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Archives and History
Trenton, N. J.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

DIVISION OF THE STATE LIBRARY, ARCHIVES & HISTORY
STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

1953 - 1954

TRENTON, N. J.

STATE MEMBERS

Director Roger H. McDonough

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

PUBLIC AND SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICES

Head Mrs. Janet S. McKinlay

Supervisor Mrs. Jane B. Hobson

Leading Services Librarian Robert M. Malone

Adult Services Librarian Mrs. Isabel S. Newberry

This Annual Report of the New Jersey State Library covers

the activities of the Division for the period July 1, 1953 to

June 30, 1954. A condensation of this report is included in the

Annual Report of the Commissioner of Education for the same period.

Legislative Research Analyst Samuel A. Alico

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Director and State Librarian

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Senior Librarian Kenneth W. Richards

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Cataloger Miss Rebecca Schlam

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY BUREAU

Supervisor of Public Records William Benson

Supervisor of Microfilm Services James M. Birch

PUBLIC AND SCHOOL LIBRARY SERVICES BUREAU

As the result of the Bureau's relocation in a former parachute factory in South Trenton, the past year's work was performed with a greater degree of efficiency and comfort. Although the location of the building leaves much to be desired, the structure itself is entirely functional. The additional space provided for book-stacks and staff offices reduced the amount of staff strains and tension which had been evident in the quarters formerly occupied in the State House Annex. It was apparent that the advance planning was a sound investment in staff time. A more efficient operation resulted from the new physical arrangements, and new equipment in the form of desks, shelves, book trucks, posture chairs and additional telephones were of great value, also. Many visitors to the Bureau remarked about the functional arrangements and one prominent library architect described them as a model of their kind.

The transfer to the new location provided an excellent opportunity to review existing work methods, including the catalog operations and the procedures involved in mailing books on inter-library loan. With the encouragement of the bureau head, the staff made a careful study of existing methods of receiving, cataloging and distributing books for shipment to libraries throughout the state. As a result, many significant improvements were made. This study and experimentation will be continued in the hope that the next year will bring further improvements.

The opening of a number of new public libraries and school libraries provided additional work for our consultants in the field. Each visit and conference with a board of trustees or school supervisor and librarian resulted in a request for additional books to supplement local collections. The increase in the amount of field work created a problem for the bureau head, who acted as both administrative head of the Bureau and as Public Library Consultant. There is an immediate need for an additional consultant to assist in making field visits to the public libraries of the state.

Library Development

One of the most encouraging events of the year was the progress made by the Library Development Committee of the State Library Association. As a result of more than fifty group meetings of librarians and trustees, a tentative master plan for improving public library services was developed. At the request of the committee, members of the bureau's staff served as consultants to each of its regional groups.

The publication of Parts I and II of the Fact Finding Surveys, "Books for the People of New Jersey", revealed the substandard services prevailing in many of our public libraries. Comparative data on the quality of personnel, quantity of book-stock and financial resources demonstrated clearly why so many of our small public libraries were not effective instruments of popular education.

The Library Development Committee concluded that, if New Jersey is to have a generally good standard of library service, the state must supply financial aid. Three types of state aid were considered: 1) equalization; 2) per capita or across-the-board, and 3) incentive aid in the form of establishment grants to libraries combining into larger units of service.

This problem will soon be referred to a special eleven-member commission

to be appointed by the Legislature and the Governor under the provisions of SJR 16. The announced purpose of this resolution is to study library conditions in New Jersey and to make long range recommendations leading to their improvement. It is hoped that the report of this study commission will result in some far-reaching changes in our existing county and municipal library structure.

Local Cooperation

It was encouraging to note that a number of neighboring communities had worked out cooperative schemes for providing library service. These included the contract between Princeton Township and Princeton Borough, the agreement between Prospect Park Borough and Paterson and the contract for services between Cedar Grove and Montclair. An interesting experiment was also conducted in Essex County, where a number of libraries adopted an arrangement which permitted registered borrowers in any cooperating community to borrow books from any library within the system.

