

REGULATIONS [1791]

As a general diffusion of knowledge has a tendency not only to increase the happiness of individuals, but strengthen the bonds of Society, to soften the manners, & render us more agreeable & useful to each other, to promote Religion & virtue, & to perpetuate the Liberty & happiness we enjoy as members of a free and independent Republic—We, the Subscribers, in order to facilitate the aforesaid important purposes, do Severally & reciprocally promise & agree to, & with each other, that we will associate ourselves to gather, & purchase a Library, to be denominated Northborough Library, & to consist of such Books as we shall in future agree to purchase under the regulations hereafter expressed, which regulations we solemnly promise to observe & keep, viz—

1st. A Librarian shall be annually chosen by written votes whose business shall be to take the custody of the Library—to deliver out the books and receive them in when return'd agreeably to the restrictions hereafter mentioned and keep an exact account thereof in a Book appropriated for that purpose, of the Books he shall so deliver & receive, specifying the State they are in when delivered & received & as aforesaid—to receive & keep an account of all fines that shall become due to the proprietors in manner hereafter express'd, & to account to the Treasurer therefore at the annual meeting of the Proprietors.

2nd. A Treasurer shall be annually chosen by written votes, whose business shall be to receive all monies that shall accrue to the Proprietors in any way or manner, & to render an exact account thereof to the Proprietors at their annual meeting unless an account thereof shall be sooner called for.

3rd. A Clerk shall be annually chosen by written votes, whose business shall be to keep a record of all the proceedings of The Propriety.

4th. A Committee of 3 shall be annually chosen by written votes, who shall manage the affairs of the Society, determine what fines, penalties or forfeitures any have incurred. They shall meet quarterly to wit 1st Mondays in January, April, July & October and at all other times when the Librarian shall deem it necessary to call them together, who is authorized so to do, and shall do, & transact all such business as shall be committed to them, by any article hereafter subjoined or by any vote of the Propriety.

5th. A Committee of three shall be annually chosen by written votes to select & purchase suitable books for Library, all the money that shall any way accede [?] to the Society, shall be paid to this Committee by the Treasurer who shall dispatch of it for the benefit of the Library according to vote of the Proprietors. Any member has a right to suggest to the committee any particular book or books they wish to have in the Library.

6th. There shall be a meeting of the Proprietors on the first Monday in November annually, at 2 o'clock P.M. at such hour & [at?] place as shall be hereafter determined upon by vote of the Proprietors – and at such other times as the Librarian & committee shall deem it necessary.

7th. The Library shall always be kept within a mile of the Meeting House in Northborough.

8th. Any person who is desirous of an interest in the Library shall apply to the Librarian who is to propose him to the committee at their next meeting, and if approv'd of by them, & shall pay into the hands of the Treasurer three dollars at least, & shall sign these articles shall become a Proprietor.

9th. Any one shall have a right to take any book out of the Library, let [?] the original cost be ever so much—and he has also a right to take out two or more books at a time, provided the original cost of all he shall take did not amount to so much by one third of the fees [?] as he gave the Library.

10th. The term allowed a Proprietor to keep a book out of the Library is five weeks living within five miles & eight weeks living upwards of five miles, and whoever shall keep a book out longer than the aforesaid terms shall for each day forfeit & pay two pence until he returns the book or books.

11th. Every one when he returns a book shall have his choice of any book or books that shall then be in the Library provided never the less no person shall have the same book more than twice in succession.

12th. Whoever shall lend any book belonging to the Library, out of his own house, shall upon discovery thereof by the Committee or otherwise forfeit & pay two shillings; and no book shall be lent out of the Library, unless to the members, except to transient School masters if they should wish therefore while keeping school in the town & then only under the same restrictions, forfeitures & penalties, to which members are subject. Or to some persons on some special occasions, judged necessary by the Committee & under the same restrictions as above.

13th. Whoever shall loose [sic] or destroy any book belonging to the Library shall be obliged to make good the damage, according to the estimation of the committee, & if the book lost or destroyed belong to a set, he shall (unless he is able to supply its place with a new one) be liable to pay for the whole set, & take the remainder.

14th. Whenever any book is return'd torn, scrawled, or otherwise abused, the Librarian shall lay it before the Committee at their next meeting; and he who returned it in that condition, shall be obliged to pay what they set the damage at.

15th. The forfeitures & penalties above specified shall be paid to the Librarian whenever he shall make a demand of them, & in case any one shall refuse to pay his forfeit or penalty, when demanded, the Librarian shall not deliver him out an other book 'till the next annual meeting of the Society, before whom his case shall be laid, for a final decision; and if he refuses to submit to their determination, he shall forfeit his whole right in the Library.

16th. The Librarian shall give an account of the state of the Library to the Society at their annual meeting, and he with the Treasurer, Clerk & Committee shall be accountable to the society for their conduct & give an account thereof, if required.

17th. Every Proprietor shall have liberty to sell or give his right to an other, while living, and in case of mortality, the interest of the deceas'd shall descend to one of his children if he has any, unless he has conveyed it to some other person. And if he leave more than one child, and did not determine by a written conveyance which should enjoy it, the children shall settle that point among themselves, before any one shall be admitted in virtue of the Parent's right. And if he leaves no child, nor written conveyance of his right or the wife it shall be deem'd as given to the Society.

18th. Provided,

Every one before he is admitted upon an others right, shall apply as specified in the eighth article, & if he shall be so admitted he shall upon subscribing these articles become a member of the Society, but if the committee refuse to admit him, the Treasurer shall refund to him the money given by the Proprietor whose right he claims.

19th. In order to make useful additions to the Library, each Proprietor at the annual meeting shall pay unto the Treasurer the sum of one shilling five pence, for the term of five years, unless sooner revoked by one of the Proprietors at an annual meeting.

20th. If by experience the foregoing articles shall be found insufficient to secure fully the several members of the Society the privileges & advantages proposed in establishing the Library, the Society shall be at liberty to make such alterations and additions as they shall judge necessary.

21st. The foregoing articles shall be recorded in a book by the Clerk, & sign'd by all the members, in which he is also to keep the records of the proceedings of the Proprietors.

Northborough
December 26th, 1791
The foregoing Regulations
were accepted by the Society

December 26th, 1791

The Society met agreeably to an appointment & chose the following persons to manage the Library, viz.,

1st. Josiah Fairbank - Librarian
2nd. Capt. Sam. Wood – Treasurer
3rd. Josiah Fairbank – Clerk
4th. a Committee of three to manage the affairs of the Library, viz.,
1st Capt. Sam. Wood
2nd Deacon Seth Rice [Junior?]
3rd Major Holloway Taylor

5th. A Second Committee to select & purchase suitable books for the Library

1st. Rev'd Wm[?] Whitney
2nd. Josiah Fairbank

3rd. Major H. Taylor

6th Voted that this Committee should select out of two catalogues [sic] presented to them such books as they think best, together with such other books as they shall judge necessary amounting to so much as is already subscribed.

7th. Voted that the first Committee take the care of providing a Bookeeper [sic].

Transcribed 11/15/13

Jean M. Langley

Library Director