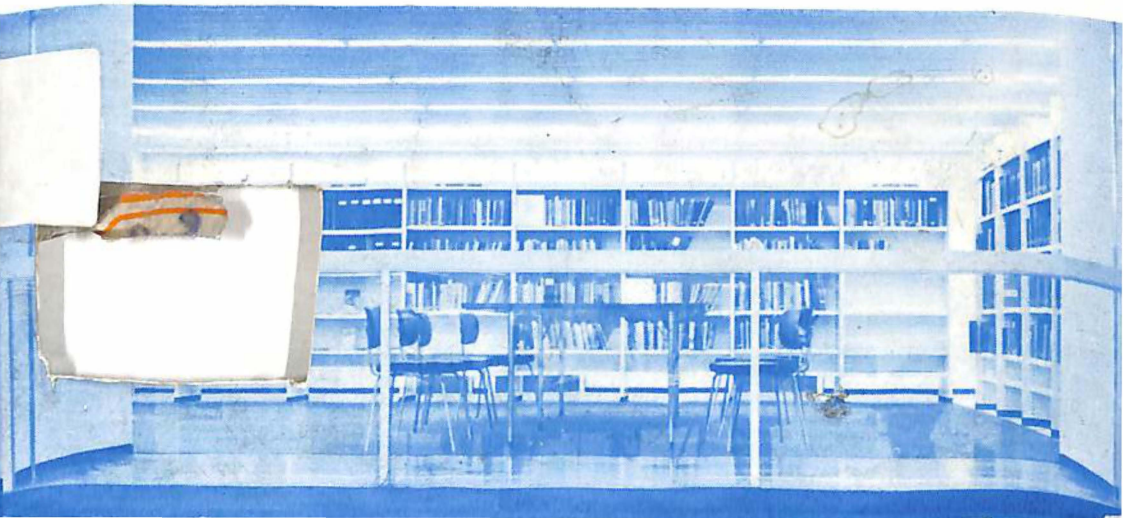
LIBRARIANSHIP

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROFESSION

by Frank Atkinson



Librarianship

an introduction to the profession

'Let us hope, too, that we may preserve some of the leaven of human laughter and light-heartedness. A truth is no truer for a dull delivery . . .' Philip Wade, Librarian of the Royal Society of Medicine.

FRANK ATKINSON

Librarianship

an introduction to the profession

with contributions from

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For Ann

Acknowledgements

RECENT reports of the demise of the Library Association Library were, fortunately, exaggerated and I am grateful to the staff for their willing and efficient assistance. I wish to thank all those friends and colleagues who have helped me—particularly Bernard Palmer, my first real tutor in librarianship, for writing the epilogue to this book; Barry Bloomfield and Peter New, for their contributions; Tony Harvey of the British Museum (Natural History), for bringing interesting material to my notice; Peter Doye of Dunn & Wilson Ltd, for details of A-V materials and packaging; Raymond Parkin of Lagos, for typing when he could have been enjoying his leave; and Cherry Hadley, Simon Francis and Nelson Trowbridge, for photographs they have taken.

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FRANK ATKINSON

Broad Oak
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September 1973

Introduction

I found that I could not contemplate an adult life in which books were not dominant. I wanted to live and work with them. . . . I had to be able to take books from their places, run my finger over their backs, see how they opened, flick their corners straight. I wanted a perspective of bookshelves always in my eye. And books, books, books. This was not a rational way of determining on a career and was much tainted by mushiness. But it was the way in which my decision hardened, before I was fifteen years old, to become a librarian. Clifford Currie, Librarian of the Ashmolean Library, Oxford.

I never wanted to be a librarian when I grew up. It never even occurred to me . . . Melinda Schroeder, Librarian in Spanish Harlem, New York.

THERE ARE MANY and diverse ways of arriving at a decision to be a librarian. There is no golden road, no preferred way. The two quotations here illustrate two extremes—precocious commitment and early indifference. Neither of these pre-professional attitudes is a sure guide to subsequent professional performance, achievement or satisfaction.

This book is intended for all those who, with whatever degree of conviction, have decided on a career in librarianship. It is not a comprehensive survey of libraries, nor does it offer a potted course in librarianship. It does, however, attempt to show what a librarian may be and what librarianship is—without considering too much the librarian over our shoulder.

Status and stipend

It is undeniable that to become a librarian is to enter a profession of indeterminate social status. Intense concern over 'status' grips

sections of the profession from time to time. There are many conference papers and periodical articles, originating both in Britain and the United States, devoted to this topic. These outbreaks are in the nature of bloodletting, which may temporarily reduce the pressure, but effect no cure. Status cannot be raised by protesting too much.

Why, then, the recurring fuss? In his paper to the 1960 Library Association Conference, R G Surridge stated, 'There is a decided link between salaries and status'. This belief may be the reason for much of the agitation.

All librarianship career pamphlets stress that the remuneration is adequate, but rarely over-generous. This is not to say, however, that a little something more than adequate would not be welcome, or that librarians should be too gentlemanly to press for it.

Not in our stars . . .

Again, concern over 'professional status' may not be the same as concern for the status of one's profession. Professor Irwin has defined librarianship as 'the characteristics and functions of a librarian'. Our corporate status may reflect those characteristics and functions which a majority of people *outside* the profession observe. It may, therefore, be better or worse than any particular librarian deserves.

However diffidently a physician may say, 'I happen to be a doctor', it sounds like a boast. To say, 'I happen to be a librarian', could be taken for an apology. Librarianship has little social cachet. It may seem unjust to be short on both cash and cachet, and for every entrant to the profession to have to achieve his own status, but that's the way it is. On the other hand, any librarian *can* establish a quite enviable status within the community or organisation which his library serves.

What the pamphlets say

In order to counteract a longstanding and widespread misconception that a library, as a place of work, is a restful and easy billet, all the introductory pamphlets emphasise the opposite.

Certainly, in a busy lending library for example, with hundreds

of returned books to be checked, sorted, trundled around and shelved, the assistants soon become aware of the physical demands of the job. There is probably more manual humping of loads in many a library today than there is on the docks.

The only light relief in all this literature appears in the British government pamphlet on careers in librarianship. 'Good vision', it says, 'with spectacles if necessary, is essential.'

We're not like that

The drunken doctor has gone out of literary fashion and even the crooked lawyer and simpering curate are becoming rare characters. Yet the mean-souled librarian, male or female, is still a stock type slotted into plays, novels and sketches. It is always a public librarian, of course. The industrial librarian—who has been around in real life for a long time now—does not exist in fiction. An academic librarian may be portrayed in the context of university politics, but never in a library situation.

Occasionally, as with Kingsley Amis's character John Lewis in *That uncertain feeling*, a librarian is shown to be a human being (and in this case he was all human being and no librarian).

For the most part, however, authors are content to use the established image.

'Tough men in good suits'

It could be that this image was originally created out of encounters between aspiring writers and those librarians who were over-concerned with property, propriety and hush. We have at least one example on record. Anthony Burgess, a writer who is never loth to share his traumas on either side of the Atlantic, comments on libraries in *Urgent copy* (Cape, 1968):

'I was frightened by a library as a child', he writes, 'and I've never got over it.' When he was a fourth-former he chose a book from Manchester libraries and tried to take it home after filling in a slip. He was prevented from doing so because he happened to be in the Reference Library. 'It was a nightmare experience', he tells the world, 'The librarians were tough men in good suits.'

It would be as well, then, to be on the lookout for slightly dim,

sheltered fourth-formers who don't know a reference library when they're in the middle of one—just in case they are budding best-seller writers.

It is worthwhile browsing through *Who's who in librarianship and information science* (Abelard-Schuman, second edition 1972), if only as a corrective to the fictional librarian image. The special interests declared therein include expected subjects such as book-collecting, music, writing and so on. Other activities may surprise those who do not know many librarians—ancient and medieval warfare; rowing and preaching; rugby league football, horse-breeding and brewing; model railways and athletics; gliding, Oxfam and talking to children.

One other interesting fact should be mentioned: the contrast between librarians' concern for comprehensiveness in works of reference, and the large number of them who preferred not to be included in *Who's who in librarianship and information science.*

This may well be an indication of the personal and professional diffidence which many outsiders see when looking at librarians and librarianship.

Will it be worth it, after all?

There are many excellent people who could exist by selling insurance, running a betting shop, or stockbroking—and call it living. Most of them, happily, are in betting, stockbroking or insurance. Only a very few can be found in librarianship, where they are likely to spend their days time-serving or low-level wheeling and dealing; their nights pass, perhaps, in envious dreams of executives' perks.

As in all fields of endeavour, a few other misfits, born middle-aged and small-minded, bumble through to retirement; regretting the past, bemoaning the present, fearing the future.

The majority of librarians, however, feel that they have a worthwhile and rewarding job. Many of us count ourselves fortunate to be in the best of professions.

Not all love

The library has been both the hope and the despair of men who

look to the future; it has been the delight and the disappointment of those who look to the past. Anyone concerned with progress and human development must first assess the present. He sometimes finds it further advanced than he had thought, with much of his work already done, and that gaps exist in areas that he had not previously envisaged. Such discoveries can only be made in a library system that is comprehensive.

On the other hand, the simple seeker after knowledge may find himself baffled either by the very comprehensiveness of the library's coverage, or by the fact that the knowledge he hoped to find has not yet been discovered or recorded.

The intense pleasure with which people have created and conserved large masses of literature to serve their ends, is paralleled by periodic outbursts of fanatical hatred for such collections. The total destruction of the ancient library at Alexandria by the Moslems; the sacking of the European monastic libraries during the Dark Ages; the Nazis' burning of books; and the recent attacks on university libraries by students in the United States, are obvious examples.

The profession which you, the reader, are hopefully entering, is not that of a mere functionary, nor one of remote scholarship or science. It is, in fact, essential to society's continuing emotional *affaire* with knowledge.

1 *One profession*

Underlying the enormous diversity of libraries, there is a common structure. If you concentrate on comparative anatomy you will not be misled by the chameleon aspects of libraries and mistake a protective or concealing coloration for organic structure. F Raymond Smith, former Guildhall Librarian.

Nothing distinguishes an Information Scientist from a Librarian unless it be that a librarian lacks the ability to comprehend and transfer or circulate information, and I do not believe that this is the case. D J Foskett Librarian, Institute of Education, University of London; formerly Librarian, Metal Box Company.

TAKEN TOGETHER, these two quotations add up to the following proposition: 'The wide variety of types of libraries that exist today suggests a variety of "librarianships". This is not so; there are only different institutions where differing degrees of emphasis are placed on the various aspects and techniques of librarianship, including information work.'

Conserving and communicating

Among the many definitions of a 'library', perhaps the best is the simplest—a collection of books and other material made useful. Put equally simply, librarianship is the practice of collecting such material and making it useful.

A library collection must be built up and continually maintained by adding to it and, where necessary, withdrawing from it. The librarian must identify the available material and select from it according to the known and anticipated needs of his users. He must then indicate possession (usually by stamping and registering), house the material and record its whereabouts at all times. This is conservation, and conservation is an essential component of the

communication process. Conservation as an end in itself is something else.

Robert Shackleton, Bodley's Librarian, tells of a distinguished French librarian (of today, not of some comic, bygone era) who told one of his staff, 'Your duty is to conserve, not to communicate'.

That Frenchman, distinguished or not, is no librarian; he is a caretaker.

There are some others in the profession whose basic philosophy is the same, and whose behaviour expresses it just as explicitly. Bodley's Librarian didn't really have to cross the channel for an example, but we laugh more easily at a *petit fonctionnaire* than at a homegrown petty official.

So much for caretakers. A librarian, on the other hand, *does* communicate. He classifies, arranges and displays his material and lists it in catalogues and handouts. He abstracts information and disseminates it in bulletins and journals (*see* the chapter *Spreading the word*) and he transmits it graphically, electronically and by personal contact. This is the information aspect of librarianship. It is, of course, more highly developed in some libraries than others, but it remains an integral part of librarianship. Most of the introductory literature to the profession—library school prospectuses, Library Association pamphlets, and so on—indicates this. Common sense confirms it.

Hands off, it's mine!

It is possible, however, that you may browse through the *Encyclopaedia of librarianship* (Bowes & Bowes, third edition 1966). Among the articles and definitions in it (for the most part authoritative and useful), the following may be encountered under the heading 'Institute of Information Scientists Ltd':

Information work is distinct from librarianship
and should in no way be confused with it.

This is interesting for two reasons. First, it is a direct contradiction of the thesis of this chapter. Second, it has the peculiar tenor of dogma declared by a man prepared to go to the stake for it. The author of the above quotation is J Farradane. He did not

go to the stake for his belief, but, in the view of many librarians, he got quite a roasting some twenty years ago. It may be worthwhile to pursue this a little, if only to appreciate that librarians *can* feel strongly about their profession.

A quick look back

The full story is contained in the two volumes of the *Library Association record* for 1953 and 1954, indexed under ' Information officers and librarians '.

An editorial in the November 1953 issue drew attention to an article by Farradane, which had been published in another journal and which suggested the setting up of an institute for information officers, separate from the Library Association. The main purpose of this new body would be to sponsor a full-time course of training for information officers.

A J Walford, in his editorial, said that this type of training could be provided within the scope of the Library Association syllabus. He also stated:

> *' The suggestion that there are two rival and divergent camps in the British library world . . . is surely detrimental to the cause of librarianship in this country. We are all searchers for, organisers and dispensers of information; the less we build up castes and the more we regard ourselves as various members of one great body, the better.'*

This editorial caused a correspondence marathon in the *Library Association record,* which lasted through to October 1954. Before summarising that correspondence, it may be helpful to describe briefly the situation in British librarianship at that time.

During the industrial reconstruction period following the end of the second world war, there was a rapid expansion in the output of technical literature. There was a consequent increase in the number of libraries and information departments in firms and organisations. By the early 1950's, some of the people running these libraries and departments were declaring themselves to be something other than librarians—' information officer ' was then the most favoured title.

Among their reasons for doing this was the belief that the

profession of librarianship had become devalued and the term 'librarian' had a low-level image, due mainly to the public libraries. To some extent they were right.

Backroom libraries

At that time, most qualified librarians in public libraries were remote from their readers. Many were closeted away, debating at length the classification of books—and this expenditure of professional time was being duplicated, not only from system to system throughout the country, but often from library to library within the same system. Many more were performing administrative and clerical tasks; and the most direct promotional route to a chief librarian's chair was through administration.

The public in lending libraries rarely saw anyone but those who issued and received their books. Understandably, many public library users thought of librarians as 'people who stamp and shelve books'. In such libraries, the profession of librarianship had been diminished to a very minor craft.

Too much Eng Lit

Other reasons for this small breakaway movement included dissatisfaction with the Library Association's syllabus of examinations. This was considered to be heavily biased towards the humanities. There was also criticism of the association itself, which was seen to be public library dominated.

These questions will be discussed further in the chapters on education for librarianship, and on professional associations. But, it must be said here, much of the criticism was justified. The faults were there and were acknowledged by the majority of the members of the profession. The dissention was really over how they could be corrected, or, indeed, whether it would be worthwhile trying to do so.

Dear sir . . .

To return to that 1953-54 correspondence in the Library Association *record.* In spite of Farradane's insistence that there were numbers of people who agreed with him that information work

was a new profession and distinct from librarianship, the battle of the letters turned out to be between J F and the rest. One correspondent was moved to write that rather than delivering a great new profession, Farradane was thumping a rather lonely tub.

Several contributors suggested that the difference between librarianship and information work was one of degree, not of kind. Others stated that abstracting is only scientific précis-writing—and précis-writing is taught in school.

D J Foskett, in his letter (which should be read in full, as should all this correspondence), complained that Farradane, though most vociferous in asserting the difference between librarians and information officers, failed to explain it convincingly.

W Pearson, of the Reference and Special Libraries Section of the Library Association (now the Reference, Special and Information Section), made the same point, saying it would have been more helpful if J Farradane had used the 'informative and interpretative abilities' he laid claim to, by telling more specifically of the duties peculiar to an information officer.

So, the battle of words never became a battle of ideas. The impediment to what would today be described as 'meaningful discussion' was Farradane's attitude. This was exactly the same as that of a man who has 'found' religion—the depth of his conviction and the certainty of his rectitude are equalled only by his inability to convince or influence the unbeliever.

It should be said that this was not a public librarians *versus* special librarians and information officers' controversy. Those defending the unity of the profession were up to their eyes in information work. They included the Research Officer of the Ministry of Defence; the Librarian of the Metal Box Company; the librarian of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and the Librarian of ICI. They had at least one university degree each and every one was a chartered librarian.

Signs and portents

What were the pointers to the possible future of librarianship that were so differently interpreted at that time? There was, as already mentioned, the development of library and information services

in commerce and industry, but there were other no less significant developments in the library world.

The launching, in 1950, of the *British national bibliography*, with its centralised classifying and cataloguing services, promised the release from such duties of many qualified librarians in public, academic and other libraries.

Readers' adviser services, staffed by chartered librarians, were being established in more and more libraries. The types of materials stocked and loaned by public libraries were becoming more diverse, with gramophone records, paperbacks, pamphlets, periodicals and photocopies becoming commonplace.

CICRIS, the West London Commercial and Technical Library Service, based on Acton Public Library, was following the pre-war lead of Sheffield in cooperation between different types of libraries to assist industry and commerce. Similar schemes were soon operating in Hull, Liverpool, Huddersfield and elsewhere.

The development, in size and number, of schools of librarianship, was one aspect of the rapid expansion of further education. The trend towards full-time professional education and the resulting lessening of the Library Association's educational role were clear.

You too can become a scientist

'Could a Bear be a knight?' asked Pooh. 'Of course he could!' said Christopher Robin, 'I'll make you one.' And he took a stick and touched Pooh on the shoulder and said, 'Rise, Sir Pooh de Bear.'

Four years after it had been pointed out how lonely J Farradane was in his tub-thumping, the Institute of Information Scientists Ltd was inaugurated in 1958. The honorary secretary was, and at the time of writing still is, J Farradane. It will be noticed that the information officer has become a scientist. In the United States, a number of librarians had already translated themselves into information scientists. The reason for this is not difficult to discern. Perhaps F A Briggs provided it in an article reviewing the position of American librarians, which appeared in the *Wilson Library*

bulletin (November 1961): 'The word "science" itself has great status', he wrote. 'To be a scientist is to be somebody; to be a humanist is to be a dodo.'

So the word was adopted as the name. We shall consider the present state of the Institute of Information Scientists in the chapter on professional associations.

Back to reality

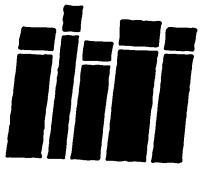
It will be seen from the various library school prospectuses that information work is included in the librarianship courses. The student, after successfully completing the course, is considered qualified to make a start in library and information work. This view is, happily, shared by the majority of potential employers.

Those librarians who, in the 1950's, interpreted the developments in librarianship as indications of a trend towards unity not division in the profession, have been proved right. The government, through the Department of Education and Science, has become increasingly involved in all aspects of library provision and it sees a fragmented library profession as an administrative inconvenience, if not a nonsense (again, *see* the chapter of professional associations).

Dr D J Urquhart, Director of the National Lending Library, and a qualified scientist, was President of the Library Association in 1972. The closing paragraph of his Presidential Address to the Annual Public Libraries Conference provides a suitable finish to this chapter on 'librarianship—one profession'.

> *'I have not adopted any narrow definition of the term "librarian". I certainly think that the term covers those concerned with information retrieval, whether they think of themselves as information officers or information scientists or not. In my definition of librarian, I also include those specialists in archives. Of course there is need for a variety of specialisations, but all are concerned with the records of man's knowledge and thoughts. The librarian's business is to collect and to make available these records, irrespective of their formats. Librarians of all types, unite!'*

2 *Several choices*



The profession of librarian . . . serves the community at all levels and in all spheres of interest via academic, public, technical and research libraries . . . Library Association statement, 1953.

IT IS REASONABLE to assume that most people who read this book will be familiar with a school library. Many will also have used a college or university library in addition to at least one public library. It may be that, out of these experiences, you have decided which type you would wish to work in. This chapter consists of brief surveys of the purpose and development of the main types of libraries. They may help to confirm, or perhaps to vary, your decision.

Public libraries

The library—the only place where I could still feel a sense of human contact . . . M E Ravage, *An American in the making* (Harper Brothers, 1917; repr Dover, 1971).

As a boy of twelve, newly come to this country, and speaking only a few words of English, I was taken by another boy to see the librarian at the Public Library in Whitechapel. I wanted a book which I could read with pleasure, which I could follow, and from which I could learn good English . . . the librarian gave me Mr Midshipman Easy. *I have considered it the perfect choice ever since. From that time on, much of my education was formed by public libraries.* Dr Jacob Bronowski, Presidential Address, Library Association Conference, 1957.

