

## CHAPTER I

## THE PROBLEM, SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THIS STUDY

The problem concerned in this research was the collection of necessary data to write a history of the Laurens Public Library, to test my idea that the library originated from the efforts of an interested organization, and that through the work of many people the library was able to reach its present status.

As no involved history of this library was written until this material was collected and organized, this history should serve to show the development of one individual library, and to add material for research of a more general nature.

This history attempts to cover what the author considers pertinent data which added to the rise and development of this library. This history is not intended to be a definitive work, but rather a survey of events which helped to make the library what it is today.

This history begins with the events which later produced a book collection, before it was called the Free Public Library, and ends with the tax levy approved by the Laurens City Council in December of 1963.

The limitations of this history can be grouped into categories including (1) the absence of all early, and most of the later, workers in the library movement; (2) heavy reliance upon minutes of meetings and newspaper articles; (3) the absence of some primary sources such as contracts, records of the Iowa State Traveling Library, correspondence, and early city buildings, (4) the lack of some secondary sources such as "mugbooks," diaries, local historians and area histories; and (5) the inability of many persons interviewed to recollect other than scanty information about policies or specific happenings over the years.