

Forbes Library Gift History

Forbes Library was the gift to Northampton by Judge Charles E. Forbes, who left a bequest to the city to build a public library. The Last Will and Testament of Charles Edward Forbes, signed September 25, 1876, can be seen at the library or online at <http://www.forbeslibrary.org/about/about.shtml>

Pertinent passages from the Will of Charles Edward Forbes are below:

All the rest, residue and remainder of my property and estate, real, personal and mixed, wherever situate or of whatever the same may consist, I give, devise and bequeath. . . for the purchase of a site and the erection of a building, or the purchase of a building for the accommodation of a Public Library, and for the purchase of books, &c., to be placed therein for the use of the Inhabitants of said town of Northampton and their successors forever. . . . All purchases of real estate under this Will to be evidenced by deed or deeds conveying a fee simple to said trustees, their heirs and assigns, in legal form, duly acknowledged and recorded, but in trust always and for the trusts and uses indicated in this Will.

(Section 9, Pages 3 & 4)

The above bequest for the benefit of the Inhabitants of said Northampton is made on the following conditions:

- 1. That the town by vote shall accept said bequest within three years after the Probate of this will, and further*
- 2. By a vote duly recorded and legally binding, the inhabitants of said town in their corporate capacity as a town shall obligate themselves and their successors*
- 3. To pay all expenses necessarily incurred in about the management and administration of the affairs of said library over and above the income derived from the Aid Fund.*
- 4. To keep the library building in repair, and to rebuild the same in case of its destruction by fire or other casualty*
- 5. To erect or provide such other building or buildings as may hereafter become necessary in consequence of the enlargement of the library*

Should the trustees nominated and appointed by this will, or their successors in said trust, upon due inquiry, made as expeditiously as can be conveniently done after my decease, become satisfied that a majority of the inhabitants of said town of Northampton are disposed to accept the above bequest upon the conditions thereto annexed, it is recommended that an act be obtained from the Legislature incorporating said library, and giving to the town in their corporate capacity the requisite power and authority, by vote or votes duly passed in legal town meeting and recorded among the records of said town, to adopt and execute the provisions of this will, and to perform all the conditions and to assume all the obligations therein mentioned, and to be forever bound to the performance thereof.

(Section 9, page 10)

The Trustees of Forbes Library procured an Act of the Legislature (Chapter 232 Acts of 1881) incorporating the library and authorizing the town to accept the will (Chapter 241 Acts of 1881). At a town meeting held on May 31, 1881, the town accepted these acts and the bequest and bound itself to the performance of the conditions of the will; and among other things obligated itself:

1. "To pay all expenses necessarily incurred in about the management and administration of the affairs of said library over and above the income derived from the 'Aid Fund.'
2. To keep the library building in repair, and to rebuild the same in case of its destruction by fire or other casualty
3. To erect or provide such other building or buildings as may hereafter become necessary in consequence of the enlargement of the library."

(Forbes Library Trustees Report of November 30, 1895 page 5)