



**Jennie McLaughlin  
(1868-1947)**

Jennie McLaughlin is remembered for being the Town's first official Librarian. Residents, who visited the Library as a child, remember McLaughlin as kind, but stern – you didn't mess about in the Library! McLaughlin married young, though little is known regarding her marriage or husband. What is remembered is that she, with her sister Mary, raised an "adopted" southern girl, Eliza. McLaughlin was a tall woman, with rosy cheeks and steel rimmed glasses and she was often seen walking to and from the Library. She was the first superintendent of the First Parish Church Sunday School and among her duties was the responsibility of selecting books as rewards for students with perfect attendance. McLaughlin enjoyed traveling,

visiting both Alaska and Europe and it is possible that she was also a member of the woman's alliance. Her passion for the Library can be seen in a report written in 1913 that discussed the hidden treasures within the Library. A sample of the reports is as follows:

The library started with a fine selection, well balanced, with nearly every department in the world of books, represented. I honestly think it has not dropped in its standard. It has been my aim to keep it balanced. My method of making out the list which is sent in to the committee for approval is to divide the list into thirds, - 1/3 to be fiction, 1/3 juvenile, and 1/3 non-fiction – whatever may seem to be most needed or most readable. The list is made with much thought and consideration.... It seems to me there may be a happy medium which it were wise to strive for. A public library is supposed to meet the needs of all sorts and conditions of men and a good public library should have something for everyone...I wish more of the citizens of the town could be induced to reach below the surface and realize the treasures which may be found there.