Although there were public libraries in ancient Rome, and public town libraries in various places in Europe during the Middle Ages, the public library service of today had its origins in the nineteenth century.

The first Public Libraries Act (England & Wales) was passed in 1850, one year after the first state law providing for tax-maintained public libraries was passed in the United States. The chief factor in the campaign for public library legislation was the efforts of liberal-minded philanthropists from the leisured and professional classes. But the development of public library services over the last 125 years, has been due largely to the efforts of individual librarians and the various associations of librarians.

Philanthropy played a further part, chiefly through the provision of buildings by J Passmore Edwards and Andrew Carnegie. Carnegie died in 1919 and from 1879 to the time of his death, he had provided 380 library buildings in Britain and nearly 1,700 in the United States.

In many places a Carnegie building was accepted although the local authority was too small to provide a proper library service. In many other places, the upkeep and maintenance of the library building took a disproportionate amount of the total monies available for public library services.

This problem was particularly acute in Britain where, up to the time of the Public Libraries Act 1919 (which also permitted county authorities to establish library services), expenditure was limited to the product of 1d rate.

The basic pattern of the nineteenth and early twentieth century public libraries in Britain was to provide a reference library, a newsroom and a lending library. A separate children's library was not usual in the early years. The lending libraries were administered on a 'closed-access' basis, whereby the books and staff were on one side of a partition and the catalogues and borrowers were on the other. An indicator showed which books were out on loan and which were available.

In 1894 James Duff Brown, following the example of Cleveland, Pawtucket and Minneapolis libraries in the United States, introduced 'open-access' to British public lending libraries at the Clerkenwell Library in London. The borrowers were allowed direct access to the books on the library shelves, but it was not exactly a flinging wide of the library doors. Duff Brown, describing the scheme (*The library* VI 1894 347) wrote: 'Having made certain

that the reader is entitled to borrow, that his umbrella and handbag are taken in return for numbered tokens, and that his dog, bicycle and three companions remain outside, the assistant presses with his foot a small lever which draws back the spring bolt which locks the wicket (gate), and the reader, empty-handed and alone, passes into the library; the wicket immediately shutting and locking again.'

The opposition to this system in the library profession, which persisted in some places up to the time of the second world war, is generally condemned as a combination of unthinking resistance to change, an aversion to having the order of the books on the shelves disrupted by borrowers, and a fear of losses through theft.

It should be said, however, that the closed access system had several advantages. Every transaction involved the borrower with a member of the staff who was likely to be knowledgeable about books in general and the library stock in particular. Staff time was not spent in arranging books on shelves, day after day, in an order which could never bring all related material together and which was—and still is—baffling to the majority of the public.

Up to 1945, the reference department of the public library served the widest social range of members of the public. For the most part, the book borrowing needs of the middle classes were met by the commercial subscription libraries and the literary and philosophical society libraries. Generally speaking, the lending departments and the newsrooms were mostly used by the poorer sections of the community. The millions of unemployed workers who frequented the newsrooms through the years, went not only for shelter and reading matter, but also to scan the situations vacant columns in the papers. (The racing news was, in many libraries, blacked out in order to discourage gambling.)

Dr Bronowski started his education at Whitechapel Library in 1920. In his address cited above, he declared that he was not the first, nor the last, to do so. 'Years before me', he said, 'Isaac Rosenberg had gone there to ask what he should read to become a poet. Like me, he has been told in the most matter of fact way; and in the most matter of fact way, he had become a poet . . .' With elementary education finishing between the ages of twelve

and fourteen years during this period, and with opportunities for formal further education being very limited, the public library performed an important role in the struggle for self-improvement.

Forward with the people?

The rapid developments which were started in the immediate post-war period of the 1940's had, by the 1960's, changed the nature of public library services. The provision of 'readers' advisers', initiated in the United States, had become an established feature on both sides of the Atlantic. It was realised that the public, granted open access to the library shelves, needed more personal help than could be given by junior assistants who were issuing and receiving books. This provision of qualified librarians and the bibliographical tools they need to assist readers has involved some libraries in expensive duplication of staff and resources. In others, it has led to a rational merging of reference information and readers' advisory services.

Also at this time, newsrooms in existing buildings were being converted into music libraries, record or children's libraries. Smaller areas, carpeted and easy-chaired, were being opened as reading rooms, with a selection of general-interest magazines. These trends were followed in the new public library buildings. Information services to industry and commerce were developing, and the range of material acquired by public libraries was being steadily extended (*see* the chapter *More than books*).

These developments were taking place at the same time as the rapid expansion of further education. New universities and colleges were being established and standards of library provision were discussed and formulated. New schools, with proper library facilities, were opening. The public library's role in all this education activity was, for the most part, as informal as ever, and the degree of involvement varied from place to place. In some areas, reference accommodation and material came to be virtually monopolised by students, and textbook provision became an increasing burden on book funds and staff time.

In spite of all these developments, the popular image of the public library was that of the provider of recreational and enter-

that the reader is entitled to borrow, that his umbrella and handbag are taken in return for numbered tokens, and that his dog, bicycle and three companions remain outside, the assistant presses with his foot a small lever which draws back the spring bolt which locks the wicket (gate), and the reader, empty-handed and alone, passes into the library: the wicket immediately shutting and locking again.'

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The rapid developments which were started in the immediate post-war period of the 1940's had, by the 1960's, changed the nature of public library services. The provision of 'readers' advisers', initiated in the United States, had become an established feature on both sides of the Atlantic. It was realised that the public, granted open access to the library shelves, needed more personal help than could be given by junior assistants who were issuing and receiving books. This provision of qualified librarians and the bibliographical tools they need to assist readers has involved some libraries in expensive duplication of staff and resources. In others, it has led to a rational merging of reference information and readers' advisory services.

Also at this time, newsrooms in existing buildings were being converted into music libraries, record or children's libraries. Smaller areas, carpeted and easy-chaired, were being opened as reading rooms, with a selection of general-interest magazines. These trends were followed in the new public library buildings. Information services to industry and commerce were developing, and the range of material acquired by public libraries was being steadily extended (*see* the chapter *More than books*).

These developments were taking place at the same time as the rapid expansion of further education. New universities and colleges were being established and standards of library provision were discussed and formulated. New schools, with proper library facilities, were opening. The public library's role in all this education activity was, for the most part, as informal as ever, and the degree of involvement varied from place to place. In some areas, reference accommodation and material came to be virtually monopolised by students, and textbook provision became an increasing burden on book funds and staff time.

In spite of all these developments, the popular image of the public library was that of the provider of recreational and enter-

tainment material. Larger funds for books and book-binding made it possible to maintain a high standard of cleanliness in bookstocks, and the innovation of plastic jackets to preserve the dust-wrappers banished the institutional gloom of ranks of drab-coloured cloth and leather bound volumes.

These improved conditions attracted borrowers who had previously subscribed to the commercial lending libraries. Extraordinary efforts were made in the 1950's by many public librarians to attract this membership. The middlebrow material reviewed in the Sunday newspapers and the weekly journals was acquired (often, in time for issuing on publication day) in sufficient quantities to satisfy the reservation demands for it.

Under the pressures of decreasing memberships and increasing costs, most of the commercial libraries went out of business. The public libraries had then taken over responsibility for what had formerly been a ' luxury ' service.

A middle-class institution?

The position was reached in Britain in the mid-1960's when a well-known writer could voice a mild complaint, in a national newspaper article, at the frequency with which she found all the plain-chant records to be out on loan at her local public library. At the same time, that very library was being heavily criticised in the professional press for deciding to supply a selection of pop records for children.

It is not surprising that many observers, including some whose opinions are not complicated by years of experience of professional struggle (nor, perhaps, by a full appreciation of the wide range of library services), see the public library as a middle-class institution.

The least a library can do for a teenager is to provide some of what he wants as well as what the library has decided he needs. He would like posters and art prints, records and tapes and cassette players . . . He would like circulating films and a film room to try them out. He would like TV. He would like comic books, sex novels, hot rod magazines and scroungy underground newspapers . . . None of this is new. It has all been practised in

Venice, Mountain View, NYC and other places. From *Revolting librarians* edited by Celeste West (ALA, 1972).

Similar views to these are expressed in Britain in the periodical, *Librarians for social change.*

Referring to the founding by Gaius Asinius Pollio of the first public library in Italy some 2,000 years ago, Pliny says in his *Natural History* (Book XXXV), that by doing so, Asinius Pollio 'made works of genius the property of the public'. (This, untranslated, is the motto of the British Library Association.) The public library, as a centre for the self-educating zeal of young Bronowskis and Rosenbergs in London, New York, Leeds, Chicago and hundreds of other towns across Britain and the United States during the first half of this century, was in keeping with this tradition.

The public library as provider of comic books and scroungy underground newspapers is a different conception. If the Bronowski and *Revolting librarians* quotations told the whole story, then it would appear that the public library had travelled a hard, long road to arrive in Toytown. But this is not so. They do, however, indicate the social context in which the public library once operated, and the vastly different one in which it is trying to establish a role today. We have said elsewhere in this book that a public library service is, in fact, a combination of minority services. With this in mind, the peculiar provision for teenagers 'in Venice, Mountain View, NYC and other places' is less alarming.

The term 'public librarian' is now only an indication of the type of institution a librarian happens to be employed by. It is not a definition of the type of work he does—which may be, for example, business information, music, or local history librarianship. Nor does it necessarily tell the place he does his work in. Hospitals, prisons and the homes of housebound people, are just some of the places to which library services are taken by public librarians today

The present trends in public library services imply an increasing need for 'specialist' librarians. Bryan Luckham says, in his *The library in society* (Library Association, 1971), 'Alongside the children's librarian, the information scientist, the subject specialist,

the media and reprographic technologist, one can imagine the community librarian who works with some defined group or area, a tutor-librarian who promotes the specifically educational work of the library and a cultural services librarian who will organise visual, dramatic and other activities.'

Maybe the community librarians or the tutor-librarians of the near future will find themselves advising new generations of young immigrants, including a few potential polymaths and poets. Their names, however, are likely to be Chaudhuri and Viswanath, rather than Bronowski and Rosenberg.

Perhaps some young librarians may also, with true revolutionary spirit, help to take the public library to some of those people who, for various reasons, do not think that is exists for them. With more than 70 per cent of the population not registered as library users, there is still plenty of scope for initiative.

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

by B C Bloomfield

The character and efficiency of a university may be gauged by its treatment of its central organ, the library. We regard the fullest provision for library maintenance as the primary and most vital need in the equipment of a university. First annual report of the University Grants Committee.

There is another group of libraries to which we should now turn, and they may be loosely described as 'academic', in that they are all attached to institutions which are professionally concerned with education.

Nowadays they are mainly the libraries of universities, polytechnics, colleges of education, institutes of further education and schools. Obviously, the library of a large university with a book stock of several million volumes is very different from that of a comprehensive school with perhaps three thousand volumes on the shelves. Both, however, have the same object: that of trying as

best they can to serve the staff and students in their respective institutions with the resources available. It is not easy to measure a library's success in meeting the demands readers make on it, but it is perfectly possible for the smallest school library to be doing a better job of satisfying its readers than is the largest university library. In fact, such an apparent paradox can almost confidently be predicted.

Universities

Turning to university libraries first, they exist to serve the teaching and research activities which are carried on within the university, and any subject taught in a university ought to be represented on the shelves of that university's library. Universities in Britain are often roughly divided into three categories: the older universities (Oxford, Cambridge and some of the Scottish ones); the redbrick universities (Manchester, Sheffield, Exeter, Hull, etc) which were mainly founded in the latter part of the nineteenth century; and the plate-glass universities (Sussex, Kent, York and others) which were mostly founded after 1950, though in some cases upon the existing base of an older technical college or college of technology. The size of the library is very much affected by the date of the institution's foundation, and thus Oxford and Cambridge have the largest university libraries in Britain.

As university libraries develop in size, they become important nationally, because they are among the largest book collections in the country and many of them are used by outside readers who are not themselves connected with the universities. In the United States, if one discounts the Library of Congress, all the largest libraries are university libraries (Harvard, Yale, Chicago, and so on) and in Germany, some libraries are both state and university libraries for the provinces in which they are situated (for example, Hamburg and Bavaria).

London University, which is a federal institution, has no single university library, but several of the individual colleges and schools have libraries which are very important in their own right. Among these are the British Library of Political and Economic Science at the London School of Economics, the School of Oriental

and African Studies, University College and the main University Library itself.

Services

The most important service offered by the university library to its readers is to make available a large collection of printed and other documentary material. It does this, in consultation with the teaching staff, by buying, cataloguing and storing books, pamphlets, periodicals, microfilm, recorded tapes and discs, maps, prints and manuscripts. Often this material cannot be borrowed by students, although it may be available for loan to the teaching staff and to other libraries through the inter-lending network. University libraries, as a rule, also provide for readers photocopying and microfilming services, and some bibliographical advisory service.

A university library will usually provide a special collection of books which are recommended to, or heavily used by, undergraduate students; but the greater part of the budget will be spent on staff salaries and on book and periodical purchases which extend the range of the library and its capacity to support the research interests of the postgraduate students and teaching staff.

In recent years, British university libraries have come under fire from readers for three main reasons: first, for being too small to support the research interests of their readers—and the vastly increased amount of published knowledge has exacerbated this situation; second, for not providing enough replicate copies of books in heavy demand from students; and third, for not providing enough specialist guidance to readers in the form of subject catalogues, reference aids and bibliographical advice. Nearly all these criticisms are, in part at least, justified and university librarians have been putting much effort into trying to meet them—in so far as this can ever be accomplished.

Staff

The staff of a typical university library might be about eighty all told. They are divided into senior and junior, and members of the senior staff will usually hold a university degree (or higher degree), and some will hold professional library qualifications. (This is

now becoming increasingly common.) The Librarian is usually equated to a Professor in both rank and pay, and the Deputy Librarian to a Senior Lecturer or Reader; Sub-Librarians (perhaps two or three in our typical library) are equated in rank and pay either with a Senior Lecturer, or with the upper part of the Lecturer scale, and may be responsible for acquisitions, cataloguing or readers services; while Assistant Librarians (perhaps ten of these) are equated in pay and rank with the University Lecturer scale and may be responsible for major parts of the library's work—*eg* periodicals, binding, or book selection in certain subject areas. The junior staff, perhaps sixty five in number, will usually be graded in three or four divisions, and assistants appointed to the upper grade will often be graduates with library qualifications who are later appointed to senior positions.

Library assistants carry out the general routine work of most university libraries, and are those members of the staff who most often come into contact with the readers. Their role is vitally important and it is at this level that recruitment is most difficult and scales of pay most disparate, each university in general fixing its own. To this establishment will often be added porters, secretaries, clerical officers, photographers, draughtsmen, and other staff as needed.

A national asset

The total book stock of the university libraries of the United Kingdom in 1970 was more than 27 million volumes. When we remember that, unlike most other libraries, university libraries tend not to withdraw but to retain their books and other material for posterity to use, it is surprising that more people do not recognise what a major cultural asset these libraries are.

Polytechnics

Polytechnic libraries, on the other hand, are largely of recent origin and they have undergone a considerable stimulus to their development. There are now some twenty nine polytechnic institutions in Britain, and they have been developed by the Department of Education and Science as a counter-balance to the influence of the

universities in higher education. While not a deliberate imitation of the *polytechnische hochschule* or the *école polytechnique*, their development owes something to both these continental conceptions.

Curricula are usually a little more restricted than those of universities, and often show a bias towards pure and applied science. Many polytechnics were founded by the amalgamation of smaller technical colleges whose libraries were generally inadequate to meet the demands made upon them by staff and students. However, since 1965, matters have improved considerably and most polytechnics now dispose of library staffs and book purchase funds which are comparable with those usual in British university libraries.

Naturally, the book collections of polytechnic libraries are smaller in size than those of most university libraries, and display their comparative youth. The bias in selection is also towards the pure, applied and social sciences, which affects the character of the collections. Since these libraries have been developing at a time when other academic libraries have been suffering a shortage of funds for staff appointments and book purchases, they have been able to appoint staff of good quality.

In general, polytechnic libraries have not, and do not intend to build, research library collections; they have concentrated much more on developing wider collections of books, tapes, discs and similar audio-visual materials, into what are usually called 'resource centres'. Unimpeded by the sheer weight of library collections, which often hinders change in university libraries, polytechnic librarians have been able to innovate, and have developed more advanced ideas of service to readers than has been possible in other situations.

Library staff in polytechnic libraries are not so well paid as those in university libraries and this simple fact, unless corrected, will in time affect the service provided by these libraries. In line with current fads, the polytechnics have granted the title of 'professor' to some of the chief librarians, but this will mean less if the titles pay less. At present, most polytechnic librarians are paid as Heads of Departments, and staff below are paid on grades often, but not always, equivalent to members of the teaching staffs.

Colleges of Education

The whole position of colleges of education and their libraries is now under review following the *James report* on teacher education, and the recent proposals from the Department of Education and Science. It looks as though the result may be the abolition of many of the colleges and the merger of the rest with selected polytechnics.

At present there are some 170 colleges of education (formerly known as training colleges or 'normal' colleges), and most have medium-sized libraries of some twenty to sixty thousand volumes. Numbers of students in most colleges are still quite small, in spite of a recent policy of merging smaller colleges and increasing student numbers in the larger colleges, and the average college might have some 800 students.

The purpose of the college is to produce trained teachers. They do this by providing three-year courses leading to a Teaching Certificate, and, for selected students, four-year courses leading to the degree of Bachelor of Education. There are also postgraduate courses leading to the Postgraduate Certificate of Education, and various other specialised one-year and shorter courses.

The book stock of college of education libraries is, therefore, heavily biased towards educational theory and the social sciences in general, while most of the books in ordinary disciplinary subjects are at the undergraduate level. Much of the research provision for education has been made in the libraries of the university institutes of education, which have acted as regional centres for various groupings of colleges of education.

In general, the demands made on the libraries of colleges of education have been at a lower level than those made on university and polytechnic libraries, and book stocks have reflected this. Library staff establishments have been correspondingly smaller too. Most colleges will have a librarian in charge of the library paid on the scale for lecturers in colleges of education (the 'Pelham' scale), and there will perhaps be two or three library assistants paid on the same scales as those in force in public libraries. Some colleges have adopted the device of appointing a lecturer as 'tutor-librarian', and employing a professionally-trained librarian to do

the routine work. The tutor-librarian has been paid on the hig
Pelham scale and the professional librarian on a lower scale. T
reflects the importance the colleges of education attach to teachi
about the use and function of the library, but it has caused il
feeling in many colleges and cannot be said to have been a success

Most college of education libraries have a separate section which is devoted to educational aids, and this contains illustrations, film strips, children's books, class books and other similar material. Usually referred to as the 'Teaching practice library', the existence of such collections—often extensive in coverage—is a distinguishing feature of the libraries of colleges of education.

Schools

The last category of academic library, and numerically the largest, is the school library. This can range in size from the shelf of books in a primary school classroom, maintained by the class and supervised by the teacher, to (for example) the immensely valuable research collection of Eton College, strengthened, maintained and lovingly described by a recent headmaster, Sir Robert Birley. While few school libraries are of this latter stature, there is no doubt that of all academic libraries, those in schools most nearly and closely affect the majority of people.

There are few primary schools which have large libraries, although most have classroom libraries and some have central school collections. In the secondary and comprehensive schools, libraries are often fairly large in size and under the care of professionally trained librarians paid by the local education authorities.

With modern methods of teaching there is greater reliance on children finding out facts for themselves, and periods of library instruction and research play an increasing part in curricula. Librarians in charge of such libraries often have only part-time assistance or a voluntary band of helpers enlisted from among the pupils themselves. The librarians are paid according to local authority scales and their responsibilities are considerable, including very often the care of extensive audio-visual collections.

The work can be very rewarding—and the holidays can sometimes be rather longer than those earned by many librarians!

SPECIAL LIBRARIES

by P G New

What they are

For the purposes of this summary one could say that special libraries are all the libraries not in the other main groups of public and academic. The very nature of this crude definition draws attention to one of the major characteristics of libraries in this group—that they are mostly very different from one another. A wide range of dissimilar institutions can come under the general description of 'special library'—libraries of government departments, newspapers, professional associations, learned societies, research bodies and industrial firms.

It is therefore meaningless to speak of a 'typical' special library, but the type on which study and literature often focuses is the library of the industrial firm or the research association, probably because the advanced techniques and intensity of service often found here are seen as the essence of special librarianship, while other kinds of special library may resemble in many ways a public or academic library.

The accepted definitions of special libraries agree that the 'special' nature comes from the group of people served, *eg* 'A library serving a special group of people who are associated together by reason of some common occupation' (D V Arnold). Under these terms, academic libraries would be 'special', but by convention they form their own group.