Increase in Circulation in Public Libraries

It was highly encouraging to note that the largest libraries in the state report that the circulation of books was on the increase after a decline of several years. While librarians were reluctant to point to any one factor as the cause for this increase, it was agreed that the initial impact of television had worn off and that young people in particular were returning to the library in increasing numbers. Apparently the repetitive nature of crime and comic programs had had its effect and many individuals were seeking more substantial forms of amusement for relaxation and enjoyment. The infinite variety of good books met the demands of those who were looking for solid intellectual fare, and it is believed that their numbers will continue to increase in the years ahead. It must be admitted, too, that many people who might not otherwise have come in contact with ideas in the realm of politics, science, and the arts were encouraged to learn more about the topic they had first become excited about through the medium of television. Television has thus been a useful device in introducing new readers to our public libraries.

Work with State Institutions

For a number of years the library has cooperated with the Department of Institutions and Agencies in an attempt to bring better library service to the State institutions. In the main, this assistance has been given under a matching fund arrangement. As originally set up, this plan applied only to correctional and penal institutions. In 1952, at the request of Commissioner Sanford Bates, it was extended to all the institutions and Glen Gardner, Marlboro, New Lisbon and Totowa came into the plan. In 1953 five more institutions indicated their desire to participate: Skillman, Leesburg, Greystone Park, Vineland State School, and the Trenton State Hospital. Totowa, because of lack of funds, was unable to participate; Leesburg did not use its funds, and New Lisbon did not continue.

In all, thirteen institutions received assistance under the plan. The total effect of the \$2,500 (as carefully administered by the Bureau staff) demonstrated the effectiveness of state aid funds in stimulating interest in the development and use of libraries. Most of the institutions had spent very little money for books and had relied almost wholly on gifts to supplement existing book collections. For the first time, under this plan some institutions received collections of books carefully selected by library experts who chose the materials

with the specific needs of the patients or inmates in mind. Experience under this cooperative arrangement made it clear that a carefully planned library program under competent guidance and supervision is of enormous benefit to the inmates of the various State institutions. It is hoped that as additional staff is provided, the library can develop this service more fully in the years ahead.

Work with Schools

The increase in school enrollment and new school buildings brought more demands for consultative services to school libraries. Thirty-two visits were made during the school year for the purpose of initiating and improving library service for children and young people in our public schools. In addition to this the school library consultant reviewed plans for school libraries in the blue prints for new school buildings received by the State Department of Education.

TRAVELING LIBRARIES

There was a decided increase in the demands for traveling libraries and ninety were sent out. This was twenty more than last year and 26 more than the year before. Each request received was for a larger number of books because of the increased number of children. This meant that at least 2600 more books were sent in traveling libraries this year than in 1951. Because the great increase in child population was in the 5 to 7 year-old group, there were many requests for books for children of those ages and because of the expensive illustrations commonly used in these books, they averaged \$2.75 to \$3.00 apiece. Even with a one-third discount, this meant that at least \$5,000 was needed to fill these additional requests. During the past year less than \$2,000 was made available for juvenile books; \$7,500 was needed if the requests for traveling libraries were to be adequately filled. During the coming year the number will have to be severely limited or a substantial increase in budget must be made.

TRAVELING EXHIBITS

For the fourth year the traveling exhibits of new children's books was made available to schools and public libraries. 840 books were received from 35 publishers, the highest number received to date. Through this cooperative arrangement with the publishers, these exhibits were used by 39 schools, public libraries and state organizations, including the New Jersey Congress of Parents and Teachers and the State Grange exhibit. Many children, parents, teachers and librarians had an opportunity to see new children's books in this way. This service was particularly valuable in those rural areas which lack book stores or adequate public libraries.

American Heritage Program

The American Heritage program is a joint project of the New Jersey Library Association and the New Jersey State Library operating under a grant from the Ford Foundation. With the receipt of a \$5,000 grant from the American Heritage fund of the American Library Association, the major task of the year became the promotion and establishment of library discussion groups throughout the state.

