

**The John Carter Brown Library. Providence, Rhode Island. Extract from the minutes of the Committee of management, July 19, 1938 [Regarding the retirement of Mr. Joseph McCoid].**

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Extracts from the Minutes of the Committee of Management, July 19, 1938

*Upon the report by the Librarian that the caretaker and photographer, Joseph McCoid, had come under the terms of the University's retirement plant and that he would no longer be in active service of the Library after October 1, 1938, it was moved by Mr. John Nicholas Brown that the following expression of appreciation be placed upon the minutes and a copy of it given to Mr. McCoid:*

IN the retirement of Joseph McCoid, the Committee of Management feels more than the ordinary regret at the ending of a long term of service. Joseph McCoid came to the Library on January 1, 1911, so that he has had a part in its activities for twenty-seven of the thirty-four years that have elapsed since it was opened to the public. He learned at once to become a skillful operator of the photostat camera and in 1912 began under Mr. Winship the reproduction of books and newspapers for the use of scholars, thus taking an important part in that revolution of research procedure through the photostat in which this Library, with the Library of Congress and the New York Public Library, was the pioneer. At a later time he taught himself to use the photostat camera for plate and film work, and for many years there was no finer photographic work coming from any library in the country than he turned out through one or the other of these uses of his camera.

THE chief task upon which Mr. McCoid engaged in this period was the reproduction of the eighteenth-century the of the *Newport Mercury*, 1758-1800, for thirteen subscribing libraries. The completion of this project in 1933 meant that he had made in the course of it 94,360 prints. He made also hundreds of reproductions of entire pamphlets from our collection for the use of investigators, notably thirty-six for inclusion in the Massachusetts Historical Society Photostat Americana, first and second series. He copied by photostat for another group of subscribing libraries the remaining numbers of the *Maryland Gazette*, 1728-1734. He made for the Carnegie Institution of Washington, and, later, for others, a reproduction, enlarged for easier reading, of the 1450 pages of our famous Motul-Maya Dictionary; and for the University of California, he copied the 336 pages of our Pedro Font Diary of the expedition responsible for the settlement of San Francisco. Only two years ago he completed the copying of the six volumes of records of the Corporation of Brown University. A well-remembered achievement in plate photography was his making of a set of thirty plates of our



*Libretto* of 1504, from which was made the superb collotype reproduction published in Paris in 1930 by the firm of Honoré Champion.

THROUGHOUT the period of his service he has been helpful in all social occasions of the Library, exercising not only his skill as caterer but the peculiar gift of friendliness which has made him a popular figure in Providence, known and well-liked by its chief citizens. Since 1911 the entire responsibility for the safety of the building has been in Mr. McCoid's hands, and in all those years no librarian has ever felt a moment's uneasiness as to his conscientious performance of the tasks necessary to the protection of the collection.

HIS courage in the undertaking of work for which he had no previous training, his success in carrying it out, and his faithfulness in the daily performance of his more familiar duties have won for him our admiration. His personal qualities attach us to him in a friendship which continues despite his separation from the active service of the Library. The association of Joseph McCoid with the John Carter Brown Library has established a tradition which is cherished by Brown University and by the Committee of Management and the staff of the institution.