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Division of State Library,  
Archives and History  
Trenton, N. J.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

DIVISION OF THE STATE LIBRARY, ARCHIVES & HISTORY

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1954-1955

TRENTON, N. J.

FOUND

**DIVISION OF THE STATE LIBRARY, ARCHIVES & HISTORY  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY**

**This Annual Report of the New Jersey State Library**  
covers the activities of the Division for the period July 1, 1954  
to June 30, 1955.

**Roger H. McDonough  
Director and State Librarian**

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**ARCHIVES AND HISTORY BUREAU**

James M. Pugh

James M. Pugh

FOUND

It is ten years since the State Library Division came into being as a part of the Department of Education and a brief review of the progress and accomplishments made during that period appears to be in order.

Of outstanding importance have been the new and improved services made available to the Legislature, the courts, the executive departments and the general public. The most apparent gains have been made in the Law and Legislative Reference Bureau, where a professional staff has been carefully developed through the capable assistance of the staff of the Civil Service Commission. The service to the Legislature, which was little more than a token affair only three years ago, has increased to a point where more than 90% of the legislators use the library on a regular, continuing basis. In addition, the library's bibliographic and reference services are used continually by the research unit of the Law Revision and Legislative Services Commission. The effect of the improved bibliographic and reference services is noted also in the ever-increasing use that is made of these resources by the courts and the executive departments. On the day in which this report was written, reference questions were answered for several justices of the State Supreme Court, questions were answered for the Governor's office and projects were completed in response to legislative requests. It is worthy of note that, whereas the library once experienced a seasonal letdown during the summer months, the increasing tempo of state business, coupled with a growing awareness of the fact that solid preparatory work can be done between sessions of the Legislature, has made the library a year-round busy place.

Another bureau of the division which has made significant progress under the excellent leadership is the Bureau of Archives and History. In recent years, the records management program of this bureau has materially reduced the volume of non-current records of the State and has assisted the counties and municipalities in disposing of vast stocks of useless records. Since 1949 the bureau has supervised the microfilming of more than 25,000<sup>000</sup> State records, a large proportion of which were subsequently destroyed. A new public record act (Chapter 410, Laws of 1953) simplified the procedures for disposing of public records no longer needed and established a State Records Committee to promulgate rules and regulations concerning the disposal and retention of public records for all agencies of government in New Jersey. A pilot records storage project, designed to show that records can be stored economically when handled in a scientific manner, has demonstrated the value of a permanent records storage and microfilm building to the State.

The achievements in the Bureau of Public and School Library Services are equally significant in terms of their total impact upon the state. This bureau, which succeeded the former Public Library Commission, has provided excellent professional guidance and assistance to public libraries for better than half a century. Since becoming part

of the Department of Education, a school library supervisor has been added and through her work the bureau has helped to improve the quality of school libraries throughout the State. Under the able leadership of the present head, the small bureau staff has been developed into a closely-knit and effective unit that is exerting fine leadership in helping communities to develop good public and school library service for the children and adults of New Jersey. The new, temporary quarters of the bureau have provided badly-needed expansion space in which to house the valuable collection of more than 100,000 volumes which are lent to public and school libraries as supplementary materials.

### OUTSTANDING EVENTS

#### Appointment of Library Study Commission

The most important event of the year was the appointment by the Governor and the Legislature of an eleven-member Commission to Study Library Services in New Jersey. The Commission is now making the most thorough investigation of New Jersey's public libraries that has ever been undertaken and it is anticipated that its final report will include proposals for additional financial support for municipal and county libraries through greater local effort supplemented by State aid to help equalize library service.

#### Institutes and Workshops

In cooperation with the Institutes Committee of the New Jersey Library Association, five highly successful regional library institutes were held during the year. In each instance, librarians and trustees from neighboring counties attended these institutes. The total attendance at the five institutes approximated 750 people.

A highly successful one-day institute for librarians and directors of education in the State penal, correctional and mental institutions was held in the Bureau of Public and School Library Services on March 11, 1955.