The program began with an orientation conference in New York in September, 1953, when the broad outlines of the program were brought to the attention of the program leaders. This was followed by another conference in Chicago in December for detailed reports on accomplishments, advice and suggestions. 21 discussion groups were established throughout the state: one youth group, three fill-centered groups, four topic-centered groups and 13 book-centered groups. It was a strenuous but satisfying year. The Bureau has yet to learn if another grant will be available next year to develop this program further in New Jersey.

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Improvements in Lending Services

The transfer to the new quarters in the Switlik Building brought about the introduction of new routines designed to provide better and quicker service to our clientele. As a result of these improvements, it was possible to fill requests for books which were in stock the same day the request was received. This was made possible by:

1. the use of a registration number for charging books in place of the name of the borrowing library;
2. the use of pre-addressed mailing labels prepared on the addressograph machine, which eliminated the typing of labels for each package;
3. the consolidation of books ordered by borrowing libraries prior to wrapping, resulting in fewer packages, less labor and less postage;
4. the acquisition of a box at the main Trenton Post Office, which made it possible to receive mail promptly at the beginning of each day; and
5. the use of 4-copy slips to speed up requests to libraries which cooperate in the state-wide interlibrary loan of books.

The study of these work procedures will continue in the hope that every possible means of improving the lending services will be explored.

BUREAU OF LAW AND LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE

Legislative Reference and Research Service

During the year 1953-1954, the reference and research services rendered to individual legislators and to the standing and special joint study commissions and committees reached a new high. More members of the Senate and General Assembly requested aid than in any previous year; 16 of the 21 senators, 53 of the 60 assemblymen and 24 of the 30 first-year legislators made formal requests for reference and research assistance. Moreover, while the requests, as usual, ranged from simple inquiries requiring but a few minutes search to projects involving a month or more of intensive work, more requests involving extensive research were received than in any previous year. These requests included the collection and supply of materials and information; the digest of reports, laws and bills; the drafting of special committee reports; the arrangement of standing and special

committee reports; the arrangement of standing and special committee hearings and meetings; the preparation of speeches, press releases and arguments for and against legislative proposals; and the arrangement of an orientation session for the new members of the Legislature.

It was felt that this increase in legislative requests was the result of 1) the Bureau's proven ability to handle the legislators' requests; 2) the staff members' attendance and availability of all sessions of the Legislature; 3) the Bureau's preparation and distribution among the legislators of request pads-- these served to remind the senators and assemblymen of the Bureau's services and to facilitate the making of requests; and 4) the ability to complete requests more promptly.

It is of note that six legislative committees called on the Bureau for reference and research assistance. These services ranged from acting as secretary for the committees to drafting the committees' formal reports. The most extensive research was done for the joint Commission on Legislative Methods, Practices and Procedures. This included the preparation of a survey of the legislative assistance available to the Legislature of New Jersey and of the other states; a study of the majority-party caucus in the New Jersey Legislature, in other state legislatures and in the Congress; a digest of the 350-page reports of the New York Committee on Legislative Methods, Practices, Procedures and Expenditures; and a number of memoranda on other phases of the problem under consideration by the Commission.

Requests other than Legislative

In addition to the increased number of legislative requests, the usual number of requests for reference and research assistance was received from the various executive departments. There was also the usual numerous demands for information from the Council of State Governments, state legislative reference agencies and other organizations and individuals within and without the state. During the past year certain types of inquiries made of the Attorney General relative to New Jersey law and the legislative process were referred to the Bureau for reply.

Format for Answering Research Requests:

During the year, the Bureau inaugurated the policy of answering all major requests in the form of general memoranda and depositing a copy of each of these memoranda in the reference library for use by all interested persons. Through these memoranda, subsequent similar requests were answered and since the source of the original request was not revealed, no confidence was violated. For example, a memorandum on the problem of reapportionment, originally prepared for the executive branch, served to answer several legislative requests on the same subject. Other memoranda, prepared originally for individual legislators, served to answer inquiries by other members of the legislative body. Several of these memoranda served as bases for research studies by other research groups in the state.