What they are not: library stock

Special libraries do not necessarily have a specialised stock, as is commonly supposed. Even where there is an obvious bias to one subject, the subject range of material is surprising. For example, a library within a steel corporation would, of course, be very strong on metallurgy, but it would also have information on the main objects made from its products, *eg* food cans from tinplate, and, at a further remove, food bacteriology. A place must also be found for subsidiary technologies such as coke preparation and refractory

materials, and there would be further technical material on corr sion, paints, making up of metal (welding etc) and rival materia such as plastics.

A whole range of non-technical literature would include manage ment, marketing, economics, commercial and general reference works gazetteers, maps, trade figures, encyclopedias, dictionaries, etc.

The library stock may *look* rather different from that in other kinds of libraries, for in many special libraries the emphasis is less on books and more on pamphlets, periodicals, patents, research reports, abstracts, home made indexes of trade names etc. These media of communication are likely to be more up-to-date than the book, and likely to be the primary records of advanced work.

Cost effectiveness: the justification

Many special libraries are part of profit-making organisations, and others are directly dependent on industry for their funds. Libraries must be seen, particularly in this kind of institution, to contribute to the effectiveness and profitability of the parent body. Such a demand contrasts with the public library, for example, where even if the aims of the service were clearly defined, the measurement of attaining them is imprecise.

If a library appears to the top administrators to be less than fully effective, it is liable to be axed. Mutilation of the library is also possible if economic winds blow cold, particularly if the library's value is not fully appreciated in high places. The library must not only do a good job within the organisation, but must make sure that the decision makers know it. It is not appreciated by those who axe library services that the library may never fully recover from the blow—cancelled subscriptions to periodicals leave gaps in runs which are very difficult to fill later; generally the weakness in materials intake over a period is felt for long afterwards.

Personal service

The special librarian therefore needs to explain the library to his superiors and make it indispensable to them. Any threat of damage to the library can then be met by an outcry from its friends. For

this reason personal contacts are important. They are also important because the special librarian often attempts actively to discover and serve on his own initiative the interests of his individual readers. Frequently, the staff of an organisation is sufficiently limited for the librarian to attempt this anticipation of need—when scanning the new issue of a periodical, for example, he draws an article or news item to the attention of one of his clients who might otherwise miss it.

Indeed, one of the particular fascinations of working in a special library is the facility to serve a known clientèle, as distinct from the amorphous ' public ' of the public library. To this can be added the satisfaction of contributing to a corporate enterprise whose goals are known, and the effect of the library's contribution sometimes measurable—again in contrast to the public library.

All readers are not equal

We have seen that cost-consciousness is an important element in the evaluation of a library by those whose decisions affect it. If this attitude permeates the whole organisation the librarian must abide by it too. For example, the democratic assumption made in other kinds of libraries that all readers are equal, is no longer true when we come to special libraries. One of the maxims of librarianship is to ' save the time of the reader ', and in a public library one would try to do this equally, not favouring one reader over another, although some queries may inherently require more attention than others.

Special libraries, or at least some of them, serve groups which have hierarchies which the library must recognise. It is more important to save the time of the highest paid rather than the lowest paid employee of an industrial firm, for example. So the special library which drops everything to deal immediately with the query from the Director of Research is not kow-towing to authority or cynically ignoring its other enquiries, but reflecting the proper priorities of the organisation.

A lesson for the others

We have seen that the special library is in some respects necessarily

different from other kinds of libraries. The services it offers benefit from the advantage that the library serves a known group of readers —usually a fairly small group—pursuing known and agreed aims. It is therefore able to 'save the time of the reader' effectively, in contrast to the public library which attempts to serve the needs of all kinds of people, in all subjects, at all depths.

In some special libraries, particularly industrial and research libraries, this favourable breeding ground has brought forth advanced techniques to help the reader, under such high sounding titles as 'information retrieval' and 'selective dissemination of information'. Sometimes these techniques are mechanised, so that data processing equipment is employed in seeking the answer to a specific query, or to keep a user fully informed about literature in his field.

With methods such as these, it is widely recognised that the special library is the most active of all types in its reader services. It takes the information to the reader, whether or not he has asked for it. By contrast, the academic library is necessarily, and properly, more passive. Much of its role is preservation of material for the future, and its clientèle is, by and large, able to know what it wants. (This is, of course, an over-simplification; the active process of teaching its readers the use of the library has always been a need and has been receiving much attention recently.) The public library, with its ill-defined aims and variety of functions, lies somewhere in between the academic and special libraries. All kinds of librarianship could benefit from the example of the intensity of service shown by the best of the special libraries.

Working in special libraries

Some will claim that appropriate staff for special libraries or information units will be 'information scientists' rather than librarians. The difference between the two concepts is dealt with elsewhere in this book. Suffice it to say here that the major differences, seem to be of terminology and, perhaps, to some extent of emphasis.

Librarian or information scientist, a science degree is often asked for by employers in any new senior position in a special library.

There is some value, in a scientific or technological field (to have a librarian who is trained in the scientific method and who can speak with other scientists as an equal. But it is foolish to expect that the degree can often match the library's speciality. Suitable librarians who are chemistry graduates *may* be available just at the time a chemical society has a vacancy, but many library specialities have no relevant or widely available degree subject. The truth of the matter is that the majority of special librarians learn their subject 'on the job' rather than come to the job with it. This causes no problems except in the 'foreign languages' of chemical and mathematical formulae. It is quite common for arts graduates to be special librarians in quite highly technical subjects.

Many special libraries are small; smaller than most academic libraries or public library systems. The effect on careers is two-fold: there are excellent opportunities for taking considerable responsibility early in one's career, which is not usually possible in larger organisations; but the corollary is that these libraries are too small to allow many posts with high salaries, so that after a promising start one may find oneself stuck at a moderate salary level. Luckily there are no barriers to moving into other kinds of libraries.

3 The library user

On the whole, I prefer the readers asleep—
way they do less damage to the books. A librar
in a letter to *The Time*

The library user should be king. Paul Bixler,
Librarian Emeritus, Antioch College, Ohio.

HISTORY REFLECTS an overriding and abiding concern for property rather than for people. Part of any librarian's job is to safeguard the property in his care. The first quotation, however, has been chosen, not to indicate a librarian's priorities, but as an example of librarians' wit.

In the previous chapter we discussed the various types of libraries what they are and what they do. There are later chapters on library buildings, the education and training of librarians and on the profession of librarianship. This chapter is about those on whom the whole structure is founded—the people who use libraries. Librarianship is not an end in itself. Libraries exist for the users. These apparently self-evident facts may sometimes be obscured by librarians' over-concern with techniques; sometimes they are disputed in actions if not in words; and occasionally, they are ignored or denied. But the second quotation does express a belief held by most librarians for most of the time. There are, of course, occasions when the user is seen as an obtuse, helpless, importunate, ungrateful, ungracious or even aggressive individual. These occasions are unfortunate exceptions to the generally-prevailing cordial understanding between librarians and their 'clients'—a word rarely employed, but sometimes more apt than the alternatives of 'readers', 'borrowers', 'users', or 'customers'. However, in spite of cordial understanding and librarians' goodwill, there are some basic factors which militate against the library user's overall interests.

The man with many hats

Library users are not simple, one-dimensional characters. Any one person may have, in a short space of time, library needs of varying degrees of specialisation. Many of these needs go unsatisfied because of the structure of the total library service. The different types of libraries which exist—and the different libraries within those types—were created not to meet necessarily *different needs*, but the *needs of different groups* of people.

'The special library's only *obligation*', says D J Foskett in his *Science, humanism and libraries* (Crosby Lockwood, 1964), 'is to provide a service to its own group, and to that end it is entitled to exploit to the full all those services, such as the national and public libraries, to which it contributes as a taxpayer . . . The special librarian . . . is under no *obligation* to reciprocate.'

The academic library exists to serve the staff and students of the school or other educational establishment of which it is part. Even within these 'closed-community' libraries, which serve special, limited groups of people, there are varying degrees of service. Not all members are equal. The managing director in an industrial organisation has priority over an ordinary researcher; the undergraduate in a university does not enjoy as many library privileges as a faculty member (*see* Bloomfield's and New's contributions to chapter 2). It must follow, then, that any service to non-members of these groups will generally be subordinate to all this, and of a limited nature—no matter how great the need of the non-member may be.

Even the public library, which is today seen as an 'all things to all men' institution, originally restricted its services to the ratepayers (and their dependants) of the community in which it was established.

Cooperation

The impression at this stage, of self-sufficient academic libraries and of selfish special librarians plundering outside resources, is not a true representation of the situation. There are those, indeed, who would say that it is a complete misrepresentation. It is frequently asserted that special librarians give each other as much assistance

as possible. British universities started formal, organised cooper
tion nearly fifty years ago, with a clearing house for dealing wi
enquiries and arranging the interlending of books between libraries
Even earlier, some neighbouring public libraries mitigated the
effects of local government boundaries by agreeing to the inter-
availability of each other's tickets and to the interlending of books.
Librarians from all types of libraries also cooperate in various
groups and sections of professional associations, in order to discuss
common problems, exchange ideas and formulate new approaches
and techniques.

It is part of the tradition of librarianship to give bibliographical and other professional help when and where it is needed. There is, of course, often the possibility of reciprocity, but a continuing theme of unselfish assistance is part of the total library scene. Library cooperation in many countries has been furthered by support from outside agencies, government departments and philanthropic trusts.

There is no national or state centre for inter-library cooperation in the United States, but there are several regional schemes, the basis of which is the establishment of a storage warehouse (called 'deposit library' or 'inter-library center') to hold sections of the stocks of cooperating libraries. These holdings are then used in common. A limited service of locating (and occasionally lending) items is operated by the National Union Catalog at the Library of Congress.

The founding (1916) of the Central Library for Students in Britain and its conversion into the National Central Library (NCL) in 1931, were made possible by grants from the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. The NCL, now part of the British Library (*see* chapter 10), is at the apex of national cooperation and interlending. The broad base is formed by the (almost) general interavailability of public library tickets throughout the country, and the local cooperative groupings and schemes—involving some public, special and academic libraries—devised to serve commerce and industry. At the next stage are ten geographical regions—the Regional Library Systems. These systems include virtually all the public libraries and some special and academic libraries in their areas.

Nine of the regions have a union catalogue of the holdings of member libraries. Requests which cannot be satisfied within the regions are forwarded to the National Central Library. Many of the special libraries which do not participate in the regional schemes do, however, lend books and other material through the NCL; those which cooperate in this way are called 'outlier libraries' or 'outliers' of the National Central Library. The Inter-University Lending Scheme, mentioned above, has been administered by the NCL since 1931. The borrowing and lending of books between libraries in Britain and those overseas is also organised by the NCL. A national lending service for scientific and technological material, formerly undertaken by the Science Museum Library, is now provided by the National Lending Library for Science and Technology.

Millions of books available . . .

The object of all this complicated and expensive structuring is to make available to the library user, at whatever service point in Britain he initiates his request, the total resources of the cooperating libraries. It works well on a great number of occasions. Indeed, at any particular time there are thousands of books and other items away from their home libraries—in transit, being used by other libraries' borrowers, or awaiting repacking and return.

There might well be many thousands more such items if, at every library service point, there was the necessary level of professional enthusiasm and competence to encourage and cope with the sort of request which cannot be satisfied from immediate resources.

Decline to lend?

Yet the present volume of interlending is more than sufficient for some librarians. In 1966, S P L Filon who was then Librarian of the National Central Library said, 'Those libraries which probably benefit most, quantitatively, from inter-library lending are the public libraries'. Some special librarians have complained that they are lending so much material that their own services suffer. D J Foskett is quoted above as saying that the special librarian has no obligation to assist other libraries. Nevertheless, he stated

later in that same address that his own special library was lendi
through the NCL ten times as much as it borrowed.

Many academic librarians voice similar complaints. They se
the situation as a steadily deteriorating one, in spite of cooperativ
schemes of subject specialisation among some public libraries. B C
Bloomfield asserted (*New library world*, vol. 73 no 865 July 1972
p 337) that public librarians are now too ready to dispose of books
which have no immediate, general appeal. 'The public library',
he continued, 'used to fill a majority of inter-loan requests from
the stocks of other public libraries, but now the principal lenders
are university, special, and other non-public libraries. I wonder . . .
whether the public libraries are not now parasites on the book
stocks of other libraries through the national inter-lending system?'

It is a fact that the public libraries have, over the last twenty
years, extended their range of materials, services and activities.
Books and periodicals no longer occupy a pre-eminent position in
many libraries, and responsibility for interloans has slipped far down
many a staff hierarchy. Every interloan request form carries what
purports to be the signature of the chief librarian, but what is
more often a facsimile stamp or a *per pro* forgery. It is unusual
for a chief librarian to see, let alone sign, the forms. Important
decisions are, in many places, being made by people unqualified
and unfitted to do so.

Librarians who feel that their stocks are being over-exploited
by the interlending system will resort to self-defence tactics. More
and more request forms will be returned endorsed 'decline to
lend'. Unless things improve, the library user, at one end or the
other, is bound to suffer.

4 *The physical presence*

A library should look like a library, not like a factory or a shop. Anthony Thompson, *Library buildings of Britain and Europe* (Butterworth, 1963).

Puzzle—find the library

A library should look like a library—but what *does* a library look like? If we delete from our minds shops, factories, power stations, railway stations and all the other things which it is not, then we should be left with the image of a library. What we are more likely to be left with is a totally blank mind, or a jumble of images of known libraries (all of which could quite reasonably be something else) and a headache.

If, instead, we turn to a general book on architecture and look for illustrations of libraries, we will then see what a library really does look like. Having found one, it should be possible to identify others without reference to the captions. D Yarwood's *Architecture in England* (Batsford, 1964) is a well-illustrated work in which to try this. Manchester City Library (p 537) is seen as a large, circular, domed building—in what is sometimes irreverently referred to as the 'jelly-mould' style. A similar building in Leeds (p 472) is, however, the Corn Exchange. This, in turn, is remarkably like a building in London (also p 472) which happens to be the Royal Albert Hall.

Many older university libraries look like chapels; a great number of public libraries look like town halls scaled down or public conveniences done large. Many a modern college library building looks like a lecture hall, theatre or gymnasium. Indeed, the majority of new library buildings of all types is indistinguishable from most other contemporary constructions.

Facts of life

It is pointless to pontificate about the external appearance of a library. Of course, it should preferably be attractive rather than

repellent, but other factors than the library building style frequently have priority. The public library is often part of a larger community development, and an academic library is usually part of the total campus scheme. The overall architectural concept, therefore, is unlikely to be much influenced by considerations of library style. As for special libraries, these are rarely separate buildings; usually they are housed in the premises of the parent organisation, such as the offices of a commercial firm, the headquarters of a trade union, or in a professional institute building.

Does it work?

If the external aspect of a library building can be made attractive, this will be a happy bonus for all concerned with it, including the staff and the users.

The really important matter, however, is that the building should work. Basically, it should be so constructed and arranged internally that the business of the library is forwarded, rather than hindered, by it. To achieve this, the librarian must present a clear picture of the pattern of his proposed services; the architect must suggest how this can best be interpreted in terms of space and materials.

Anthony Thompson says (in his book quoted above), '. . . whereas every architect has lived in a house and knows its needs intimately, they have not worked in libraries as librarians . . . In short, for a library building to be anything like well planned, the librarian and the architect must work in close cooperation.' In Britain, this need for cooperation is recognised by the existence of the Architects and Librarians Working Party of the Library Association. The difficulties facing the librarian and the architect are greater when the library is only part of a new complex. In that case, the routing of basic services, for example, including water, electricity, heating and ventilation, will be determined by the overall building requirements, not just those of the library. Compromise is then the order of the day.

Where's the broom cupboard?

Consultation should be continued down the line so that, where

possible, departmental heads may study the plans and visualise their departments working within them.

Details of importance in daily routines may be overlooked in the grand design. The person responsible for the cleaning and maintenance of the library, for instance, is likely to be most concerned with the proper placing of power-points for his machines —and with the relative widths of those machines and any lifts provided.

The unfortunate case of the splendid, first-floor library where, for some months until things were put right at great expense, the cleaners had to carry buckets of water up from the ground floor because that was the only area provided with a standpipe tap, is by no means unique.

Future needs

No library's services are fixed for all time. There will be changes in emphasis on the various aspects of service—some will develop, others will diminish—and new services may be started. In the past, where the overall use of a library has increased heavily, some quite drastic structural alterations have been necessary—not only for readers and services, but also to accommodate the increased staff.

Future changes in library practice—including those brought about by computerisation and automation, and the storage and handling of new types of library materials—will entail some quite different concepts of library layout and planning.

A high degree of flexibility is desirable in the internal construction of a library building. To achieve this, it is necessary that power, water and other essentials be ducted inside pillars, and that non-load-bearing walls and other parts be movable.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Besides being a social institution, a public library has a physical presence. Nowadays this can take numerous forms, from an imposing piece of civic architecture as part of a regional capital, to a modest vehicle providing a mobile service to scattered hamlets. Bryan Luckham, *The library in society* (LA, 1971).

We have said that the public library service of today started the nineteenth century. In spite of modern, imposing pieces civic architecture, a proportion of public library buildings existence are nineteenth century and early twentieth centur constructions. Many are thick-walled, solid affairs, short of win dow space and fronted with flights of stone steps. Some have been modified and rearranged inside many times to accommodate the changing patterns of service—from closed-access, through the first tentative, wicket-gate stage of open-access, to a completely open library with readers' advisers and a variety of other special services.

These much-modified and adapted buildings, in spite of inevitable compromise, imposed by inflexible interiors, do have one advantage—that of identity. To the residents, they are familiar landmarks. To the visitor, this type of building is recognisable as a public something or other and the chances are about two to one that it is a library. Moreover, the words PUBLIC (and or FREE) LIBRARY are, more often than not, cut large in the stonework, leaving no doubt about its purpose or one's right of entry.

Buildings anonymous

The degree of anonymity achieved by modern architects in their buildings makes it impossible to identify a public library by its appearance. It is, therefore, surprising to see so many new public libraries bearing no clear sign saying what they are. A building with a completely blank face is one of the architectural fads of the day that no librarian should accept. The suggestion that books should be visible through the windows to indicate that a library is inside will not necessarily rate a high planning priority. A simpler and more definite indication can be given by a large, clear, unambiguous sign, illuminated at night. (After all, it is many years now since even some churches had neon-light signs erected.)

In some respects it is a pity that the word 'free' was ever dropped from the public library's title. If the (quite inaccurate) connotation of charity is an insuperable bar to its reintroduction, perhaps some alternative additional phrase—such as an invitation to look round or to walk right in—should be added to the library sign.

Many mansions

There is now no generally agreed pattern of public library interior layout. The post-second world war development of readers' adviser services has led some libraries to merge their reference and lending information and advisory services, and to integrate their stocks on a subject department basis. In others, reference and lending departments are still physically and administratively separate. A more common development is the removal from the library proper, into a lobby or entrance hall, of the charging and discharging of book loans and the registration of readers. To have these routine and clerical operations—with their inevitable, occasional fuss and bother—carried out away from the main purpose of the library, is a great advantage. This arrangement has been introduced into a number of buildings both old and new.

Another feature affecting the layout of libraries is the introduction of motor-driven conveyor belts to move books from the point of return to some checking and sorting area. This idea may yet be further developed, possibly in conjunction with the use of battery-driven trolleys, to ease the burden of shelving returned books.

How new is a new building?

The devising of a large branch or central public library building is a lengthy process, and the translating of ideas into architects' and surveyors' plans and drawings for contractors, sub-contractors and tradesmen is even more time-consuming. While the rate of social and technological change at present is extremely rapid, building construction seems to be a perversely slow occupation. With the librarian's decisions fixed (perhaps for years) while the building is going up, significant developments may be taking place in library services and procedures. Changes of plans not only cause further delay, but are expensive and may not be possible within the overall budget.

So, in spite of a degree of flexibility in the internal structures, it is inevitable that a number of library buildings now under construction will be outdated in some respects by the time they are functioning. For example, the many forms of audio-visual aids which are proliferating in education and entertainment will inevit-

ably form a significant part of public library stocks within t
next few years (see the chapter *More than books*). There are stro
indications now that, as a sound recording device, the disc
obsolescent, shortly to be replaced by the cassette. If this shoul
be so, then some plans, currently being translated into furniture
and fittings and storage and issuing accommodation for discs, will
result in new but outdated record libraries.

It could well be that, instead of deploring the lack of permanence in present-day architecture and building, librarians will soon wish for a greater degree of built-in obsolescence. We may yet reach the stage when we trade-in our old buildings, after five years or so, for new ones.