#### Publications

Among the many publications issued by the State Library Division the following are worthy of special mention: (1) A Statement of Objectives and Standards of Library Services for New Jersey State Institutions, August, 1954 (In conjunction with the Bureau of Classification and Education, New Jersey Department of Institutions and Agencies); (2) A Guide for Planning Facilities for the High School Library, April 1955; (3) List of New Jersey Authors, February, 1955. (In cooperation with the New

Jersey Association of Teachers of English and Rutgers University).

### American Heritage Project

The discussion group program sponsored by the public libraries throughout New Jersey was continued under a second grant of \$5,000 from the Adult Education Fund of the Ford Foundation. With the cooperation of the American Library Association, four leader training programs were held: three on book discussions and one on film discussions. Books and materials were purchased and made available to the 25 groups that operated in various communities throughout the State. The bureau's adult education librarian served as director of this interesting project. The film discussion groups in southern New Jersey were pilot projects for the country-wide program. As such, they were closely observed by the American Library Association because of their implications for future adult education activities in the nation's public libraries.

### Legislation

A mandatory certification bill was passed by the Legislature and sent to the Governor for his signature. The bill would amend the present permissive act to require the employment of professional librarians in communities of 10,000 population and above.

Jersey Association of Teachers of English and Rutgers University).

### PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIVES

#### American Heritage Project

The new and expanded services carried on by the library division have placed additional strains on the already inadequate facilities. There is not enough space for the patrons and staff, the lighting is poor, the book stacks do not provide needed expansion space, and because of the lack of good safe exhibit space, priceless documents, such as the original copy of the Bill of Rights, must be housed in a vault in the cellar of the State House.

#### Modernization of State Library Quarters in the State House Annex

The present library quarters in the Annex are well situated with respect to their proximity to the executive offices, the Legislature and the courts. From a functional standpoint, however, the library is poorly designed. The lighting is inadequate, there are not enough offices, and there is insufficient reader space for the state officials and employees who use the facilities on a daily basis. As the staff has expanded, it has been necessary to place their work desks in the reading room because of the lack of available offices. The resulting noise and clatter is highly disturbing to the justices and other individuals who use the library as a workshop for research and reference

purposes. While the staff members make every effort to maintain quiet, it is impossible to do so under the present conditions. Complaints from library patrons are increasing in number and there is no hope for better conditions until the present area is modernized and made more functional.

Several preliminary surveys have been made leading to these improvements and the State Architect's office has drawn preliminary sketches suggesting one method of converting the present waste space to usable work areas. It is hoped that these plans can be reviewed in consultation with a highly-qualified library architect in order that firm plans can be developed for this project.

#### Building for records storage and microfilm

It is recommended that a central storage facility be erected to house the non-current records of the State. If possible, funds for a simple, warehouse-type, fireproof structure should be budgeted as a capital expenditure in the coming fiscal year. The pilot records storage project in the Switlik building on Lalor Street has already demonstrated that a central storage facility for storing records would save money for the State. For lack of space in the pilot area, the Department of Law and Public Safety was forced to set up its own small records center in a rented building. The courts and other agencies are now storing records at warehouse prices in Trenton and elsewhere. Preliminary estimates indicate that it would take about \$200,000 to \$300,000 to build the type of structure that would be needed for cheap storage purposes. In terms of the savings that would accrue from filing equipment released and rentals saved, this capital outlay for a permanent building would be recovered in a very few years.

#### Library development-State aid to improve municipal and county libraries

Within the next few months or at the beginning of the next legislative session, the Commission to Study Library Services in New Jersey will report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and to the Legislature. Although the final details of the plan are still to be worked out, it is believed that some form of state aid to equalize library services in New Jersey will be recommended by the Commission. The Commission is unanimous in its feeling that the main support for public library services should continue to come from the municipalities and counties concerned. It recognizes, however, that in the more sparsely settled areas of the State and in the very small communities, some outside assistance is needed if their libraries are to be maintained at a level that will qualify them as effective instruments of popular education.

