

Excerpt of memo from W.B. McDaniel read at first meeting of MLA-PHIL, November 16, 1951

Transcribed on the occasion of the Chapter's 60th anniversary and read at its annual meeting, April 6, 2011, by Annie Brogan, MLA-PHIL Archives Chair, and Librarian, College of Physicians of Philadelphia

Some of you will remember that in 1943, during the war, when national meetings were suspended, a regional meeting of medical librarians was held in this building, some of its sessions in this room. The region embraced was, roughly, that of the Middle Atlantic States. At the time, there was a strong feeling in the medical library association, to which most of us belonged, that such regional meetings constituted a threat to the security of the national Association. We therefore dutifully and loudly proclaimed that our meeting had nothing whatsoever to do with the Medical Library Association. This was rank perjury, of course, because it was the friendships we had formed in, and the professional assistance we had received from, our national association that made it seem imperative, even in the midst of war, for those of us who could get together to do so. We foreswore use of the name of our Association, indeed, but its beneficent spirit was guiding us all the time.

Now we have all been devilishly concerned with national medical library affairs...[W]e have been an enterprising enough little group in the great world out yonder; but we haven't given too much attention to cultivating our own garden in any systematic way.

Of course, the time to do what comes naturally is when it seems the natural thing to do. It seems clear to quite a number now that the time is ripe to provide ourselves with a mechanism for studying together how we might be of more use to one another in meeting common problems at the local level; a mechanism that will embrace all in our area who are in any way concerned with these problems. The Medical Library Association, which itself welcomes as members all medicated [sic] institutions and individuals, has sufficiently recovered from its phobia of regional development in this very large country. This encourages the hope that a Metropolitan Philadelphia group may enjoy the undoubted inspiration and practical assistance to be derived from affiliation with the national association...