'Maximising the use of plant'

This extraordinary phrase first appeared in British official directives about ten years ago. (One of these, sent to colleges, called for more courses to be fitted into a longer academic year in order to 'maximise the use of plant and increase the throughput of students'; it came from the Department of Education and Science.) The phrase has now become a cliché in government circles, and is used to cover many situations, from school playing fields and facilities being made generally available to the community, particularly during vacation periods, to the activities and opening hours of public libraries.

Part of a speech in 1967 by Denis Howell, then a government minister, reads: 'I still believe we need much more thought about the use of our libraries—their social purpose. In my view they should become cultural centres in the widest sense of that term—a place where people can gather together to talk, to hear a variety of discussions—the very heart of the community . . . where people can get a meal and a drink and where there is a multiplicity of activity . . . The community cannot afford to put up any expensive buildings for limited use. Our capital resources must be exploited to the full, and I intend to consider ways and means of bringing this about in all new library buildings.'

It would seem that maximising the use of plant was the basis of this speech, but the idea of the public library as a community

cultural centre is as old as the library movement itself. Many public libraries have, since their inception, provided accommodation for local societies and classes, and have housed and sponsored exhibitions, displays, concerts, plays and film shows.

A number of comparatively recent buildings include a cafeteria or coffee bar; others offer refreshments from vending machines. It must be said, however, that this provision is not usual—nor is the more basic one of washing and lavatory facilities for the readers. Some librarians maintain that public toilet facilities have proved more troublesome than all the rest of the library. There would seem to be a good case for persuading the public health department to take over responsibility for these and to man and maintain them as they do other public lavatories.

Mobile libraries

The physical presence of a public library may be a 'modest vehicle providing a mobile service to scattered hamlets'; it may also be a large and quite impressive vehicle providing a service on a housing estate, in a shopping centre, or in some other heavily built-up area of a town or city.

In many parts of the world, mobile libraries are playing a major part in introducing library services to previously unserved areas. But the conception of travelling libraries pioneering across the counties of Britain and the United States is now somewhat dated.

The use of mobile libraries in county library areas increased tremendously after the second world war as part of the general public library development. They replaced many hundreds of village centres, containing a few hundred books chosen by the voluntary helpers who ran the centres. The larger and better-selected stock, and the attendance of a qualified librarian on a mobile library, represented a different order of service.

The increased use of mobile libraries in urban areas is a more recent phenomenon and there are various reasons for it. It used to be assumed that a mobile service was in the nature of a probing —an assessing of the demands prior to the building of a permanent branch library—but, although this element is always present, it is rarely now the main reason for an urban mobile service. Public

libraries have always had a less than adequate share of
able land and building resources. Now that land specul
property development are a paradise for freebooters, a
service is often Hobson's choice.

It is reasonable to attribute some marginal virtues to this
sity. A bright and clear-lettered vehicle has obvious publicity
and there may well be people who would be more inclined to
a mobile library than a branch library. Yet the ultimate aim sho
surely be a properly housed library.

It should be possible (without anticipating a new heaven and
new earth) to get the best of both worlds by having a library an
a supplementary mobile service.

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

by B C Bloomfield

Since the academic library serves all members of the institution in which it is housed, its location is clearly of prime importance. Central position is based on the acknowledged importance of the library. It is probably true to say that most universities and polytechnics in Britain operate a central library service from a central library building, and this is usually placed in a convenient position for the majority of users on the university campus. (The polytechnics present a more varied picture; they are often recent amalgamations of previously separate colleges and their library services are in different stages of unification.) The libraries of other colleges and schools are usually housed in rooms within the central buildings, so that they also are easily accessible.

However, in all academic institutions, there are frequently pplementary services which may or may not be under the control co-ordination of the central library. In universities and polynics, individual faculties and departments develop separate ary collections and often these are of considerable size. In the ed States, where university libraries are larger than in Britain, not uncommon for the law and medical faculty libraries to rtually independent of the central library and under the

control of the head of the faculty. In Germany, the same is true for the departmental, or 'seminar', libraries. Since these libraries are usually housed separately, there is obviously a danger of wasting scarce and expensive library resources if they develop without consultation with the central library collections, and policies of co-operation need to be mutually agreed.

Room for improvement

As education in general, and higher education in particular, has expanded considerably since 1945, there has been a corresponding increase in library building; but it may still be said that libraries are as badly housed now as they ever were. In spite of the building boom, the pressures for enlarging library collections, the sharply increased numbers of books and periodicals being published, and the much larger numbers of readers to be served and staff to be housed, have led to considerable overcrowding in most academic libraries.

Institutions have tried to solve these problems in various ways. The smaller colleges and schools have usually dealt with the problems by getting rid of some of the book stock and transferring responsibility for some of their functions to other bodies. But the larger academic institutions have been unable to do this. For universities, when the central library is filled, there are a number of possible solutions. One is to build a special library for undergraduates, housing a specially selected book stock (as at Harvard, Leeds and others); another is to build a special warehouse or depository library (the New England colleges and London, for example); or, when a department or faculty is moved from the central location, to build a separate faculty or departmental library. These solutions are all very expensive, since they involve extra buildings, extra staff and extra books. There are now moves afoot to build up central warehouse lending collections (such as the National Lending Library in Boston Spa and the Center for Research Libraries in Chicago) in the hope that these may prove less expensive and more efficient. Time alone will tell whether or not these are successful.

Obviously, the form of any academic library building is dictated

by its function. A warehouse library, closed to readers, will need only to provide efficient storage and retrieval services for the books. A library with a large book stock but only a small research staff, will not need to provide a great deal of space for readers; while the general university library with perhaps 8,000 students and 600 members of teaching and research staff, will of necessity provide a great deal.

Building now

In considering any academic library and the building it occupies, it is always necessary to consider the history and development of the institution and what may become of it in the future. Many academic libraries are in what are now old and out-dated buildings, but because those buildings are historically, sentimentally or aesthetically important, they will continue to be used or adapted for library purposes.

However, if one is considering building anew, different factors come into play. Any new academic library building needs to take account of the book stock to be housed (and this will include periodicals, audio-visual aids, manuscripts and other things), the potential readers, and the library staff. And of course, one needs to bear in mind other architectural factors such as the environment in which the library is being built and the money available. All these things must be considered together, for a decision taken on one count will inevitably influence later decisions.

For example, when considering the housing of the book stock, one must decide whether the collections are to be available to readers on open access (which is usually convenient for readers, but wasteful of space in a large library); whether reading accommodation is to be with the book stacks or separate from them; whether the climate makes it necessary for the books to be in air-conditioned storage; whether, if the books are not open to readers, to install machinery for retrieving and shelving books, and so on. Likewise, when dealing with the provision of space for readers, the total potential reading population must be estimated and some guess made as to the average number likely to be present in the library at any one time. Such a decision will be influenced

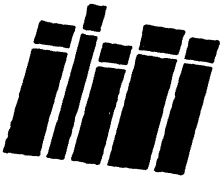
by whether the readers live in the academic institution or commute to it; whether any other reading accommodation is available to them in other libraries; how many hours of actual teaching or lecturing students are expected to undergo; and whether readers are expected to use the library intensively in the course of their studies or not.

When it comes to accommodation for the library staff, the layout of the library should permit a sensible flow of work and also enable the staff to be easily available when the readers need to consult them. Another major decision which will influence the layout of the library needs to be taken early on: this is whether the library will be open at all times to readers, or only when supervised by the library staff, with the entrance and exit physically controlled. Climate is another important factor, for a style of architecture which suits a temperate zone, may need great modification for a tropical climate.

The best laid plans . . .

Much work has been done by librarians and architects on the problems of designing successful academic library buildings, but there still seems to be no infallible method of ensuring success. The easiest way of getting some insight into the problems is to read Keyes Metcalf's fascinating book *Planning academic and research library buildings* (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1965). One should also walk round, and talk to the staff and readers in some of the better known buildings erected since 1945. Included in these are the History Faculty Library at Cambridge, Edinburgh University Library, the Law Faculty Library at Oxford, the School of Oriental and African Studies Library in London and the University of Sussex Library. Some of these buildings are illustrated in this book.

5 More than books



To assume that interest in the book by libr
precludes their legitimate interest in any
media is to condemn the profession to a nic
history reserved for stuffed specimens. F Hallwo
County Librarian, Wiltsh

'I've always loved books . . .'

Many years ago this was a perfectly acceptable reason for wanting to become a librarian. For some considerable time now, that reason, alone and unqualified, has not been enough. Today, 'I love books' is probably the worst answer an applicant can give to the question, 'Why do you wish to join the library profession?' Interviewers' reactions to it may vary from falling about laughing, to a tart observation that 'when you've humped a few thousand around the shelves you'll change your tune'.

Librarians have long wished to change a popular image of themselves as effete, browsing booklovers. To this end, they have stressed the physically-taxing aspects of librarianship—and we have seen that these are still prominent in current librarianship career literature.

Librarians have also tried to publicise the many technical elements of their profession—the acquisition, classifying and cataloguing of books and much other material, and the arranging, displaying and exploiting of them. While realising that the general public remains largely untouched by these propaganda efforts, librarians nevertheless look for some awareness of the true nature of librarianship among those who wish to join the profession.

. . . and other printed material'

Manuscripts, maps, plans, photographs, prints, slides and other diverse materials have always been represented to some extent in libraries. In certain libraries, items such as these have been thematically collected; in others they just accreted. Either way,

most of the material tended to lie quietly mouldering; the book was still pre-eminent.

However, after the second world war, when 'information' was becoming a key-word, a new shibboleth by which all librarians felt they might be tested, books alone were not enough.

Periodical literature took on increasing importance, and the number of journals stocked by a library was taken as an indication of its 'current awareness'. The professional press was flush with articles on the problems of periodicals—of acquiring them through subscription or otherwise, of circulating them, of displaying, binding and storing them. Microforms, as alternatives or additions to periodical holdings, came to be described and discussed at length.

Other non-book printed material came to the fore at this time also. The importance of fugitive items was stressed—such as pamphlets, leaflets, off-prints and printed ephemera of all types from newspaper cuttings to posters, programmes and tickets.

Cuckoo in the nest?

During the late 1930's there was a gramophone record library at London University and, no doubt, there were others elsewhere. Gramophone records were also being made available by some local education authorities, for loan from central depots to schools.

In British public libraries, however, the breakthrough (or breakdown, according to another point of view) came in 1946, when a record library was opened at the Chingford Branch of Essex County Libraries. This was paid for out of a local differential (that is, supplementary) rate, by the Chingford residents.

The next year, 1947, Walthamstow, Hampstead and Sutton Coldfield public libraries started gramophone record libraries, and others quickly followed. Some degree of determination was required to initiate this service; the legal position was vague, and a deposit or subscription was usually called for from the users.

In those early years, before the bright-sleeved long-playing discs were marketed, bulky sets of 78 rpm records were the norm. Perhaps this fact justified librarians reverting to 'closed access'. The discs were generally stored behind the staff at the counter and an indicator showed borrowers which records were IN and which

were out. This throwback attitude persisted long after the long-playing record and record libraries had become commonplace.

There was regular debate throughout the 1950's for and against a record library service. Those against declared that lending discs was not a proper function of public libraries and was a dissipation of resources. Those for maintained that money could be obtained from local authorities for such a new service additional to funds provided for the established, traditional ones. The ayes increasingly had it and record libraries were set up in more and more public libraries.

Some librarians qualified their support for gramophone record provision by the meaningless proviso that it should not be done 'at the expense of a good book service'. But the book was inevitably placed in a position akin to that of a first child in a restricted-income household when a sibling is born: he may be no less loved, but his material prospects are diminished.

Shadow of coming events

If some conservative-minded librarians saw the establishment of gramophone record libraries as a self-inflicted injury on the public library system, on a less dramatic level it was simply seen as an ancillary, cultural service. Either way, it was not a particularly ominous innovation. Only the *Linguaphone* and similar language-teaching records foreshadowed the truly radical change which would affect all types of libraries.

At the time that the long-playing record was being developed, so was the magnetised-wire recorder—which soon became the tape recorder. With these, and equally rapid developments in the photographic field, a whole new industry of educational and recreational audio-visual materials was being created.

Educational technology

Concurrent with these technological developments, general social changes were taking place and these were being reflected in the world of education. Formal teaching was being replaced by group and team teaching, and the rigid timetable approach was being abandoned in favour of pervasive-project work.

A new branch of the teaching profession—educational technology—was sprouting in the late 1950's in the United States, and in the mid-1960's in Britain. It is now flourishing, with a formidable array of paraphernalia, including teaching machines and programmes, reading machines (combining tapes and printed cards), language laboratories, films, video-tapes and even computers.

Addressing a conference in 1966, H J Edwards of the Department of Education and Science said, 'The world of education is well known for its partiality for bright new ideas, new methods and new fashions which come and go in no time at all'. Now that this partiality for new fashions is being exercised in the fields of technological advance, many people are alarmed. Their feelings about education may be expressed in the words of Captain Beatty in Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (Hart-Davis, 1969): 'Discipline is relaxed, philosophies, histories, languages dropped, English and spelling gradually neglected . . . Why learn anything save pressing buttons, pulling switches?'

On the other hand, it would be absurd to suggest that teachers should operate in a still centre, separate from the rest of the world and ignoring its developments and changes. For better or worse, the days of 'talk and chalk' teaching are gone.

The only non-contentious statement to be made about educational technology is that it implies a decreasing reliance on the book as a medium of information.

More books, less reading?

It is too easy to take an extremely gloomy view of the present state of education, yet it is difficult to reach a balanced one. The social-class content of many of the attacks on education, and an equal and opposite amount in the defence of it, leaves the overall picture confused. In Britain, some of the most vigorous criticism has been voiced in the periodical *Critical quarterly*, which has also published three books of educational criticism over the last five years. Each one has the sub-title *a black paper* and the books are referred to as the 'Black papers on education'. Not all the contributors to these publications have been over-emotional. The late Sir Cyril Burt's contribution, for example, to the second one

(*Crisis in education*, edited by C B Cox, Critical Quarterly, 1969) was reasoned and moderate in tone. It did, however, include a serious charge against 'progressive' teaching methods in primary schools. On the results of these methods, Burt wrote: 'Judged by tests applied and standardised in 1913-14, the average attainments in reading, spelling, mechanical and problem arithmetic are now appreciably lower than they were 55 years ago'.

We should remember, however, that more people are being educated today than ever before, and, in Britain, the numbers were further increased in 1973 by the adoption of a compulsory fifth year of secondary education.

There is, then, an ever-increasing potential of library use. It is not known to what extent the use of audio-visual materials may affect the demand for books. In 1971, the number of titles published in Britain fell for the first time since 1959—and the low figure in that year was in part due to a prolonged printers' strike. The indications are (but there are no comprehensive statistics to support this) that the number of copies produced is steadily decreasing. There is a general tendency towards smaller editions and printings.

Sweet smell of cassettes

In the third edition of the *Encyclopaedia of librarianship*, Professor Irwin cites the following definition: 'Librarianship is the collection, preservation, organisation and use of recorded communications.' This will serve to remind us that librarians are not exclusively concerned with printed materials, and also that to add audio-visual and other items to a library does not call for a change of name to 'resource centre' or whatever.

The American Library Association's *The booklist* (fortnightly) has included 16mm films since 1956, and other non-book media since 1969. It now devotes as much space to reviews of discs, cassettes, slide sets, films and film strips, as it does to book reviews.

In Britain, libraries closely connected with education—school, college, university and county libraries—have, naturally, taken the lead.

It is not surprising that there are many educational establish-

ments with both a library and a resource centre. Generally speaking, the teaching staff initially acquired the non-book materials and the equipment necessary to use it. As the quantities of material increased, departments of educational technology and resource centres developed—frequently with little or no consultation with the librarians, who in many cases showed small interest or concern.

Although there are some colleges where not only are the library and resource centre located far apart, but communication between them is minimal, there is now a growing realisation that the two cannot be mutually exclusive. On the one hand, it is becoming apparent that the recording, storage, handling and use of non-book media require the techniques of librarianship; and on the other, an increasing number of librarians are prepared at least to consider being involved with this material. Such a tentative statement is necessary to reflect the tentative current position.

'Instructional modes and media services departments'

In 1968 the American Library Association published *Guidelines for audio-visual services in academic libraries*, and in 1970 the British Library Association published its recommended standards for the provision of school library resource centres, followed by a policy statement on them in 1971.

Since then, conferences have been held and scores of papers have been published on the question of libraries and non-book materials. The varied terminology for places where these materials are held includes 'media centre', 'A-V centre', 'materials centre', 'instructional materials centre' and 'media library'; with 'instructional modes and media services department' as the longest and 'resource centre' as the current favourite. The confusion of the present position is indicated by the fact that the Open University has a 'media librarian' and Aberystwyth Public Libraries have a 'cassette librarian'.

Public libraries

The debate over the provision of audio-visual materials in public libraries is in its early stages. The points which will be made against are predictable—and valid.

Reference provision would involve not only the material itself (films, slides, sound and video-tapes and cassettes etc), but also playback and viewing facilities. These latter would include equipment, accommodation, technical and supervisory staff.

Proposals to lend this material would be met with a great number of objections, perhaps the first one being that it would be a minority service—as was argued against gramophone record libraries some years ago. Further, it will be maintained for some time to come that the public generally do not have their own equipment necessary to use the material.

On the other side, it may be argued that a public library service is a compound of minority services which are used by overlapping, not mutually-exclusive, minorities. The case against the lending of audio-visual materials must be progressively weakened as slide-viewers, film projectors, tape and cassette players (which even now are available at relatively low costs) become commonplace household items.

Overall, time is on the side of those who support public library provision of non-book materials. The pressures from a public familiar with these media through educational and recreational use of them will be one important factor. A more compelling one will be the virtual impossibility of the public library being the only type of library with services based for all time almost entirely on printed material and the gramophone record. Indeed, it is already predicted that the recorded disc will be obsolete in a few years' time. With this in mind, Aberystwyth Public Libraries, when initiating a 'record' service in 1972, opted for the cassette; thus they leapfrogged both the disc and the spool-tape stages.

Closed-access again?

In the chapter *Several choices*, it was questioned whether open-access in public libraries was an unmixed blessing or not. The system may well be called into question again—and will certainly be severely tested—when the provision of any great range and quantity of audio-visual material in public libraries is seriously considered.

Open-access requires the maximum possible degree of simplicity

of shelf arrangement. Separate sequences of books are a drawback, and additional sequences of audio-visual material, separately shelved, filed and stored because of their differing formats, would further decrease the efficiency of the open-access system.

The maximum use would, no doubt, be made of non-book material that was physically compatible with, and shelved in the same sequence as books. Many audio-visual 'packs', consisting of slides, printed material and discs or cassettes, are book-shaped; but the majority of them is not sufficiently rigid or robust to stand on bookshelves. The publishers of these packs may, if demand warrants it, eventually produce 'library editions'. In the meantime, library binders' techniques, which have been developed to cope with such items as paperbacks, maps, books with loose supplements, plans and so on, can be applied to limp audio-visual packs and separate items.

The alternative seems to be to house all these non-book materials in a special, closed-access department, with the high ratio of staff to borrowers which would be necessary to administer it effectively.

'No paper, no type . . .'

A current advertisement in the *New York review of books* is for 'a poetry magazine to end poetry magazines'. The unbelievably nauseous prose (even for a blurb) reads: 'No paper, no type—only the poet's own voice cradling, hurling, caressing, sharing the poems which it uniquely holds . . .' It is, of course, a cassette. This brings us to a final point in connection with public library provision of audio-visual materials: the question of payment, additional to the purchase cost, to the people involved in the production of them, for the privilege of stocking and lending the materials.

In the Scandinavian countries, where a writer's work must be translated into other languages for it to reach a sizeable public and make any significant profit, authors are supported directly or indirectly by government grants. The Danish scheme was the first, in 1946, and Iceland's the last, in 1968. Only Sweden takes account of the number of times an author's works are borrowed by the

public. Recently, other countries have inaugurated schemes similar to the Scandinavian ones.

In Britain, twenty two years of agitation by various groups of writers for a levy on books lent from libraries (' public lending right ') is reaching a decisive stage.

The latest British *public lending right* proposals include payment to publishers in addition to authors, and for reference as well as lending material. In the United States, the Authors League has been pressing for ' lending royalties ' to be paid for the use of books in libraries. A bill has been introduced in Congress to create a commission to study the question.

With so many ' creative ' people—writers, photographers, actors and so on—involved in audio-visual productions, the 'lending right' protagonists and lawyers could well have the time of their lives.

6 *Spreading the word*

But to do good and to communicate, forget not.
Epistle to the Hebrews, 13, 16.

IF A newly-created library—of no matter what type—were quietly to open its doors with no advance publicity, a number of people would, no doubt, find their way in and use it. Assuming a well-selected stock, adequately guided and arranged, and an informed staff willing to answer enquiries, then the users would derive some benefit from it. They would tell others about the library, a moderate clientèle would be built up, and its existence would to some extent be justified.