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The Commission had available for its use a great deal of statistical data that had been collected by a fact-finding committee of the New Jersey Library Association in cooperation with the staff of the State Library Division. Among the principal findings of the study which reveal the poor condition of many of the 261 public libraries in New Jersey were the following:

Many of our people lack library service of any kind. Approximately 276,000 people do not have access to any public library.

More than one-half of the people in New Jersey receive library service at a very low level of support. Approximately 2,700,000 or 56 per cent of the people of New Jersey are served by libraries supported at a level equal to less than \$1.50 per capita annually, the nationally-recognized level for minimum acceptable service. The American Library Association has recommended a \$1.50 per capita expenditure for minimum library service, \$2.25 for good service and \$3.00 or more for superior service. About 2,000,000 or 41 per cent of our people, including all the people in 13 of the 21 counties, receive library service at a level of less than \$1.00 per capita.

Many libraries in New Jersey are staffed by persons with inadequate professional training and experience. Of the 943 persons classed as professionals in our libraries, only 263 or 28 per cent have library degrees.

Many of our library units are too small to render adequate service. The smallness of many of our libraries is a basic difficulty to be surmounted. Any program devised to improve library conditions in New Jersey should encourage the consolidation and federation of our smaller library units into adequately-sized units.

The Commission is now considering sweeping proposals that will, if adopted, lead to a vastly improved and effective system of public libraries in New Jersey. These proposals include:

1. an integrated system of public libraries by creating new county libraries and encouraging federations of existing libraries in the more populous areas,
2. additional financial support for municipal and county libraries by means of greater local effort and State aid to help equalize library service,
3. additional field workers in the State Library Division,
4. improved standards for professional library personnel,

including the certification of librarians in communities of 10,000 population and above, and

5. adequate support of the library training program at Rutgers University and the State Teachers College at Trenton.

The work of the study commission, as reported in the library periodicals, has attracted wide attention and its final report, is certain to receive close scrutiny and study by interested groups throughout the nation.

When the study commission organized in November 1954, Governor Meyner charged it with the responsibility of "producing a study that would serve as the basis for a carefully conceived plan leading to the improvement of library services throughout the state". If the Commission completes its work and makes its formal recommendations as anticipated, the implementation of the broad program for the improvement of public library services will be a primary objective for the library division in the coming year.

#### Records Program

The Bureau of Archives and History has suffered from lack of leadership during the past year. The prospect of an early appointment of a qualified head of this bureau, however, gives hope that certain important aspects of the records program can be pushed forward. For example, the beginnings made in improving the report forms of various state agencies can be continued without further delay or interruption. In addition, the personnel of the bureau have frequently been consulted in connection with proposed purchases of expensive types of reproduction equipment. This is a broad field that needs to be explored vigorously. A coordinated program by which the archival experts would cooperate with the Division of Purchase and Property and the Budget Bureau in maintaining a watch-dog eye on the purchase of new equipment and in helping to standardize forms would be an effective means of reducing costs in every State agency.

### BRIEF REPORTS OF BUREAU ACTIVITIES

#### PUBLIC AND SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICES BUREAU

One of the primary functions of this bureau is to enlarge the book borrowing potential of local libraries by lending materials that are beyond the scope of the average community library. Every effort is made to fill as many requests for books as possible in a minimum

of time. By analyzing the methods and forms used in inter-library loan procedures it has been possible to institute several important technical changes. These improvements are being continued and consideration is now being given to the possibility of instituting a photo-copying method for recording loans to public and school libraries. An alternative possibility is the use of marginal punched cards to speed up the clerical operations involved in recording book charges. As another means of speeding up the service to local communities, librarians have been urged to use the telephone in making requests for reference assistance and to provide the most precise information possible about the subject matter requested. The addition of a new reference librarian to the bureau staff has greatly improved the bureau's services in answering reference questions from the field.

