¹³

The refusal to assist in such endeavor showed, she said, "a lack of initiative not consistent with the library spirit of recent years."¹⁴

¹² Evening Public Ledger, 15 November 1898.

¹³ Committee on Library, April 13, 1898. Archives of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

¹⁴ Commons, p. 3. Marot emphasized that one of the most important functions of a public library was to help educate citizens in order to take their place in the public affairs of their communities.

Marot had recognized from the start that the idea of an independent library such as her library, dealing exclusively with public affairs, was "probably in advance of liberal financial support for such a purpose."¹⁵ After working closely with the traveling library of Philadelphia,¹⁶ the Free Library of Economics and Political Science was temporarily moved to the Odd Fellows' Library on North Broad and Cherry Street ¹⁷ in Philadelphia, where, in 1901, it was incorporated with the American Academy of Political and Social Science.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ The Free Library of Philadelphia, Fifth Annual Report 1900, p. 55; Sixth Annual Report 1901, p. 39.

¹⁷ Gospill's Philadelphia City Directory, 1899, p. 2716.

CONCLUSION

Helen Marot's early years as a librarian were a prelude to further political activities. In 1900-1901, she and Caroline Pratt investigated the custom tailoring trades in Philadelphia for the United States Industrial Commission. This experience "added force to her natural sympathy for the exploited."¹ Her exposure to the condition of labor in America

made operating a reading and discussion center seem like a sentimental gesture indeed, and transferred a studious librarian of pacifist tendency into a belligerent activist who would play a distinguished role in some of the great social movements of the Progressive Era.²

As a librarian, she sought to connect libraries with the political issues of the nineteenth century. In this role, she was part of a new sociological order inspired by a longing for a better society. Although her voice was small; her dedication and steadfastness were not. As a Quaker, she was convinced of the justice of her cause. She believed that a person was born innocent but that society, through its exploitative system, made the wage earner forever tied to machines and denied equal share in society's wealth. Therefore, she placed great importance on education to not only emancipate the working class and improve their skills, but to provide the tools for greater participation in government to make a truly democratic government.

¹ Robert McHenry, ed., *Liberty's Woman* (Springfield, MA: G. and C. Meniamlo, 1980), p. 771.

² unpublished version of Sol Cohen.

The road she chose was not a popular one. Caught between ignorance from below and cynicism from above, she sought a middle course. This course was not based on trying to fit theories to justify one's action but to educate herself and others in political and economic affairs so as to deal more effectively with the abounding social problems of her time. Her methods were peaceful and effective: knowledge, education, discussion, reading, love of humanity; and books, books, and more books.

The road to utopia through education [said Durant] is long arduous, but man has made some progress on that road, and there is no visible limit to his further advance. The goal is a humanity sufficiently instructed and foresightful to ask reasonably and freely.³

³ Will and Ariel Durant, The Age of Napoleon, 11 vols. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975) 11:399.

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