But this would be an almost completely passive, introverted service; ticking over only, not in motion. In this sort of situation, little more than the custodial aspect of librarianship would be involved. Few libraries, in fact, commence and continue like this. (Although there must have been some in the past, for so many people to think of libraries as quiet backwaters.) A complete library service, however, also has active, outgoing elements which are brought into play before a library is opened and which constitute the driving force once it is operating.

There's a library here

On a campus, or in an organisation's building, the way to the library should be amply indicated; similarly, there should be plenty of street and road signs directing people to a public library. The library itself, whether a separate building or not, should be clearly lettered.

A new library service should be well publicised in advance by all possible means. The distribution of leaflets and the submission of descriptive articles for publication in any relevant institution journals, are two frequently-employed methods. In the case of a

public library, the local newspapers should be used for both articles and advertisements. It is a rare thing to see posters announcing a library service—which is a pity.

Printed guides

It is usual for libraries of all types to produce introductory printed leaflets or booklets. Conditions of membership, hours of opening, some description of the stock, equipment and services, and a plan of the layout of the library are the main items included. A brief history of the library and extracts from the library regulations may also be given. The guide should certainly include locations, telephone numbers and other details of any related libraries. A map or plan showing the location of the library itself is a useful addition if copies of the guide are sent out for the information of, and in the hope of converting, non-users of the library.

How to use the library

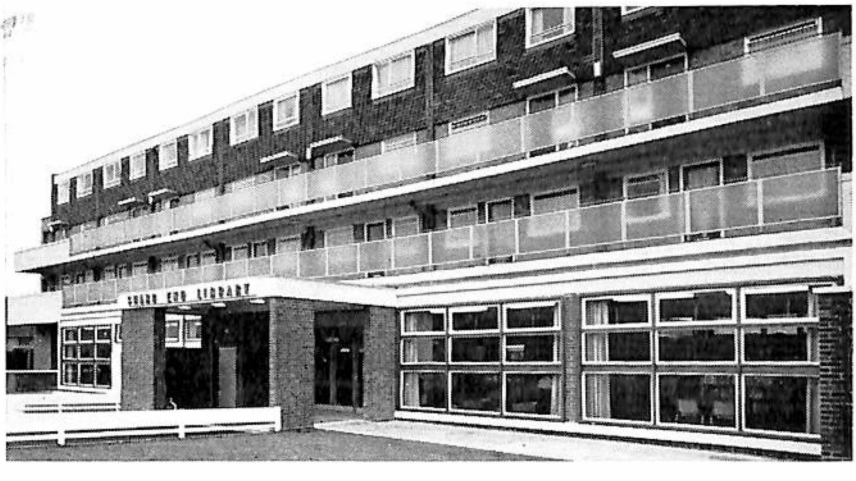
The academic librarian—university, college or school—has the best chance of all to instruct his readers in the use of the library. Not only does he have a clearly defined and identifiable group of users, it is to a large extent a 'captive' one. Library instruction can be organised and timetabled.

At the beginning of each session or year, in almost every academic institution, will be seen the easily recognisable groups of students being shown round the library. It is now standard practice for some form of library initiation to be provided and it usually takes the form of a general address by the librarian, followed by guided tours of the whole or parts of the library.

In some institutions these talks and tours may be followed up by teaching seminars conducted jointly by librarians and members of the teaching staffs. In American university libraries, for example, it is not unusual for there to be teaching programmes on the use of the library lasting one or two terms. All new students are required to undertake this instruction which includes a certain amount of written project or course work. Similar courses are becoming more common in British universities, colleges and some schools.

Leytonstone Branch Library 1936; income from the shops below paid for the library above.

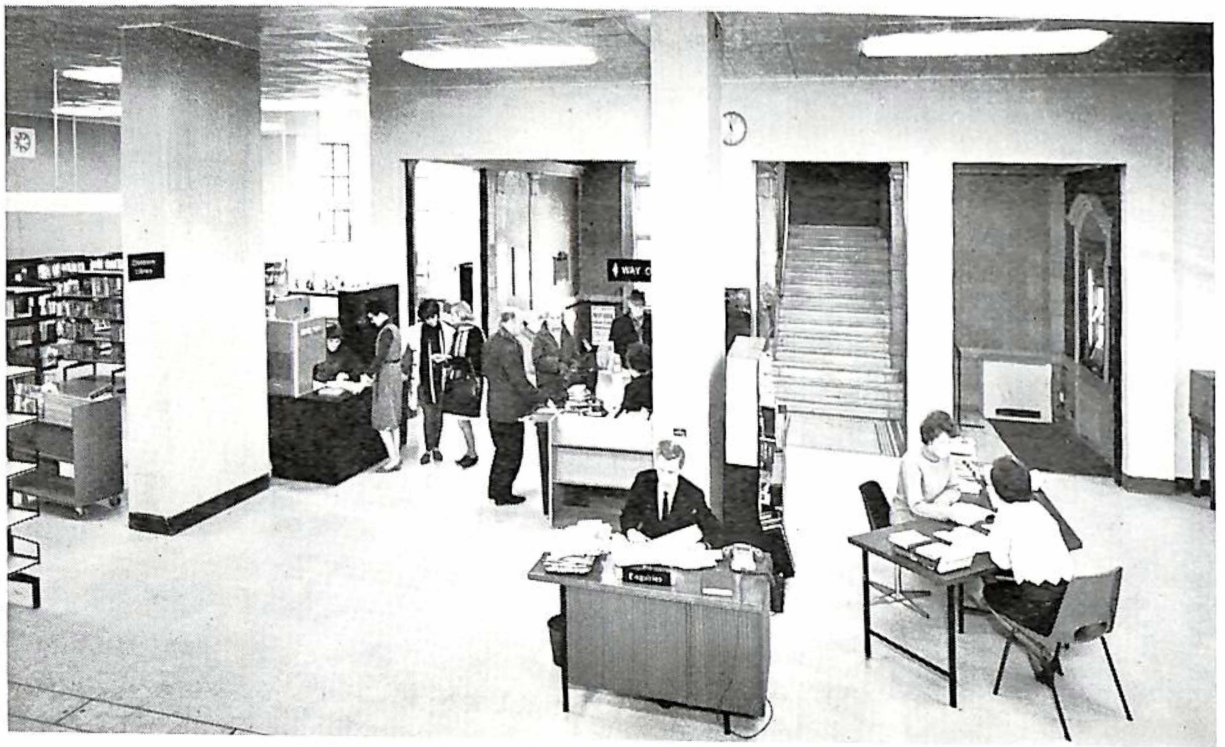
Thirty years later, site-sharing is more common—Shard End Library, Birmingham, with flats above.



WOODSIDE DISTRICT LIBRARY. LENDING LIBRARY.

Above, closed access in the early years of this century. In Woodside District Library Glasgow, readers are consulting catalogues and checking the indicator boards; at the service area issues are being recorded in a ledger.

Below, the librarian of Birkenhead Public Library poses in the entrance hall by the indicators.

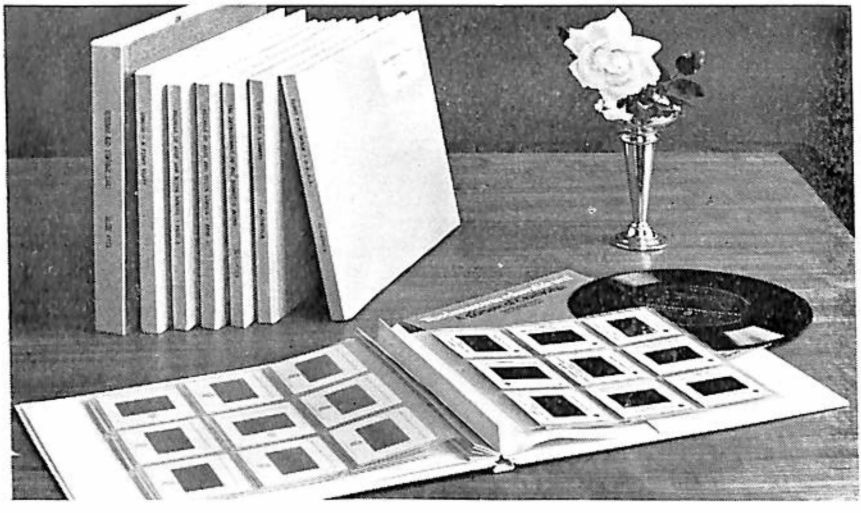


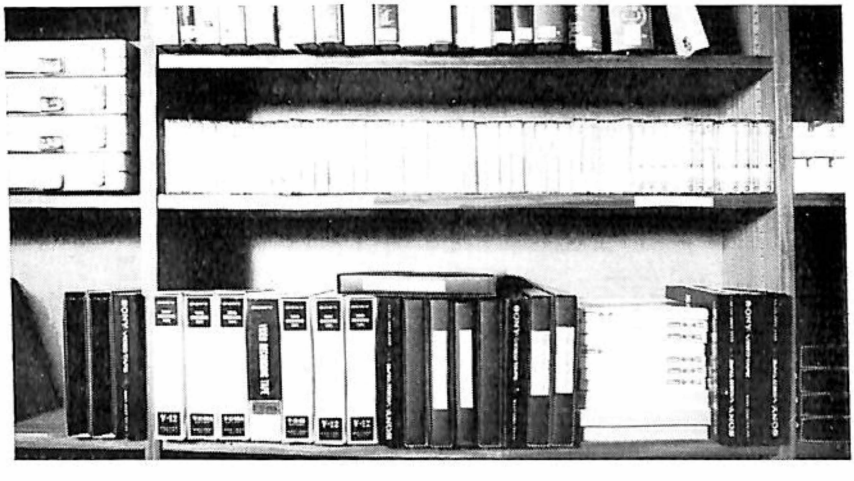
Open access: Dudley Public Library today—light, space and readers' advisers . . .

. . . and refinements—the coffee lounge upstairs, with vending machine.

Audio-visual aids: familiarity with mixed media at an early age is shown by these children at Horndean Infants School, Hampshire, using slides, cassette and printed text.

On facing page, modern packaging forms fit comfortably on the bookshelves.




SONY
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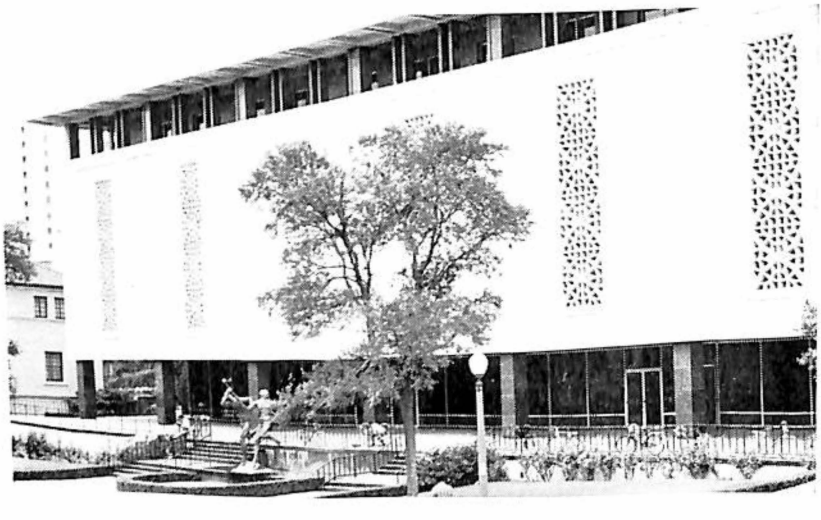
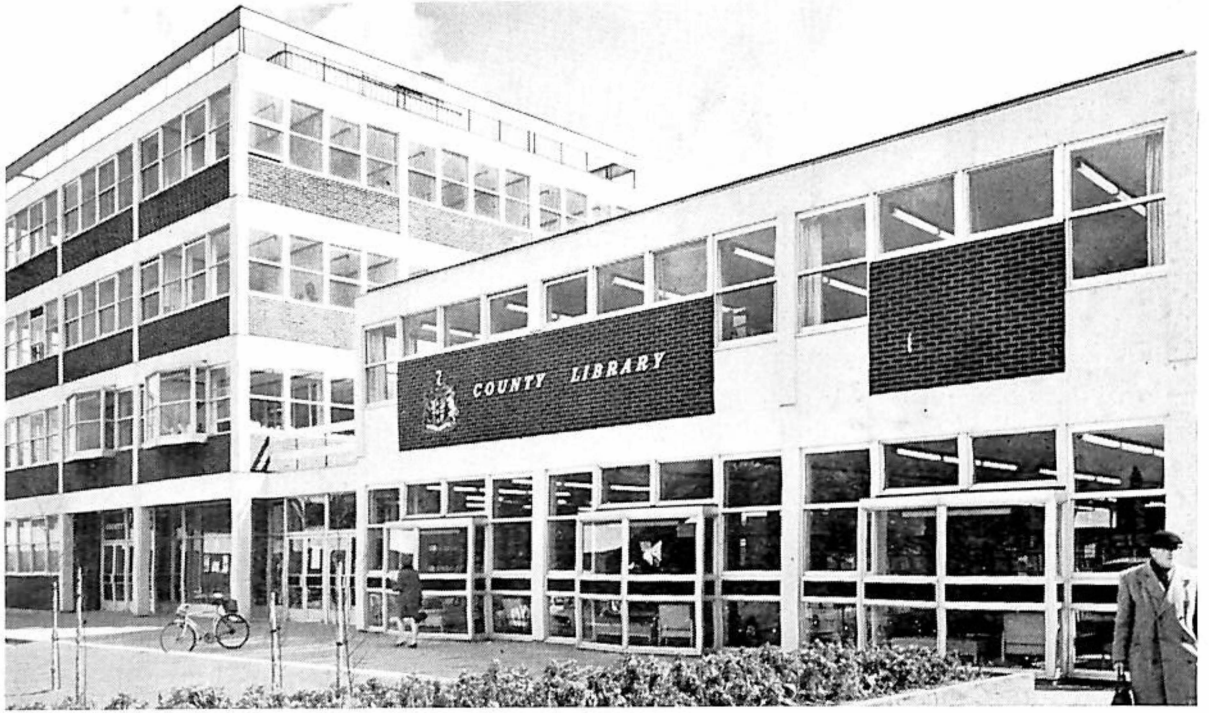
Old and new in Texas: the public library and the new undergraduate library of the university, in Austin.





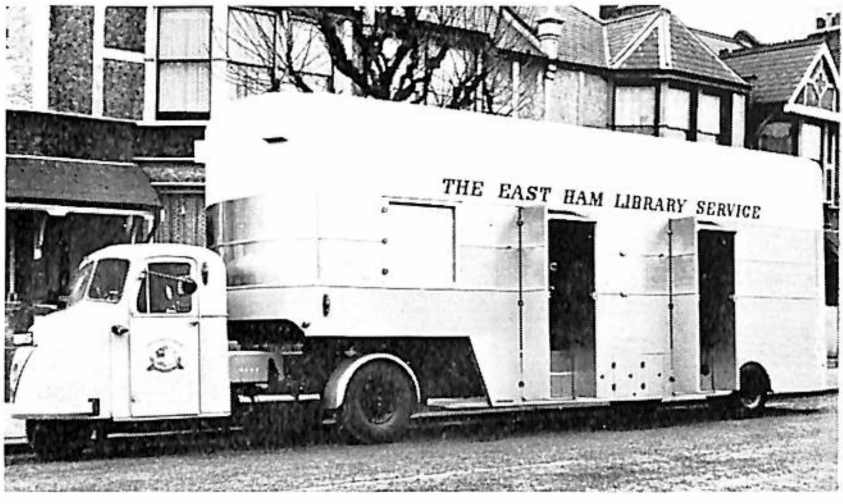
A good clear sign on Dunstable Area Library, Bedfordshire.

Flying saucers have landed in Surrey—Bourne Hall Public Library, Epsom & Ewell.

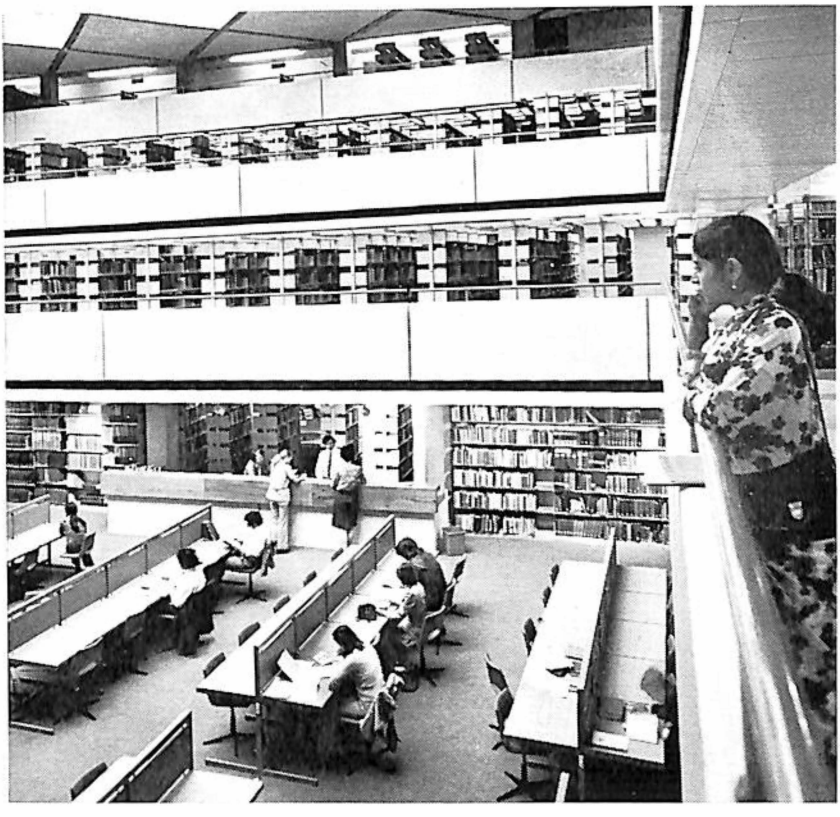
The good ship Eccleshill (Bradford) District, with stabilisers out for rough weather.

Good enough to eat—West Sussex County Library Headquarters in Chichester.

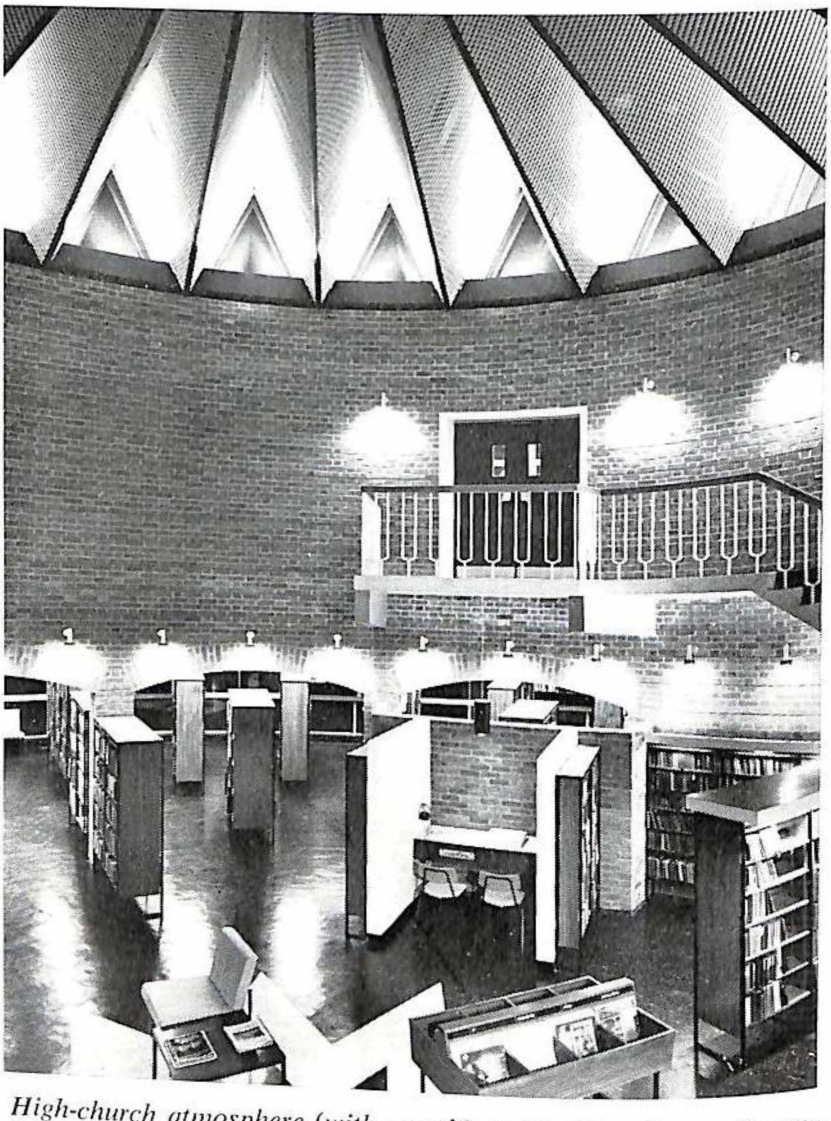
'Where do you want it, mister?' Cornwall County's 'piggy-back' container libraries, which are off-loaded and connected to main services at prepared sites, and offer a telephone service, study facilities, and greater floor and shelf space than a mobile library.



