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**Editor-in-Chief: Albright, Kendra S. / Bothma, Theo J.D.**

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IMPACT FACTOR 2017: 0.500

5-year IMPACT FACTOR: 0.596

CiteScore 2017: 0.52

SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) 2017: 0.243

Source Normalized Impact per Paper (SNIP) 2017: 0.634

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# A Unique Record of a People's Reading

**PAUL KAUFMAN,**

**Published Online:** 2011-09-20 | **DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1515/LIBR.1964.14.3.227>

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# A Unique Record of a People's Reading

by PAUL KAUFMAN

"Every artificer, . . . the smith sitting by the anvil, . . . the potter sitting at his work: . . . Without these shall not a city be inhabited . . . They will maintain the fabric of the world."

(*Ecclesiasticus*, 38)

The picturesque name and surroundings of Innerpeffray are known to all interested in libraries throughout Scotland and to many in England. The historic collection in the heart of Perthshire has been the subject of articles in Scottish periodicals and in the *Library Association Record* and was described in a broadcast some fifteen years ago over the B.B.C.<sup>1</sup> More recently, in 1961, members of the Bibliographical Societies of Glasgow and Edinburgh made a joint visit to inspect the various features of interest.<sup>2</sup>

These exceptionally arresting features need no repetition here. The founding of the library by David Drummond, third Lord Madertie, in a testament of 1680, stipulated the erection of a library "for the benefit and encouragement of young students" with provision for the maintenance and development of a suitable collection, now totaling well over 3000 volumes.<sup>3</sup> This foundation received a substantial addition from the Rt. Rev. Robert Hay Drummond, Archbishop of York (1761-1776) in whose time the present library building was constructed. Although the scattered farm houses of the area called Innerpeffray have all but disappeared, the two-story library, quite isolated except for the adjacent unused chapel and schoolhouse, attracts hundreds of visitors every summer and maintains a library service for residents in the environs. Four miles from the nearest town of Crieff, such a unique remoteness in the peaceful countryside gives it a distinction of no little charm tinged with a sense of the mystery of its survival in such an unusual rural setting.

Such facts have been recited. But what has remained unnoticed is what makes a public library – or shall we not say any non-private library? – of significant influence in the society from which it springs. Here is a

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## 📄 About the article

**Published Online:** 2011-09-20

**Published in Print:** 1964-01-01

**Citation Information:** Libri, Volume 14, Issue 3, Pages 227–242, ISSN (Online) 1865-8423, ISSN (Print) 0024-2667, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1515/LIBR.1964.14.3.227>.

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