The increasing effort to speed up the reference and lending services has inevitably created a need for improved cataloging procedures. Accurate and detailed entries are needed for every book in a library collection if it is to achieve its maximum potential for reference and research purposes. At the present time, with only one professional cataloger employed, it is not possible to catalog the adult and juvenile collections in an adequate manner. Additional assistance is needed if the valuable collections of the bureau are to be fully utilized.

#### Exhibits

One of the more popular activities of the bureau is the exhibits or working collections of books it sends out to various group meetings in answer to requests. These collections, chosen to meet the specific needs of the groups to which they are shown, become more popular each year. The materials include many items that the average person at a meeting would not have come in contact with in the ordinary course of affairs. Through a simple card request arrangement, the materials are lent to participants in the meetings under an arrangement which permits them to return the materials through their local libraries.

#### Parents' Bookshelves

These are collections of twenty-five worthwhile books on family life and child study which are sent to local libraries or parent-teacher groups throughout the State. The service was begun in 1949 and has been consistently popular since that time. Fifty "book shelves" are now in existence and they are made available to local parent-teacher groups upon request. New material is added annually and older items replaced so that the collections are kept attractive and up-to-date at all times.

#### School Library services

The increasing demands that are made upon the school library consultant point up the need for an additional professional librarian to

assist in this specialized library activity. Many parent groups are asking for help in establishing libraries in elementary schools. They need guidance and assistance in order to plan intelligently and to spend their modest funds in the most economical manner. The burgeoning school population, the great number of new school buildings, many of which will include library facilities, emphasize the need for another school library consultant to specialize in the elementary school field.

The New Jersey White House Conference on Education pointed out the need for additional school library facilities. Reports made at these conferences, indicate that there are many secondary schools still without school library services of any kind. There are only 57 elementary school librarians in the State and there are over 1400 elementary schools. Clearly, there is a vast field for development in this area.

#### Exhibit of new children's books

For the fifth year, a traveling exhibit of new children's books has been made available to schools and public libraries. Under a cooperative arrangement worked out with the publishers, more than sixty firms sent 741 new books to the bureau for this collection. In addition to its use by public schools, the collection was used at the Glassboro and Trenton State Teachers Colleges and at the Rutgers Library School while it was building up its own collection in this field. It may be noted that a bookmobile would be of tremendous help in improving book selection procedures in public and school libraries by bringing "model" collections to the attention of librarians, trustees and school administrators.

#### Traveling libraries

Traveling libraries or small collections of fifty to 100 books remain in demand by secondary and elementary schools. Each group of books has been selected specifically in terms of the needs of the individual school concerned. Increasingly, requests are being received for books in subject areas such as vocations, music, science and background material on a given country or people. In many instances, the requests are for a general selection of materials of a recreational and enrichment nature. This is particularly true where the collections are designed for use in a school which has no library facility whatsoever.

#### Study of the bureau of library services by state library association

Reference has already been made to the work of the New Jersey Library Association's Development Committee. Its report analyzing the current status of library service in New Jersey was turned over to the official eleven-member Library Study Commission when that group came into existence. This report, which included a study of the Bureau of Public and School Library Services, was prepared by a committee under the direction of Miss Ethel M. Fair, former head of the Library School at Douglass College. The report analyzed the present operations and procedures of the Bureau in relation to the overall need for improving library service throughout the State.

This committee endorsed the current program of the bureau and made certain specific recommendations leading to its improvement. These include:

1. More field workers to promote the most forward-looking plans for library service, to advise on the development of local book collections and to assist in upgrading local services by advice to local library trustees and staff.
2. Additional professional staff to assist in selecting, acquiring and cataloging materials for the bureau's collections and in developing book lists and bibliographies as an aid to local libraries. While stressing the fact that the strengthening of the cataloging and bibliographic services should have immediate priority, the committee's report emphasized the need for additional consultants to be available in identified areas and for superior reference service to be furnished near at hand so that local facilities can be readily supplemented.