Mobiles in town (above) and country library service.

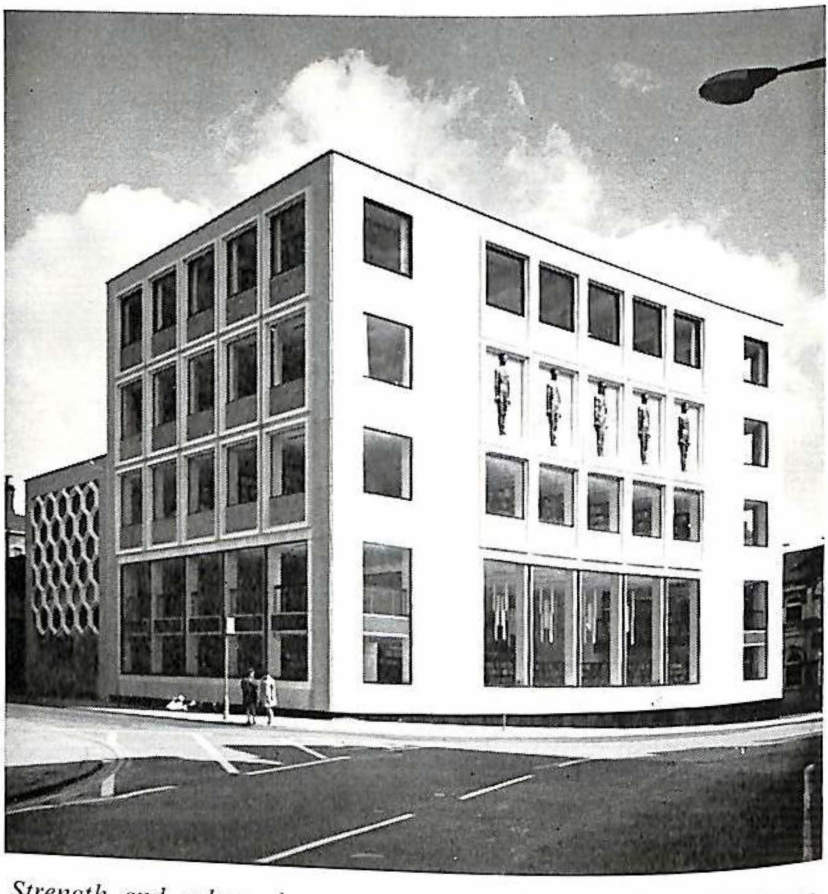


Oriental contemplation of the new school of Oriental & African Studies Library in London.



High-church atmosphere (with carrels) inside West Sussex County Library Headquarters in Chichester.

Wide open spaces in Bradford's new Central Library.



Strength and urban elegance in Grimsby's new Central Library.

is not possible to generalise about oral instruction in special aries. In some institutions and government departments, regular uction courses for new members of staff include talks on the rary and its services. Staff conferences, which are annual or six- nthly affairs in many commercial and industrial organisations, ten provide a useful platform for the librarian who, in addition addressing the members, may also be given display facilities or his publications.

The librarian as a host

The public librarian cannot organise or timetable his readers for instruction in library use. There is only one section of his community that is to some extent, for some of the time, 'captive'—the schoolchildren. Organised visits by classes of children to their local public library are quite common. These sessions are used, not only to show the children round the library and to enrol new members, but also to teach the use of the catalogue and reference books. A competitive game element is often introduced into this work.

Of the adults, the more fortunate ones—those who enrol during a quiet period—are likely to be given some brief indication of the working of the library by a member of the staff. At busy periods, however, there will be time for little more than the handing over of a copy of the introductory leaflet.

The late Dr Savage, one of the greatest of all public librarians, had a concept of service which he epitomised in the phrase 'the librarian as host'. His contention was that the librarian (by which he meant not only a branch or departmental librarian, but also—and particularly—the chief librarian) should spend the majority of his time among the readers in his library. He should, like a good host, make them welcome and converse with them; his bibliographical and bibliothecal knowledge and expertise should be always available—but not obtrusively so.

Dr Savage's idealism and eloquence drew few librarians out of their offices and even fewer stayed out of them. He was, of course, protesting against the practice which was then prevalent (*see* the chapter *One profession*), of relegating the important duty of

contact with readers to the most junior members of public library staffs. The mantle of host now rests—quite snugly at times—on the shoulders of the Readers' Adviser.

> *Communication has been recognised as one of the key elements of present-day society, and its high development as one of the distinguishing marks of contemporary culture.* M Brawne, *Libraries architects and equipment* (Pall Mall, 1970).

There are now various forms of linked tape/slide guides to the library which are being increasingly produced to help readers. More than a dozen have already been produced by university libraries in Britain alone, and the Standing Conference of National and University Libraries (SCONUL) has a special sub-committee devoted to co-ordinating this activity and drawing up guide lines for librarians engaged in producing these aids. In addition, there are many programmed texts for library instruction which are used in school and college libraries. These have the advantage, compared with the usual lecture, of being freely available when the student wants to use them. They usually deal with the simpler problems of using the library catalogue or of tracing the bibliographical details of a book in a variety of general bibliographies.

Maintaining contact

It has been said that the classification of books in a library is a form of communication between the librarian and his readers. This is usually reinforced with subject guides on bays and shelves. To bring together books and other material on related subjects, or aspects of the same subject which are separated by the classification scheme, most librarians organise displays. The displaying of books, pamphlets, photographs and other documentary material—not only for this purpose, but also to highlight interesting and topical items—is one of the oldest methods of librarian/reader communication.

Printed material

Many libraries of all types issue complete or selected lists of additions to stock. This is not only a useful service to regular readers, but also a good way of informing those who do not habitually use

the library, about new books and the continuing development of the collections. Some library accessions lists are of such importance (*eg* that of the University of Dar-es-Salaam which includes a list of local publications deposited under the legal deposit ordinance) that they are often filed by other libraries permanently or used for book selection purposes.

In addition to these publications there are the scholarly journals which issue from many academic and other libraries. *The Bodleian library record, Harvard library bulletin, The Guildhall miscellany,* the *Education libraries bulletin* issued by the University of London Institute of Education library, and many others, are examples of this kind of journal which not only aims to publish research articles based on material in the library collections but also to publicise the library and serve as a vehicle for communication with readers scattered throughout the world.

Journals and bulletins produced by special libraries frequently contain abstracts of recently acquired material and other items of up to date information.

The annual report used to be the most important publication of the public librarian's year. This was originally, and still is ostensibly, the librarian's report to his committee, but has been used for many years as a medium for telling fellow librarians of local achievements. In some libraries the annual report is made freely available to library users; in others they have great difficulty in obtaining a copy. Some librarians have despaired of communicating satisfactorily with these three diverse audiences and no longer publish a report; others publish one at three or five year intervals.

A touch of technology

These are just some of the ways in which librarians communicate with their readers to keep them informed. There are many others, including the use of telephone, telex, closed-circuit television and computers. In the United States, cable television has been developed to the point where the viewer is in contact with the studio and can respond to questions and even select from a choice of endings to programmes according to his taste. (Happy, sad, and indeterminate are usually on offer.) This has led to the suggestion that the

contents of libraries be put on microfilm or videotape; then, by using his 'narrow band channel', the reader could request any available publication. This would be presented page by page on his screen, with the viewer signalling for each page in turn.

Whether or not the expense involved in this particular development would be justified by sparing someone a trip to the library on a wet night is doubtful. A more sophisticated system, however, has already been developed for the CIA in the United States. Vast quantities of documents are filmed and subject-coded. The subject codes and locations are stored in a computer which is programmed to retrieve filmed items in response to subject requests. A subsidiary gadget shows the selected films on the viewing screen of a reader/copier machine.

Dazzling though this may seem, we should remember that the information material has first to be identified, acquired, assessed and subject-classified. The long-term effects of this sort of development will be some changes in the physical form of libraries, and in some areas of librarianship. But it will not supersede them.

7 *Education for librarianship*

The term ' professions ' denotes occupations which demand a highly specialised knowledge and skill acquired at least in part by courses of a more or less theoretical nature and not by practice alone, tested by some form of examination either at a university or some other authorised institution . . . *Dictionary of the social sciences* (Tavistock for Unesco, 1963).

IN THE 1880's, Henry Tedder in Britain and Melvil Dewey in the United States were proclaiming to librarians in conference that the time had come when they could speak of their vocation as a profession, ' without assumption '.

If we take a generally accepted definition of a profession such as that quoted above, then in one respect at least Tedder and Dewey were being presumptuous. There was no testing by examination ' either at a university or some other authorised institution '; nor were there any formal courses in librarianship. Training on the job in apprentice fashion was the only way of becoming a librarian.

Not only were people outside librarianship unconvinced by Tedder's claim; few librarians believed it either. Melvil Dewey's proposal in 1883 that a full-time school of librarianship be started, met with strong opposition from both outside and inside the library world. In Britain, although Henry Tedder's proposal in 1882 that the Library Association should institute a system of professional examinations was accepted, there was no great enthusiasm from possible candidates. The numbers sitting varied from three at the first examination in 1885, to none at all at some later ones.

Nevertheless, the pattern of education for librarianship in Britain had been established, with examining in the hands of the Library Association and part-time teaching by practising librarians. In 1894, there was strong criticism by librarians of the examinations on the grounds that they were memory tests, not tests of reasoning.

(Sixty years later the same criticisms were being made by full-time library school lecturers.)

The exception to the rule of part-time education was the school of librarianship opened in 1919 at University College, London. It devised its own curriculum and granted its own diploma. This was seen as a weakening of the Library Association's authority, granted by Royal Charter in 1898, 'to hold examinations in librarianship and issue certificates of efficiency'. The majority of librarians were opposed to the school.

Once it was functioning, there was criticism from municipal librarians of the lack of 'practical content' in the courses and of the over-emphasis on academic subjects. 'As a result', says Gerald Bramley in his *History of library education* (Bingley, 1969), 'the solitary school . . . operated in splendid isolation'. The school eventually became a postgraduate one and the majority of its students went into academic and other non-public libraries. The profession as a whole remained untouched by the school's existence.

In the United States in 1887, Dewey got his library school at Columbia College. In 1893, a conference of librarians at New York resolved that schools of librarianship should be attached to universities and that the educational requirement for entry should be the same as for other university courses.

This approach, and the more hospitable attitude of American universities to professional education, established librarianship at the outset as a graduate profession in the United States. The American Library Association's main involvement has been in 'accrediting'—that is, approving the standards of—the various library schools.

Broadly speaking, the subsequent development of education for librarianship has been a gradual shift from the British system, wherever it has been adopted, to the American one. In South Africa, for example, the Library Association there no longer examines, and librarianship is now a graduate profession. In India, where Americans initiated librarianship courses, teaching has been based from the start on universities. It is in Australia, where library and librarianship development came late, that the British system is likely to survive longest.

EDUCATION FOR LIBRARIANSHIP IN BRITAIN

by P G New

The courses offered by the fifteen British schools of librarianship are changing year by year. This section hopes to steer a course between useless over-generalisation and giving such detailed information on individual schools' arrangements that the information is rapidly out of date. The practice is therefore followed of not naming schools when describing particular kinds of courses. The situation depicted is that obtaining in mid-1973, modified by obvious trends for the future. To get an up-to-date picture the enquirer should obtain the Library Association's *Students' handbook* and the prospectuses of the various schools of librarianship.

It is assumed that a large number of those reading this book will be young people thinking of taking up librarianship as a career. There is therefore a concentration in this section on the qualifying courses offered by schools of librarianship; there is no mention of the short day- or week-long courses on various topics such as computers in libraries, music librarianship, reference librarianship, all aimed at the qualified practising librarian. There is no mention either of the Library Assistants' Certificate intended for the routine, unqualified workers in libraries, or the Mature Registration Scheme for older graduates with experience in library work. And very little is said of the increasing amount of research in schools of librarianship, some of it associated with research degrees.

The development of library education

The pattern of education for librarianship is becoming more complex. The past decade has seen a proliferation of different kinds of courses in librarianship under the aegis of various bodies. At the beginning of the 1960's all schools of librarianship, with the single exception of University College London, prepared for the examinations of the Library Association. Examinations were set and marked by the association (in fact by practising librarians as a spare time activity). Nowadays the Library Association gives permission for schools of librarianship to examine their own students on behalf of the association, and invites schools to submit their own local variant syllabuses for the association's approval.

Apart from the greater autonomy for schools within the framework of the Library Association, two factors have been important in drawing much of the weight of library education away from the Library Association altogether. One is the establishment of further university schools of librarianship which have, like University College London, formulated syllabuses entirely independent of the Library Association. The other factor is the creation of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), which enables colleges outside universities to grant degrees under its auspices. Thus the way was open for the polytechnic schools of librarianship to run degree courses in librarianship. Here too, the Library Association has no direct say in the syllabuses, but as with the university courses, it may or may not approve a course for the purposes of exemption from its own examinations and thence entry to the register of chartered librarians.

While the controlling voice in library education has been changing, the content has been transformed too, with the evolution from a narrow professional course to an undergraduate programme. Earlier courses were closely wedded to the minutiae of practice; present day studies stress a theoretical base and place librarianship in its social context. Detailed accounts of library law and specifications for items of furniture were asked for in the examination questions of twenty years ago; now it is assumed that the librarian can call upon experts in these matters, and that in his education he can pay more attention to what, in a fundamental sense, librarianship is, or should be.

At the same time the subject of librarianship has itself been expanding. The vastly larger amount of writing on librarianship topics is demonstrated by the increasing number of periodicals. Many British schools of librarianship now have substantial research programmes—a phenomenon unknown ten years ago. All this leads to higher levels of teaching, higher expectations of students, greater intensity of courses, and pressures towards longer courses.

In one respect the present situation is simpler than in the past; education for librarianship is now virtually all undertaken by full-time study. Before 1964 there was a choice of full-time school, part-time classes, or correspondence courses. With the change in

syllabus in 1964, the Association of Assistant Librarians reasonably decided not to rewrite its correspondence courses, which had been a feature of library education for many years. The 1964 Library Association syllabus was designed with full-time study in mind, but part-time preparation for it is not impossible. Part-time study survives in a very small way, but the student thinking of this very hard road to qualification is warned that numbers of students at any one institution are very small, restricting the choice of optional alternatives and indeed sometimes causing a college to close down a course, leaving students stranded and half-qualified. But part-time study now has a new role to play, for example in special degree courses for qualified non-graduate librarians.

The content of education for librarianship

The outsider finds it difficult to visualise what makes up the craft of librarianship, and so it may be helpful to describe briefly the make-up of a course in librarianship. Most teachers of librarianship in Britain would hold the view that there are certain basic or 'core' studies in which every librarian must be competent. These, therefore, must form a compulsory element in any course, and they are: library management, subject bibliography, and classification and cataloguing.

Library management needs little description. It is no longer obsessed, as it was in the early days, with the mundane details of library housekeeping. The approach at the other end of the spectrum is to consider the subject as management theory as it may be applied to libraries. Most schools place the subject between the two extremes.

Subject bibliography has also evolved. In the past, students were required to memorise titles of hundreds of important reference books, standard works and bibliographies, such as might be stocked by a general reference library. Nowadays the approach is much more selective. The student searches out all the different categories of material within a subject of his choice. The depth is greater, the breadth less, but the understanding much improved.

Cataloguing and classification varies from school to school in its treatment. To some schools these are techniques of reduced

significance now that central cataloguing agencies are in being. To others the centre of librarianship is found here. To classify a book means making a judgment about how knowledge is interrelated; some degree courses in librarianship therefore study knowledge itself (epistemology).

In recent years the study of *librarianship in its social context* has come to the fore. This topic is taken as a fourth core subject in many courses nowadays. There is scarcely enough time to do justice to it in brief professional courses, but degree courses have the room to give it proper scope.

In addition to core subjects, courses usually have a choice of *optional subjects*. These may include history of libraries, the history of the book, book production, hospital librarianship, library work with children, and many others.

Some courses have a particular slant throughout—for example an educational bias useful for librarians in the teaching world. The most notable examples, however, are the courses in 'information science'. As noted elsewhere in this book, there are arguments for according information science the status of a separate discipline, but an examination of the content of courses shows no more than a special bias; there are no subjects totally unfamiliar to librarianship courses.

Different ways of qualifying

1 *The two year course.* At the present time most qualified librarians have no degree, but the profession is now moving towards graduate membership. It is likely that within a very few years all students leaving schools of librarianship will have either a degree in librarianship or a postgraduate qualification, for the two-year non-graduate course leading to the Library Association examinations is now attracting fewer suitable students, and soon it must surely be discontinued everywhere.

There is misunderstanding and misgiving in the profession over the projected demise of the two-year course. The schools of librarianship are accused of pursuing higher level courses with no regard to the young people so to be excluded from librarianship. In fact the decline of the non-graduate course stems from the

rising educational expectations of young people both inside and outside librarianship. A holder of two 'A' levels is nowadays looking for, and frequently finding a degree course; in earlier years he might have been content with a non-graduate diploma. Those who cannot gain acceptance to degree courses yet who are good enough students for the sub-degree diploma (with nominally the same pre entry requirements—two 'A' levels) are few in number. Librarianship must therefore offer degree courses to continue to compete for the best students—indeed for students of the quality of the best two-year course students of the past. Numbers for the non-graduate course will drop further as its weak competitive position compared with degree courses is more widely recognised; for, when confidence goes, the decline steepens. In the last years of the non-graduate qualification it is obviously of the most crucial importance to warn those intending to embark on it. It is however reasonable that a few people, despite the warnings, may apply. There may be, for example, those who do not have the ability or desire for degree study, or those for whom two years rather than three or four years is a more appropriate investment in study in view of the likely span of their professional service.

The profession and the schools of librarianship recognise that many who now have the non-graduate qualification consider that they have a devalued article and seek means to improve their qualification, particularly by becoming graduates. There are several methods open at present, for example, working for the fellowship of the Library Association (FLA) either for its own sake or as a means of entry to a master's degree course (usually in librarianship). Alternatively a first degree in another subject may be taken, either through part-time study at a university or polytechnic, or through the Open University. All these are laborious routes to graduate status and there are demands for some shorter, more direct programme particularly intended for non-graduate qualified librarians. There will, however, be no simple automatic 'conversion' to a degree for all who want it. By no means everyone will have the ability to gain a degree, and two or three years hard part-time study would be required. (It seems that very few would be able to attend full-time.) Schools of librarianship are now

considering or publishing their plans. A master's degree is offered by one school, but most seem to be thinking of first degrees.

2 *Degrees in librarianship.* At present there are very few graduates-in-librarianship; most degree courses have been running only long enough to produce one or two annual outputs of graduates. From now on, however, degree courses are likely to expand to take up the capacity vacated by the dying two-year course, until the latter is extinct.

Each degree course in librarianship has its own unique pattern —there is no standard syllabus laid down by a central body such as the Library Association. Each school devises its own syllabus and submits it to its university or to the CNAA for approval.

Nevertheless it is possible to distinguish two different kinds of degree in librarianship: the composite and the integral. The composite type offers librarianship as one of a number of subjects to be studied together, the other subjects being taken from those on offer by a university; *eg* librarianship may be taken with (say) English literature and history. This arrangement is likely to treat librarianship in a conventional way, but it enables students to combine vocational study with more traditional degree studies of a proven standard and of a type that is the first choice for many students.

On the other hand, the integral degree has the scope to present librarianship in an unfamiliar and novel way. Certainly it can give librarianship a more extended treatment, as all the three or four years of study are directed towards librarianship (widely defined), or are clearly useful to it (*eg* courses in languages and computers).

3 *The postgraduate route.* The third method of qualifying is to take a conventional degree at university or polytechnic and follow it with a one-year postgraduate course in librarianship. At present postgraduate courses are in very great demand; one should apply *early* in the academic year before the course begins.

Many courses prepare for the Library Association's postgraduate professional examination; the others for an alternative qualification, which the Library Association accepts (as it does first degrees

in librarianship) as the equivalent of its own examination for the purpose of registering as a chartered librarian.