Docket of Research Requests

As a corollary to the above procedure, the Bureau inaugurated a docket upon which is recorded each request for research service. Each entry contains the subject of the inquiry, the name of the inquirer, the dates of receipt and completion and the form in which the inquiry was answered. Because of the increased number of requests received, it was felt that the maintenance of such a

record was desirable both as a check on outstanding assignments and as a reference aid in answering future requests in the same or related fields.

In its study of ways to improve the legislative process in New Jersey, the joint legislative Commission on Methods, Practices and Procedures investigated in detail the research facilities available to the Legislature and began the preparation of recommendations leading to an expansion of those services. The State Library concurred in the belief that additional legislative research facilities were necessary and desirable, and, as a result, foresaw increased demands on the library's existing facilities.

Growth in Use of Law Library

Despite the pressures of work for the legislature and the executive agencies, there was also an increase in the use of the law library by the judicial branch. The library had the look of activity. On occasion, people stood in line to get books, legislative bills and information and the tables in the alcoves were filled with patrons. Justices and judges, their law clerks and secretarial staffs, the Governor's counsel and the Attorney General's staff members used the library on a daily basis. In a very real sense the law library came to be used by the law officers of the state as their workshop. A gratifying recognition of this was shown by the fact that this year a visit to the library was scheduled on the agenda of every distinguished visitor who came to study the workings of the New Jersey court system.

The increased use of the law collections caused by the widening recognition of the rich resources available in the law library created certain strains on the existing staff which was inadequate to meet all the demands that were made upon it. There were regrettable delays in the completion of research memoranda for the judiciary, in the mailing of the court reports and in the distribution of the regular accessions list of new books. It is hoped that the condition will be improved in the coming year with the addition of a new assistant at the law desk.

New Jersey Documents

As the State Library is responsible for collecting and keeping official New Jersey documents, further steps were taken to insure their preservation in the reference collection. Firm rules were adopted governing the loan of this type of material and, when only one copy was available, it was ruled that it could not be removed from the library. To facilitate this rule, one copy of each document was worded "Depository Copy -- Do not remove from the library". As a further step in its emphasis on its New Jersey collection, the reference staff started recataloging and regrouping all New Jersey periodicals so that they would be all filed in one place and, therefore, more readily accessible.

Pamphlet and Clippings Files

The reference library's collection of pamphlets and newspaper clippings on New Jersey was greatly expanded during the past year. This type of materials is often of vital importance to state officers and its maintenance, therefore, is considered to be a prime function of the Library. Appropriate headings were assigned to the New Jersey and general information files and a catalog was prepared to facilitate the use of this material.

Weeding the Collection

Weeding the reference collection of non-essential materials was made imperative by the acute lack of space in both the reading room and the stacks. A vast amount of materials in the fields of literature, geography, foreign history and others not of primary concern to a state library was discarded and valuable space recaptured. In some instances, unneeded books were exchanged for materials more appropriate to a governmental reference and research library.

Cataloging Unit

Perhaps the greatest advance of the past year was the improvement in cataloging procedures. The law and reference catalogs have long needed careful revision. Inadequate listings and, sometimes, a complete lack of listings of materials in the library have been a constant source of frustration. A good beginning was made in correcting these deficiencies. More than 1000 cross-reference cards were added to facilitate the location of related materials. In addition to this, many uncataloged materials of long standing were entered. At the same time, current works were cataloged promptly. Other cataloging changes were also initiated to make the library's catalog the effective tool it should be for its patrons and staff.

ARCHIVES AND HISTORY BUREAU

Among the most significant achievements of the past year were the passage of a new public records act, the preparation and distribution of a printed manual of rules and regulations to state and local officials and the installation of a demonstration State Records Center.

These accomplishments were accompanied by a continued high production in the Microfilm Unit and an increase in field services. More than 2½ million state records were microfilmed for various State agencies. In contrast to previous years, most of this filming was done in the new quarters acquired in the Switlik Building, where the additional work space made it possible for the first time to collect the records at a central location for filming. This arrangement was a distinct improvement over the previous system, whereby machines were installed in the offices of the agencies whose records were to be filmed, and the agencies' clerical employees, who had had no microfilm experience, were assigned to the task. The increased output per worker more than compensated for any time that may have been lost in transporting the records to the central Microfilm Unit.