In conclusion, the committee defined the bureau's obligations and responsibilities as follows: "The Bureau is thus the sole State agency responsible for direct service and leadership for more and stronger public and school library operations throughout the State. The bureau's responsibilities, ever-widening as New Jersey's population increases in numbers and in schooling, are directed toward benefits to the educational and cultural life of New Jersey citizens of all ages. No single one of the bureau's designated functions should be curtailed. Rather, they must be strengthened if the limitations of the present library service for New Jersey readers are to be removed".

#### LAW AND LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE

For the first several years of the Division's existence, much attention was given to "selling" the library to the three branches of State government. It is apparent that this basic job has been done. Our present task is to develop the high quality collections that are needed to meet the demands that have been created. The additional professional and clerical staff that have been provided will be of tremendous assistance in helping us to measure up to our responsibilities. With a larger book budget and with better physical facilities, including an improved lighting system, noise resistant floors, and more desk and office space for patrons and staff, we shall be able to develop a library service that will be a credit to New Jersey.

### Steps taken to improve Reference and Research Services

To insure that the quickest possible service will be given to library patrons, every effort has been made to integrate the staff activities of the various branches of the library. Through a process of in-service training, including frequent interchanges of personnel between the reference and law desks, staff members have been made familiar with the materials in the various special collections with which they would not ordinarily come in contact. This constant exchange of information has had a positive effect in improving the quantity and quality of our work output.

This staff training has been accompanied by a continuing study of the kinds of materials we should be acquiring in terms of our functional responsibilities as a government library. Improved procedures have been developed for keeping track of all publications that are issued by various state agencies in order to acquire them as a permanent record of State activity. At the same time, a policy of systematic weeding of little-used or obsolete materials is being followed. A good beginning has been made in disposing of the useless stock of unneeded books, periodicals and documents, and this activity will be continued in the years ahead.

### Expansion of clipping and pamphlet files

The final report of the Law Revision and Legislative Services Commission in New Jersey made special mention of the need to expand the library's collection of pamphlet materials and newspaper clippings. As a result of a vigorous acquisitions policy, the already valuable pamphlet collection was more than doubled in the past year. The clipping file, which takes considerable staff time to maintain, was similarly expanded. It is now possible to produce from these collections almost instantly a great deal of valuable material on many of the subjects under current consideration by the Legislature, the executive offices and the courts. The collection of model and proposed laws was enlarged in accordance with the recommendations of the Law Revision and Legislative Services Commission.

### Book acquisitions limited by funds available

The purchase of new books was severely limited by the funds that were budgeted for this purpose. Because a high proportion of the book budget was needed for the purchase of expensive law books, state codes and other legal materials, there was little money left for the purchase of general books in the field of government, political science, and related fields that are needed in a state library. Every effort was made to select materials that bore directly on current problems, such as zoning, traffic and water supply. It is hoped that the book

budget can be substantially increased in the next year to help us meet the need for more general works in the field of government as well as in the field of New Jersey history and genealogy.

#### Improvements in cataloging

Even the best and most complete collection of books, periodicals and documents is of limited use unless it is adequately indexed or cataloged. Through the cooperative efforts of the cataloger and the staff of the law desk, a splendid beginning has been made in making the catalog of the law collection a more usable one for the general patron. Subject headings have been revised and codified to conform to Library of Congress specifications and useful "see also" references have been inserted. While the principal emphasis was placed upon improving the law catalog, the general catalog was not being neglected. The Proceedings of the New Jersey Historical Society, for example, are being analyzed and subject cards assigned for the major articles in the proceedings. Seventeen volumes of the set have now been completed.

#### Summary

The improved bibliographic procedures coupled with the positive effort to make the collections live, up-to-date and properly cataloged appear to have been reflected in the increasing use that is made of the library by state officials and employees. The work of analyzing the functions and tasks of the State Library coupled with assignments of personnel to meet the growing demands for service will continue in the years ahead. It is hoped that these promising activities will produce further positive results equal to the year just past.