Most non-Library Association postgraduate qualifications are diplomas, but a few are master's degrees and there is an understandable trend for schools to offer master's degrees if they can, for thereby they will attract better students than the schools still offering diplomas. The government has a say in this, however. The DES is reluctant to give more student grants for higher degrees (studentships); diplomas have the rather different kind of grant called bursaries. Excepting therefore some courses with a scientific bent which were established before DES intervention, schools offering master's degrees must resort to a form of subterfuge. This is to run a full-time diploma course, the students financed by bursaries, but to provide facilities for some students to obtain a master's degree by a part-time extension of their studies, usually taking the form of an individual piece of work.

4 *The choice between routes 2 and 3.* In the near future, with the two-year course no longer in the picture, the choice before the young person entering librarianship will be whether to take a degree in librarianship, or to take a degree in another subject followed by a postgraduate course in librarianship. The advantages of the latter are that the degree can be of a known and proven nature, and career options can be left open until graduation. By contrast a degree in librarianship is unlikely to be used other than in librarianship, although it could be. Also librarianship degrees are often CNAA degrees—degrees of high standard, but not always receiving the recognition accorded to degrees from universities. But the librarianship degree route usually takes three years, as against the four of the degree-plus-postgraduate alternative, and the full three years are spent in a study which the student will find of more direct benefit to his work than the conventional degree. Librarianship teachers welcome the chance given by the librarianship degree to extend their ideas in areas which have been cramped by purely professional courses. The one year postgraduate course in particular must be very intensive to give a competence to practise in so short a time.

Previous experience

The first degree courses in librarianship do not ask for previous library experience, as it is expected that many of the students will come directly from school, as for degree courses in other subjects. Also, within the three or four years' duration there will be incorporated periods of work in a library.

The professional courses—two-year and postgraduate—often stipulate a year's work in a library as a pre-entry requirement. Requirement or not, it is no bad thing to have some taste of a career before investing time in studying for it. Librarianship may not be, in practice, the kind of life imagined from the careers booklet, and it is as well to know this before a course is started, perhaps to be abandoned with the stigma of failure. Also, any study is more firmly based if the student can relate the theoretical studies back to the example of practice.

A particular form of pre-course practical experience is provided by trainee schemes. Many different arrangements have this title, but in the best of these a public library gives a year's systematic practical training to selected members of its staff, sends them to library school on full salary, and in return expects the trainees to work for that library for at least two years after returning from library school. Since part of the 'deal' is a place at library school, some schools of librarianship have arrangements to participate in the original interviews, so that acceptance for the scheme is acceptance also for the school of librarianship. These trainee schemes have not so far extended to degree courses.

One or two schools may still offer, as an alternative to a year's library experience, an extra preliminary term preceding a two-year or one-year postgraduate course. These terms are in the autumn: the course proper runs from January to December rather than October to June. The student is not paid by the library, and in the case of the postgraduate course he is not paid a DES bursary for the term either, so he must support himself.

The schools of librarianship

There are fifteen schools of librarianship in the United Kingdom, mostly in universities or polytechnics. There is a fair distribution

throughout the country, excepting the south-west of England. Ease of access to a library school is, of course, crucial to part-time study, but as full-time courses are the order of the day, many students have to move from home into lodgings or halls of residence in any event, and so location becomes of less importance. Proximity to important libraries can help a library school in its teaching, but it cannot be claimed that this factor was highly regarded when the schools were established. Library schools are where they are for a variety of politico-educational reasons, usually relating more to their parent establishment than to professional need.

Many of the schools of librarianship were founded in the years immediately following the second world war. Initially they were regarded as a temporary expedient to enable returning ex-servicemen to qualify quickly. A year's full-time course instead of several years spent in part-time study would be some compensation for the years taken away from their careers by the war. But the schools survived as grants for students other than ex-servicemen became available; this was in line with a national shift towards full-time education for the professions. A rapid acceleration of this process came with the introduction of the 1964 Library Association syllabus which was designed for full-time study. After this, part-time study became a rarity, and the schools of librarianship assumed almost complete responsibility for education for librarianship, and because of this took up a major role in controlling entry to the profession.

But to go back. The very first school of librarianship in the country was that established at University College London in 1919. For over a quarter of a century it was the only centre for full time education in librarianship in the UK. The latest schools to be established are those in the 1960's for special individual reasons, despite, it must be said, the Library Association's general opposition to enlarging the number of schools. They are Aberdeen, Aberystwyth, Belfast and Liverpool.

In the 1960's the call was to restrict the number of library schools, to avoid proliferation of small establishments too weak to be viable. Better to concentrate resources in a few large schools,

it was said. Now schools are called upon to restrict their output, as it is feared that too many librarians are being produced. It is not clear whether there *is* serious overproduction, or whether supply of and demand for librarians is just in balance, but any adjustment is a slow acting process. (Thus a school's plans for the intake of a particular batch of students must be made perhaps five years before those students come on to the library market.) It therefore seems that if any adjustments were required they should have been made several years ago, and that alterations now will be not only too late, but may be unnecessary.

Which school to choose?

Luckily there are no bad library schools, so the very difficult problem of choosing which library school to attend is not of crucial importance. In any case it is sensible to apply to several schools simultaneously, as competition for places is usually keen (very intense for some courses), and an application to a second school may be too late if it is left until a rejection is received from the first choice school. Unfortunately there is as yet no central clearing house for applications, as with university degree courses.

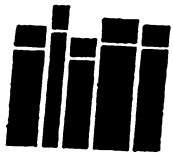
Selection of schools may be dictated by domestic reasons, *eg* the wish to be in a particular part of the country. If this is not so, the field is wide open. Reasonably enough, one can ask librarians about the reputations of various schools. It is to be remembered, however, that reputations take a long time to catch up with the facts, so that the poorly thought-of school may be greatly improved, and the seemingly premier schools may no longer deserve their good name. Any individual librarian, too, is likely to be tempted loyally to recommend the school he attended, regardless of its merits and demerits.

The process of selection for library school is two-way: the student chooses the school at the same time as the school chooses the student. A good or a bad impression may be gained from the tone of the interview, the helpfulness and style of the prospectus, or the buildings housing the school. Each of these factors may be indicative of the quality of the school, but should not be over-

stressed; inadequate buildings for example, may well be quite outside the control of the school.

More definite, if negative, advice can be given on the choice between a university and a non-university school. It is reasonable for the outsider to suppose that the university schools are in general superior to the non-university schools—after all, this follows the common thinking about higher education courses generally. Without individually naming schools, it can be said that several non-university schools are among the leaders and that not all university schools deserve the highest placing in any merit table. In other words one should not *automatically* choose a university school on the assumption that it must be better.

8 *Professional associations*



A profession can only be said to exist when there are bonds between the practitioners, and these bonds can take but one shape—that of formal association. Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders *and* R A Wilson, *The professions* (OUP 1933; 2nd imp Cass, 1964).

WE HAVE mentioned in the chapter on education for librarianship that, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, some leading librarians in Britain and in the United States were telling their colleagues that librarianship was a profession. At that time it was not a profession and Henry Tedder and Melvil Dewey, two of the most vociferous claimants, knew this. But they also knew that the claim had first to be made in order that it might later be made true.

During the nineteenth century a number of new professions, which were to take their place alongside the ancient ones of church, law and medicine, were founded. Accountants, architects, engineers, bankers and others formed their associations and institutions.

The American Library Association was founded in 1876 and the Library Association of the United Kingdom in 1877. So, one pre-condition of professional status had already been met by the time that Tedder and Dewey were claiming it. But even this condition had only been fulfilled to a limited extent; membership of both associations was low and included high proportions of 'non-practitioners'. The other conditions—formal courses, the definition of a corpus of specialised knowledge, and the examining of candidates at a university or some other authorised institution—were unfulfilled for many years. Nevertheless, librarians in Britain, the United States, Germany, France and a number of other countries had, by the first decade of this century, well-established associations which were to become truly professional associations.

Speaking generally

From Carr-Saunders and other authorities we can identify three main elements in professional associations: members derive

mutual benefit; members serve the profession; the profession serves society. Not unnaturally, the extent to which members (and, more particularly, various grades of members) feel they are benefiting from the association, is a perennial cause for concern.

In most professional associations there are differences of opinion on many matters between the student members, or those in the process of qualifying, on the one hand; and the qualified, established members on the other. Voting rights, membership subscriptions and other fees are frequently contentious items. Then there are the disputes over the degree of difficulty of papers and standards of marking which plague any association which is also an examining body. Even the legal profession has not avoided this. One of the many stories told of Clarence Darrow, the great American lawyer, illustrates this point. A one-time student of Darrow's, who had for many years complained bitterly of the diabolical difficulty of the bar examinations he had failed so consistently, finally made it. So he promptly sought out the great man who asked him, 'Did you pass your examinations?'. 'Sure did, Mr Darrow', replied the student. 'Great', said Darrow, 'now I suppose you'll want the standards raised.'

This cause of dissention is, to a great extent, removed when education and examining are transferred to universities and other institutions—as is now the general trend in librarianship. On the other hand, some older members of the profession will remain convinced, of course, that the standards are ever declining and that qualifying gets progressively easier.

Some years ago a library school lecturer suffered severe attacks of cramp, during his initial term, correcting hundreds of 'proffesions' and 'proffessionals'. Thereafter, he made a point of telling his students that the first step towards professionalism was to learn how to spell it.

Them and us

Other evidence of 'them and us' thinking remains in most professional associations. This is inevitable when only a minority of the membership actively participates in its affairs. The British Library Association is no exception. Only a minority of the eligible

members exercise their right to vote for representatives on the Council of the Association—which does not prevent the majority from criticising that same Council for its actions and inactions.

It is, of course, the council which is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that the association is truly professional, in that it should not only serve the members, but should serve society also. It is this element of altruism which some members find hard to accept. A recently published Library Association pamphlet (*What does the Library Association do?*) includes this statement:

> *The LA is not a trade union, and cannot relate the whole of its subscription to direct personal benefits to its members . . . Under the terms of its Charter, the Association has much wider purposes: the establishment and improvement of libraries; the promotion of legislation; the encouragement of research; and the better training of librarians.*

An equally firm statement on the purpose of the American Library Association appears in the first volume of the *Encyclopaedia of library and information science*, edited by Allen Kent and Harold Lancour (New York, Marcel Dekker, 1968):

> *The Association's primary concern is with the aims, the mission, and the work of the profession. It is not organised for, or engaged in, specific undertakings to better the lot of its individual members . . . The Association has preferred to channel its organised energies into idealistic and long-range purposes . . .*

Nevertheless, much of the work of these associations, although not specifically intended to benefit members, does so by raising the standing of the profession as a whole.

Serving society

The LA and the ALA have impressive records of 'idealistic' effort and achievement in both national and international spheres. They have devised and recommended standards for college, school, public and other libraries in their respective countries and both have influenced recent legislation affecting libraries—the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and the Local Government Act 1972, in Britain; the Library Services Act 1956 and the Library Services and Construction Act 1964, in the United States.

Both associations cooperate closely with many bodies concerned with books, information, communication, education and the welfare of physically and mentally handicapped people.

In 1939 a *Library Bill of Rights* was adopted by the Council of the American Library Association. The latest broadened and amended version of this dates from 1967. The six clauses reject any form of censorship of library material on religious or political grounds, and any restriction on the rights of individuals to library access. The *Bill of Rights* was drawn up to preserve the right of every citizen to read what he chooses.

Although British libraries and librarians have not been subjected to the same degree of political pressure as American ones have, the Library Association has never been slow to express its total opposition to any attempt to censor and restrict library activities. It also opposed publicly, and by representations to Parliament, the suggestion in 1970 that charges should be made for the use of public libraries.

Through membership of the International Federation of Library Associations, and by cooperation with Unesco, the LA and the ALA have contributed to the establishment and development of library services in developing countries.

Material considerations

The idealism of professional practice, however, is alleged by the sociologists to outweigh concern with financial rewards, and perhaps one way in which librarianship is behind the older professions is that it still clings to this old-fashioned belief. Professor P Havard-Williams, Loughborough University of Technology.

The British Library Association found it necessary to stress, in the pamphlet already quoted from, that it is not a trade union. Some members would no doubt prefer that it were. It certainly became a more professional association in 1962 (or more an association of professionals) by withdrawing voting rights at Association meetings and in Council elections from non-librarian members. Nevertheless, a considerable number of institutions and non-librarian individuals remain in membership. This is in accordance with the first purpose listed in the Royal Charter, which is 'to unite all

persons engaged or interested in library work'. On the other hand, attempts to limit full membership of the American Library Association to professional librarians, with associate membership for non-librarians, have always been rebuffed. 'The many non-librarians who have been included in its membership over the years', says the *Encyclopaedia of library and information science*, 'have helped to achieve the association's position of influence.'

The majority of the members of the British Library Association hold Library Association qualifications or are in the process of acquiring them. Membership of the association is necessary in order to obtain and hold such qualifications. For this reason some librarians feel less than enthusiastic about the 'idealistic' activities of their association which are supported out of the subscriptions attached to 'compulsory' membership.

Yet the opening statement of *What does the Library Association do?* is indisputably true: 'A professional association, first and foremost, provides a corporate personality and a voice for its individual members. If the LA were abolished today, it would have to be founded again tomorrow.'

Special associations

Most library associations have formed within them groups or sections to cater for the interests of various types of libraries or various types of library activities. The earliest 'special' association—the Association of Assistant Librarians—does not, however, fit either of these categories. It was founded independently in 1895 and became a section of the Library Association in 1930.

The professional education system prevailing in Britain until quite recently meant that most assistant librarians were taking LA examinations, in parts, by part-time study at technical colleges or by correspondence courses. These courses were organised and administered by the Association of Assistant Librarians. The mainspring of AAL activities was undoubtedly professional education, and the long haul to professional registration was a strong bond between members. To paraphrase Dostoievski: 'On the road to qualifying we were all brothers'.

Now that full-time professional education is the norm, the

various college students' unions have, to some extent, replaced the AAL. It is said that the officers and council of the Association of Assistant Librarians now give a solid impression of middle-age and middle-management. The problems of establishing a new image and a new role, which face the AAL, are the same ones which will shortly confront the parent association. As degrees-in-librarianship (the holding of which is not dependent on membership of the LA) become more common, the Library Association will need to attract members rather than having them as of right.

The number of fields of specialisation within librarianship has increased steadily with the development and diversification of library services since the second world war. Both the LA, through its groups and sections, and the ALA, through its divisions and round tables, foster these special interests.

Information and documentation

'Information' in a special library context implies information contained in documents and other non-book forms. 'Documentation' has been defined as 'recording, organisation and dissemination of specialised knowledge'. There are in this field a number of associations which are separate from, and to some extent parallel to, the special groups in the main library associations. Some of these will be mentioned here.

Aslib was founded in 1924 as the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux. In 1949 it merged with the British Society for International Bibliography (from which it inherited a personal membership) and assumed the title of Aslib. K C Harrison says (*First steps in librarianship* 4th ed Deutsch, 1973), 'The need for such a body arose because of the growth of specialist libraries and research organisations after the first world war, plus the fact that the Library Association was in those days slow to recognise the special needs of these bodies'.

Aslib's membership includes not only special libraries, but also some public, national, and academic libraries and a considerable number of individuals. In addition to its library, information, research, and appointments bureau services, Aslib's Education

Department organises short courses in special librarianship and information work.

Aslib's range of activities is covered in the United States by the Special Libraries Association and the American Society for Information Science. The founding of the SLA in 1909 (which shares initials with the Scottish Library Association and the School Library Association) was largely due to its first president, John Cotton Dana, who was a public librarian. The ASIS was formed in 1937 as the American Documentation Institute and changed its name in 1968 to the American Society for Information Science.

Like Aslib in Britain, the ASIS played an important role during the second world war in the supply of scarce technical and scientific journals and documents to the allied governments. This led to financial support from their respective governments which still continues.

In Britain there is yet one more special association in the information field. This is the Institute of Information Scientists founded in 1958. According to its printed 'Origins and Objects', 'The enormous expansion in scientific research and development . . . led to a great number of scientists taking up information work as a specialisation. A new profession clearly emerged . . .'

The Institute's *Handbook 1971-72*, fifteen years after this emergence, claims 869 members but lists a somewhat smaller number, of whom seventy eight are outside the United Kingdom. The two largest groups are 'Members' (the highest grade) and 'Associates'. The requirements are: for Members, a degree and five years' approved information work; for Associates, two 'A' levels and five years' approved work.

An over-riding clause, by which the Council may grant any class of membership for five years' approved information work, must account for almost one third of the UK 'Members' being non-graduates.

It is now possible for a librarian interested or engaged in information work to be a member of any or all of the following: the Reference, Special and Information Section of the Library Association; Aslib; and the Institute of Information Scientists. The RSI has over 5,000 members, Aslib has between 300 and 400 individual

members and the Institute of Information Scientists has some 800 members.

The Library Association's Royal Charter enjoins it to unite all persons engaged in library work. To this end, it is currently exploring possible areas of cooperation with the Institute and Aslib.

If some form of federation should emerge from these exploratory talks, then the resulting 'united thoughts and counsels' would benefit all libraries, librarians and information workers.

9 *Librarianship - one world*

Americans are always moving on.
It's an old Spanish custom gone astray,
A sort of English fever, I believe,
Or just a mere desire to take French leave,
I couldn't say, I couldn't really say.
Stephen Vincent Benét, *Western star.*

MOVING ON may well be a sort of English fever. A generation ago one of the more lively aspects of the British public library scene was the continuous criss-crossing of librarians as they travelled south to north, Wales to east, highlands to midlands, in pursuit of better-graded jobs. The root cause of that particular epidemic was anxiety over paying the bills. The fortunate one-in-six who landed a new appointment was usually all of thirty five pounds a year better off. He was also, or so he felt, another step nearer to his first 'chiefship'—and any chief librarian post, however humble, was much coveted.

The increasing number of special libraries, the development of academic libraries and the schools of librarianship, brought further opportunities for movement; not just between libraries, but between different types of libraries and different aspects of librarianship.

There is plenty of evidence of librarians moving among the various types of libraries in *Who's who in librarianship* and in successive issues of the ALA's *Membership directory* and the year-books and handbooks of other national library associations.

Small world

There is also evidence in plenty that these movements are not confined within national borders, in spite of the fact that there are no internationally-recognised equations of qualifications in librarianship, and that the holder of an overseas qualification may be at some disadvantage in competition with the holder of a 'home' qualification. There is an Englishman in Yale University Library who has worked previously in public libraries in Leeds and

Sheffield—and in the Haile Selassie University Library, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Librarian of the Rhodesian Parliament was once on the staff of Croydon Public Libraries; and a librarian from Chester City Library moved to the university library at Syracuse. The directors of four out of seven Canadian library schools are British. These are but a few examples. The opportunities continue to arise. Most issues of the *Library Association record* (the official journal of The Library Association) carry a number of announcements of overseas vacancies, particularly in Commonwealth countries.

Nor is it a one-way movement. A considerable number of librarians from the United States, Canada, Australasia and South Africa, come to work in British libraries, usually for a limited period. There are librarians from Africa and Asia, working or studying in Britain, many of whom will return to take up positions of responsibility in their own countries.

Increasingly over the past decade, overseas study tours have been arranged for students and young librarians by schools of librarianship and professional sections, groups and divisions. The majority of such tours from Britain is to other European countries, particularly Scandinavia. More ambitious ones have been organised to the United States and Canada, and to West Africa. Britain and the Scandinavian countries are most frequently visited by groups from America.

These examples of individual and group initiative, as expressions of the international nature of librarianship, are paralleled by the efforts of library associations and other national and international bodies.

Getting ever smaller

Library and documentation work is of necessity international in scope. We cannot work on our own, but rely on inter-library cooperation, and have become gradually internationalists in practice. Miss W E S Coops, *Chief, Library Section, Unesco.*

In 1876, James Yates, Librarian of Leeds Free Library, England, was invited as a delegate to the Philadelphia conference at which the American Library Association was inaugurated. Twelve American

librarians were present at the London conference in 1877 during which the Library Association of the United Kingdom was founded. For a short time—and the difficulties must have been formidable—the *Library journal* was the official organ of both the American Library Association and The Library Association.

Internationalism was a feature of the very earliest days of professional library associations and it has become an increasingly more significant one. It would be unusual now for a national library conference not to have a quota of overseas delegates and visitors. But, over and above this, international professional co-operation has been formally organised for many years now.

It was at The Library Association's fiftieth anniversary conference in 1927 that the International Library and Bibliographical Committee was formed. Two years later, at the First World Congress of Librarians, held in Italy, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) came into being.

Since the end of the second world war, Unesco has been concerned in many fields of international librarianship, including the initiating and expanding of library services in developing countries. Many leading British and American librarians have been seconded to Unesco over the years to help with these projects. Unesco's Chief Librarian has stressed, among her Section's many other activities, 'co-operating with international and national institutions active in the field of documentation, libraries and archives, by fostering the co-ordination of their activities and by granting them subventions'. For example, the 1971 IFLA Seminar for Developing Countries was sponsored by Unesco, and was supported by the International Federation for Documentation (FID), the International Association of Music Libraries, the International Association of Metropolitan City Libraries (INTAMEL) and thirty one national library associations.

In his preface to the published papers of that conference (*International librarianship*, The Library Association, 1972), the editor, Dr George Chandler, says of the exhibition relating to the services of library associations: 'The participants from the developing countries were no doubt pleased to see that, in spite of differences in size, there was a common thread. At the start of the alphabet,

the American Library Association demonstrated its great resources in organising co-operation, while at the other end, the Zambia Library Association showed that, in spite of its small size, it too was able to send significant material on co-operation for the exhibition '.

Enlightened self-interest?

The undeniable altruism of librarians in the field of international aid and cooperation must to some extent be compromised when government agencies and finance are involved. The report of the US National Advisory Commission, quoted below, includes this statement: ' The contribution of our library profession and libraries to the improvement of international relations over the years has been noteworthy . . . They have aided in the work of creating understanding of our society and our policies . . .'

At a Students' Conference held at Aberystwyth in 1972, the British Council representative was under some pressure from delegates who accused the Council of cultural imperialism. The report of the conference by Patrick Villa in the *Assistant librarian* (65 (6) June 1972, 96-97) states that: ' The speaker effectively rejected this flood of criticism . . . and claimed that the Council were certainly not " agents of western imperialism ", having moved away from spreading the British way of life, to simply serving the needs of developing countries '.

At the same conference, Ronald Benge, one of the most intellectual of British librarians and with wide experience of Africa and the West Indies, was accused of ' cynical pessimism ' by the British Council speaker. Benge's view is mainly represented in the conference report by a few crisp quotes: 'An industrial revolution is unlikely to occur in the Third World, yet educational and library development is geared towards this '; ' Foreign experts are never needed '; ' Probably the biggest problem to library development abroad are the librarians themselves, unable to accept a notable characteristic of developing countries—a supreme and rather glorious chaos '.

The opposite view, taken by ' a distinguished American publisher who has spent much time abroad ', was quoted in the *ALA bulletin*

(62 (3) March 1968, 251): 'We need librarians almost more than we need libraries throughout the world. It is discouraging indeed to walk into a library in a developing country, even a very inadequate, meager library and there find the books locked up. Librarians who know the value of books when they are read, who will fight to see that books are placed in the hands of those who need them, who will buy, borrow, or steal to acquire books for their collections —these are the people and those are the assets that are most greatly needed in the international scene'.

Don't burn all your boats

Young librarians are currently being urged by representatives of Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) to undertake a tour of duty abroad. Those who tend towards the opinion of the distinguished American publisher—and feel free of cultural imperialistic tendencies—may go and do good. Those who are influenced by Ronald Benge's cautionary words on developing countries will only go if they feel capable of performing some useful brand of librarianship in the midst of glorious chaos. (Some librarians, of course, work best in those conditions.)

In either case, it would be advisable to try for leave of absence or some other assurance of a job to come back to. The experiences of some librarians returning from these voluntary assignments indicate that not all employers rate the experience very highly.

10 *There is a happy land*

Schemes for the national library services of developing countries make the British library world seem positively victorian by comparison. Gerry Wheatley, Hatfield Polytechnic. *New library world* 73 (868) October 1972 408-409.

To avoid haphazard and fragmented response to the inevitable forces of a changing society, a national plan is required that can be used to guide the next steps of all participants toward a recognised and achievable goal of adequate library service to all . . . US National Advisory Commission on Libraries *Report* 1968.

IN highly developed countries, such as Britain and the United States, there are immense library resources. These have been established and developed in varying degrees of isolation. We have seen in an earlier chapter (*The library user*) how librarians, with support from charitable trusts and a modicum of government help, have co-operated over the years to improve the situation.

Government involvement in library and information services, motivated by both economic and social considerations, has greatly increased over the past decade. It is now hoped that it will be the determining factor in the co-ordination of total national library services.

Legislation affecting libraries

Government influence on the level and extent of various types of library service might be described as piecemeal but pervasive.

In the United States, the federal (central) government has moved into the field of library services by means of a number of Acts, starting with the Library Services Act 1956. Other major measures during the last decade, providing funds for libraries of various types, include the Library Services and Construction Act; the

Elementary and Secondary Education Act; the Medical Library Assistance Act; the Higher Education Act; and the Library Depository Act. 'All types of libraries', wrote Alex Ladenson, Chief Librarian of Chicago Public Library, in *Library trends* (19 (2) October 1970 175-182), 'have come within the purview of federal law.' This issue of *Library trends*, which is devoted to library legislation, is a particularly interesting one. It not only reveals the problems peculiar to a federal constitution, but also indicates many basic library problems similar to those of Britain. Writing as a public librarian, Ladenson says, 'For the most part the public library is chained to a political unit that is not large enough to support a modern library adequately. Moreover, it is becoming increasingly clear that the legal boundaries of a city, village or county have become meaningless insofar as public library service is concerned.' Recently, however, the Nixon administration has turned its back on most educational and library funding.

In England and Wales, the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 brought a significant change to the relationship of central government and public libraries. For the first time in public library legislation, the provision of 'a comprehensive and efficient service' was made mandatory. The Secretary of State for Education and Science became responsible for superintending and promoting the improvement of the public library service. Under the Act, two Library Advisory Councils—one for England and one for Wales—were set up. The Local Government Act 1972, by creating fewer and larger library authorities (seventy five in England compared with 314 and a probable eight in Wales as against thirty seven) makes the provision of an efficient and comprehensive service more possible.

School and college libraries are under a measure of control by the Department of Education and Science because of central government expenditure on education and through the supervision of HM Inspectors.

The University Grants Committee, which controls the financing of universities, including their libraries, has been transferred from the Treasury to the Department of Education and Science. Research in various areas of library and information science is also financed

by the DES through its Office for Scientific and Technical Information (OSTI). Some librarians see the DES leading us to the happy land of a national library system. In his *Libraries and society* (James Clarke, 1969), G Jefferson says, 'Library services of all types are now ultimately within the orbit of the Department of Education and Science . . . It is now possible for a total view to be made of the library resources of the country by a single authority with some kind of responsibility for all kinds of library.' Others are less optimistic.

A national library

Most recently, the British Library Act, 1972 based on the recommendations of the Report of the National Libraries Committee (Cmnd 4028), provides for a reorganised top tier of national library services under a British Library Board, including two DES appointees. The board will control the British Museum Library, which will perform the functions of a national reference library for the humanities; the Science Reference Library, that is the National Reference Library for Science and Invention re-named; the British Library Lending Services, comprising the National Lending Library for Science and Technology and the National Central Library, both housed at Boston Spa; and the British National Bibliography.

In the United States, the National Advisory Commission on Libraries has recommended that the Library of Congress should undertake responsibilities similar to those of the British Library and that it should be re-named Library of Congress: The National Library of the United States.

A national library service

The aim of all this top tier restructuring is to help towards creating a national library system. In Britain, with its relative geographical and political compactness and well-established regional interlending systems, the task is comparatively easy. Yet, even here, there are gaps to be filled and considerable difficulties to be overcome.

The university libraries are very much on the fringe of the embryo national system. As D T Richnell said in his Presidential

address to the Library Association in 1970 (*Library Association record* 72 (6) June 1970 223-228): 'The University Grants Committee's responsibility for libraries is an indirect one. In so far as it has exercised a direct influence it has been more concerned with standardisation for economy's sake, rather than with a greater degree of co-ordination of library services, either with one another or with other library services. The lack of integration of library services is apparent even within single universities . . .' There is obviously scope here for the DES, through its Arts and Libraries Branch and the University Grants Committee, to organise some co-ordination, at least among the university libraries themselves and, preferably, with the polytechnic libraries also.

Special libraries, too, remain largely untouched by government action. In his article cited above, Wheatley suggests that government grants should be made to private enterprise commercial and industrial libraries to encourage their participation in a national library service. 'All libraries providing for specific subject fields', he continues, 'should be formally linked with the appropriate government research associations, and the grants could be conditional upon such links being maintained.'

Local provision

We have already seen that the national interlending system is under some strain and that many librarians believe this to be due to local administrative shortcomings—reflected in poor stock maintenance and general bibliographical incompetence. These faults are not confined to public libraries.

The regional and national interlending loads can be reduced, and frequently a speedier service provided, by cooperation at a local level. In a number of areas, schemes of cooperation between the various types of libraries have had varying degrees of success. The Newcastle upon Tyne scheme has possibly achieved more than most. All the major libraries in the city are involved—the University, the Polytechnic, the Literary and Philosophical Society and the City Libraries.

R G E Harris, the polytechnic librarian, has described the scheme in the *Library Association record* (75 (8) August 1973

147-149): 'Newcastle has pioneered modular co-operation', he writes, 'in which each library may choose the modules which appeal to it and which, overall, cover almost every aspect of library activity.' Much has already been achieved in such areas as stock acquisition and relegation, information exchange and exchange of readers; and more cooperation is planned for binding and reprography, staff training and exchange, and rationalisation of services to industry and commerce.

Local difficulties

Harris makes a number of important points about local cooperation (which are of general validity and explain some of the weaknesses of national schemes of cooperation). 'Only self-sufficient libraries are fit for co-operation . . . Co-operation is intended to enrich and extend services, not to replace or bolster them . . . It is, for instance, detrimental to a new polytechnic library to unleash hordes of its undergraduates on to others. The others would have problems, but the polytechnic itself would never develop the library resources essential to its well-being.'

We quoted in an earlier chapter the maxim of Paul Bixler, Librarian Emeritus of Antioch College—'The library user should be king'. Perhaps we should add to that 'in his own country; elsewhere, only by invitation'. In 1972, college of education students in Hull staged a sit-down at the university. They were protesting against not being allowed to use the university library even for reference purposes. They were supported in their contention that they had a right of access, as members of the public, by the Publishers Association who claimed this was a condition of the university's holding of a library licence entitling them to a discount on book purchases.

Philip Larkin, the University Librarian, stated that the university policy had always been to make its library resources freely available outside the university, so far as its own readers' interests permitted, and that over ten per cent of its readers were outside readers. But 'to offer the library accommodation provided by the University Grants Committee for its own students to the students of other institutions, even though such institutions are separately

financed to provide such accommodation themselves . . . seems to us to go far beyond anything a university with a normal sense of responsibility can undertake to do '.

Far, far away

Cooperation must be of mutual benefit to all the libraries involved and must be agreed. Cooperation cannot be decreed. Yet cooperation is essential to ensure adequate local provision of bibliographies and bibliographical expertise to identify required material and to arrange the obtaining of it.

The library user's access to the total national resources, however extensively they may be organised, is through one or more of his local libraries—public, academic or special. If the user's only choice is a part-time branch which, during the few hours it is open, has a staff reluctant to telephone even its parent library, then a considerable proportion of the base of the national library system will never know what the apex might do for it.

11 *Librarianship publications*

A precondition for reading good books is not reading bad ones: for life is short. The art of not *reading is a very important one.* Arthur Schopenhauer *Essays and aphorisms* (Penguin, 1970).

IT IS usual to append to a book such as this one, a list of authors and titles hopefully headed 'Further reading'. There are hundreds of works on the various aspects of librarianship and related subjects—the printed *Catalogue* of the Library Association library (LA, 1958), for example, contains 19,000 items, and much more has been published since then. The possible permutations of selection are infinite, and to further reading there is no end.

The works mentioned in this chapter have been chosen because they are good and because they deal, wholly or in part, with aspects of librarianship which have been only lightly touched on in this book. The place of publication is London unless otherwise stated.

General

Encyclopaedia of library and information science edited by Allen Kent *and* others (New York, Marcel Dekker, 1968-). This work is planned to be in eighteen volumes, but it is sure to run to many more. It is an alphabetical arrangement of subjects, and volume 9 (Fore-edge painting—Germany) was published in July 1973. Although particularly strong on American topics, it is well-balanced, and there is an international panel of authoritative contributors. Early volumes will be due for revision before the end is reached. Also due for revision is the British work—*Encyclopaedia of librarianship*—edited by Thomas Landau and published by Bowes & Bowes. The latest (third) edition appeared in 1966.

Organisation and administration of libraries

Introduction to librarianship by E V Corbett (James Clarke, 2nd ed reprinted with supplement, 1970). This book is recommended

for its detailed treatment of British public libraries—control and staff; stock acquisition, maintenance and revision; catalogues and cataloguing; and the public libraries Acts. Corbett's cautious approach to computer applications has to be seen in the context of the 1960's when he was writing this edition. It is still a justifiable attitude and provides a useful counterbalance to some current over-enthusiasm for piecemeal computerisation. The fifty-page section on reference books serves as an introduction to the type of material which is comprehensively dealt with in the three volumes of A J Walford's *Guide to reference material* (Library Association, 2nd ed 1966-1970).

British county libraries 1919-1969 edited by K A Stockham (André Deutsch, 1969). In his contribution, Geoffrey Smith speaks of the integration of town and country under the new local government structure of less than 100 authorities. 'It follows', he says, 'that the "new" public libraries that result will be more like county libraries than any other type of library.' This book, with its very full bibliography—176 items, including C R Eastwood's *Mobile libraries and other public library transport* (AAL, 1967)—provides a thorough historical and contemporary survey of county libraries.

The standard text on university library practice is an American work—*University library administration* by R D Rogers *and* D C Weber (New York, H W Wilson, 1971). It covers, among other aspects, aims, staff organisation and communication, stock including non-book materials, and reader service. Reviewing this book (*Library Association record* 73 (12) December 1971) James Thompson, University of Reading Librarian said: 'From the first page of its masterly introduction to the last page of its thorough text, this work is a delight . . . To deal so adroitly with the subject of university libraries in these times of escalating growth and technical complexity is a quite awesome feat.'

Handbook of special librarianship and information work edited by Wilfred Ashworth (Aslib, 3rd ed 1967). This book deals in detail with those aspects of librarianship mentioned in *Spreading the word*—abstracting and publications of the library and information department. There are also sections on the administration of

special libraries, the selection, acquisition, filing and storing of material, and information retrieval.

Buildings and equipment

Libraries, architecture and equipment by Michael Brawne (Pall Mall Press, 1970). This is one of the best books from which to get the feel of libraries. It is a world-wide review of buildings, furniture, fittings and equipment, with examples from public, academic and research libraries. It is illustrated with photographs and plans, and provides a comprehensive and interesting survey of library services from the viewpoint of accommodation and equipment—from the layout and bookflow of an accessions department to automatic book-retrieval systems. It also includes a short history of the development of library buildings and a section on the possible changes in the physical form of libraries due to computerised transfer of information and other technical developments. *Planning academic and research library buildings* by Keyes Metcalf (McGraw-Hill, 1965), is the standard work on academic library buildings, but it has wider application than that. Dr Metcalf's approach is from the user's point of view and he supports this attitude in attractive and lively style. From someone who has served as consultant to hundreds of library building projects all over the world, this is a remarkably unsolemn book.

The most up-to-date and comprehensive work on British library buildings and equipment of all types is *Planning and design of library buildings* by Godfrey Thompson, Guildhall (London) Librarian (Architectural Press, 1973).

Non-book materials

New media and the library in education by B J Enright (Bingley,* 1972). In spite of the title, this book is not restricted to libraries in education. It discusses whether or not the library is the place for A-V materials, and the planning, staffing and financial implications of answering 'yes'. For implications peculiar to public libraries, there is the article by F Hallworth in the *Library Association record* (74 (3) March 1972) and some disagreement by correspondence

between him and R J Lee, Borough Librarian of Reading, on this subject, in the same journal (74 (8) August 1972).

Classification

There is no doubt that the aspect of librarianship which has been mentioned most lightly, if not slightingly, in this book is classification. This is the subject nearest to the heart of Bernard Palmer and perhaps some of the enthusiasm which permeates his *Itself an education: six lectures on classification* will provide a necessary antidote. The second edition (Library Association, 1971) contains a lengthy essay by Derek Austin entitled '*Two steps forward . . .*' This deals with developments in classification during the ten years since the lectures were delivered in Oslo and Copenhagen.

For a comprehensive textbook, see Jack Mills's *Modern outline of library classification* (Chapman & Hall, 1960). A recent primer, with an original approach, is *Approach to classification* by Derek Langridge (Bingley,* 1973).

Professional associations

Handbook of national and international library associations by Josephine R Fang (Chicago, American Library Association, 1973). This is the first edition of a work which aims to be comprehensive. It has made a good start with over 300 national and international groups of librarians, giving in essence, a world-wide picture of the library profession. Full details of each association are given, including name, address, officers and staff, date established, membership requirements, activities, publications and finance. Each entry is followed by a bibliography of publications of the association and of books and articles about it. In addition, there is a bibliography of readings (some seventy items) on library associations.

Sociology of librarianship

Libraries and cultural change by Ronald C Benge (Bingley,* 1970). The author's declared intention is to present the social realities in which library studies should be set. He deals with communication, mass communication media, censorship, education, the impact of technology and social background. It sounds formidable and

forbidding. It is, on the contrary, a witty, intelligent, extremely readable work—and it should be read.

For an intelligent and varied glimpse of the book industry as a whole, a collection of conference papers edited by Raymond Astbury under the title *Libraries and the book trade* (Bingley,* 1968) is worthwhile and untaxing to read.

Pointers to the history of libraries and librarianship are concisely revealed in *Library history* by James G Ollé (Bingley,* 2nd ed 1971), a shortish book in this publisher's 'examination guide series', which does however go beyond the sparse factual content of a 'crammer'.

Finally, computers—and such is the bemusement which these machines arouse in many of those who encounter them, that they may fairly be considered under 'sociology' rather than 'machinery' —are obviously here to stay, and are described well and comprehensively in a book written specially for student librarians, *Computers & systems* by John Eyre and Peter Tonks (Bingley,* 1971).

(Titles starred * are published in the USA by Shoe String Press.)

Epilogue

by Bernard I Palmer

Education Officer Library Association

IN JANUARY 1946, but recently released from the Royal Air Force, I stood before an evening class of 50 students of librarianship at the North-Western Polytechnic. The class ranged across all ages from 16 to 50 years, and fully half of them were ex-service men and women impatient to get ahead with their professional studies after the years spent with the armed forces.

Scarcely had the class settled down to hear what their new lecturer had to say, when one young student raised his hand to ask a question: 'How long are you going to teach us?'. Not comprehending his point, I asked him to elucidate and he replied: 'This class has been going one term and you are already the third lecturer we have had so far: how long are you going to stay?'.

The name of the young man was Frank Atkinson, and since the older we get the more like ourselves we grow, it should be easy for readers to recognise this young man in the author of this book. Questioning, with little regard for the establishment, abrasive in his approach, refreshing in his assumption that, like himself, when the reader knows all about it he will be committed to librarianship for life, this is the mature librarian who developed from my young questioner.

You should not imagine that you have just read the usual kind of introduction to librarianship. These mostly set out to describe in carefully objective terms the British library scene, or some library discipline or methods. This book, on the other hand, is a deliberately subjective appraisal of librarianship—one man's guide to the job he loves. You will note that the author has appended a short bibliography of works about different parts of librarianship, for further reading. These have been chosen (he claims) not only for their informational content, but because this content is presented with enthusiasm by their authors. If you read and enjoy them for their enthusiasm, do not be misled into thinking all books on librarianship are like these, and that there is no hard, and some-

times dull, work involved in mastering some techniques. No subject worthy of study can be mastered in the ' play-way '.

Whilst I may agree with Frank Atkinson's general thesis that librarianship is amongst the best and most rewarding of professions, I cannot always agree with him. I cannot, for example, in the light of 46 years work in the field of librarianship, agree with him that to be a librarian has no social cachet. Quite the contrary! In my travels in three continents I have always encountered great interest and some awe from people who learn of my vocation. It is surprising how well established in society is the concept of librarians as a force to be reckoned with. At my age I tend to meet the people in charge of organisations, and it is music in my ears when they sing the praises of their librarians, many of whom I know personally or by name. I could go through this book picking point after point and entering my caveat, but let this one example suffice.

If Frank Atkinson had written a book with which all his colleagues would agree in every detail, the book would not *fizz* as this one does. The man who never gives offence has nothing worthwhile to say, and having read this book you will (I am sure) agree with me that here is an author with plenty to say and with an exciting mode of conversation. It is therefore certain to give offence in some quarters because you can't please all of the people all the time. This book is, in fact, as subjective in its approach as any man's or woman's account of her spouse, warts and all! I hope it gives as much pleasure to those newly entering the profession as it has to one who is on his way out.

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