### BUREAU OF ARCHIVES AND HISTORY

The bureau suffered a severe loss when the supervisor of public records left on October 1, 1954, to accept a new position as records manager for the Lockheed Aircraft Corporation in Burbank, California. This staff member did an excellent job in furthering the records management program of the State Library. Under his direction, a new public records law was enacted; retention and disposal schedules were adopted for broad categories of public records applying to state, county and municipal offices; and a number of State departments were surveyed and recommendations made for all the records within the agencies concerned.

Pending the appointment of a records specialist, the Director of the Division assumed the duties of Head of the Bureau of Archives and History in addition to his other duties. With the assistance of the

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Microfilm Supervisor and the Records Clerk, and with the guidance and counsel of the State Records Committee, a good deal of effective work was done in pushing forward the records program.

### Microfilming

Under the able supervision of the Supervisor of Microfilming, approximately 2,000,000 documents were recorded under projects carried on in six agencies of State government.

The most important new project covered the early records of the Bureau of Vital Statistics. An excellent beginning was made in placing these important documents on film. Since the majority of these records exist in single copies only, the importance of the project can be readily understood. The completion of this project will insure that a duplicate, microfilm copy of the records will be available should fire, flash flood or other disaster damage or destroy these invaluable originals. In addition, the Bureau of Vital Statistics will be able to move the original records to less valuable space and employ the microfilm copy for reference purposes. Other microfilm projects include payroll registers of the Division of Budget and Accounting, index card records for the Academic Credentials Division of the State Department of Education and case records of the Division of Workmen's Compensation.

### Records storage center-Switlik building

The pilot records storage project established in 1953 has amply demonstrated its usefulness to the State. Despite the lack of clerical help to process reference requests promptly when they are telephoned in from the agency concerned, good service has been maintained by using microfilm machine operators. Inevitably, this reduced the microfilm output, and a full-time clerk is needed to process reference requests to the records, to maintain index files and to transport records to and from the agencies which send them to the center for storage or microfilming.

The disposal and retention schedules that were established for the various categories of records as they were stored have helped to keep down the total volume of records by permitting the continuing destruction of useless records. Over 1,000 cubic feet of out-dated records were destroyed in accordance with these schedules.

### Historical material

The principal acquisition during the year was a collection of early court records from Middlesex County. Many of these records

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are of the colonial period. No longer of use in the county court house, they will be retained permanently in the State archives for their research value.

#### Records retention and disposal schedules

Several important new rules and regulations were promulgated by the State Records Committee as authorized under Chapter 410, Laws of 1953. The most important new schedule was that developed for the municipal courts of New Jersey. This schedule, worked out in cooperation with the office of the Administrative Director of the Courts, will make possible the prompt disposal of all records as soon as they have reached the end of their retention period. In this connection, an important change was made in the general rules and regulations for the disposal of public records of a general nature. Heretofore, it was necessary for municipal, county and State officials to obtain annual authorizations to destroy records which reached their retirement period that year. From now on, authorizations will be issued on a continuing basis. Municipal clerks, for example, will be able to destroy voucher forms after six years without obtaining additional approval. The new system will make it possible for local officials to dispose of old records as soon as the records have outlived their usefulness.

It is worthy of note that the counties and municipalities in the State report increasing activity in the direction of better records keeping practices. At the New Jersey League of Municipalities meeting in Atlantic City, the Director of the Division and the Supervisor of Micro-filming served as consultants on records and microfilming. From conversations with individuals from many parts of the State, it was apparent that there is growing interest in records management procedures on the part of local officials and employees. Apparently the retention and disposal schedules that have been developed by the Bureau of Archives and History have been of tremendous help in assisting municipalities solve their own records problems. In the opinion of the Municipal Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada and the National Records Management Council, these schedules are among the best that have been developed by any state.

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