Legislation

The passage of chapter 410, Laws of 1953, (Destruction of Public Records Act) provided the necessary enabling legislation to carry out the program of records management. This act authorized a State Records Committee consisting of the State Treasurer, the Attorney General, the State Auditor, the Director of the Division of Local Government and the Head of the Bureau of Archives and History, or their designated representatives. Under the provisions of this act the Records Committee was empowered: (1) to adopt regulations authorizing the destruction of public records, (2) to approve schedules governing the systematic retention and disposal of public records, (3) to approve procedures for the microfilming of public records, and (4) to promulgate rules and regulations for the effective administration of this act.

The Committee held its first meeting on December 17, 1953, at which time the representative of the Attorney General's office was elected chairman and the Supervisor of Public Records appointed secretary. In subsequent meetings the Committee gave its approval to records schedules that had been prepared by the Bureau and also began the systematic processing of requests for the destruction of records. A manual of rules and regulations concerning the records program was prepared and distributed to state, county and municipal officials. Included in this manual were definitions of the terms to be used in the records program, procedures for requesting authorizations and for establishing retention schedules and rules for the use of microphotography. The distribution of these manuals was accompanied by a request that one person be designated in each agency to be responsible for records management and to act as the liaison representative to the Bureau of Archives and History. A principal objective for the coming year will be the development of a systematic training program for these key individuals.

State Records Center

For a number of years it had been apparent that the housing of inactive records could be accomplished more efficiently and economically by providing a central storage place. Other governmental units and private industry have found such an arrangement highly satisfactory. Among these are the federal government, the states of Rhode Island and Michigan, the cities of New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco and a number of private corporations, including Bethlehem Steel, the New York Title Guarantee and Trust Company, the Montsano Chemical Company and Pan American Airlines.

The opportunity to develop a records center in New Jersey came with the acquisition of the Switlik Building. Although this building had been obtained primarily to house the Bureau of Public and School Library Services and portions of the State Museum, the Bureau of Archives and History obtained 2700 square feet for the records center and microfilm unit, 1500 square feet of which were set aside for records purposes.

By utilizing warehouse-type, steel shelving and specially-designed containers, an area capable of accomodating 6700 cubic feet of records was made available. At first it was estimated that it would take at least two years to fill this area, but this proved to be too conservative. There are now 4767 cubic feet of records housed in the Switlik Building and current demands indicate that in a few months the maximum capacity will be reached. Because of the limited space in this area, a separate center for the records of the Division of Budget and Accounting was established in one of the basement vaults of the State House. This center was modeled after the one in the Switlik Building, thereby maintaining a uniform system of records storage.

The records center has already demonstrated that it can save money for the State. By transferring records to the Switlik Building, approximately \$30,000 was saved by releasing State-owned space and equipment for other purposes and by reducing the rentals paid for storing records. Inasmuch as the present Records Center area comprises less than one-twelfth of the space needed to service all the State agencies, it is conservatively estimated, based on the experiences of existing centers in government and industry, that annual savings of several hundred thousand dollars can be realized if proper facilities are provided.

These estimates do not include the additional savings that can be achieved by microfilming.

Mention must also be made of the need to consider the proper protection of the vital current records of the State, the records that can best be described as those needed "to put the State back in business after disaster strikes". In 1949, a project was undertaken to preserve these vital records. Because of their age, however, most of these records have lost their initial value. Consideration should now be given to microfilming the current key records annually.

One of the valuable features of the Records Center has been the servicing of requests for information from agencies storing their records there. Because of the numerous references to motor vehicle records, the Division of Motor Vehicles has assigned a full-time clerk to the Switlik Building to handle its own requests. It is recommended that a full-time clerk be added to the Records Center staff to assist in maintaining the records properly and to supply the remaining agencies with effective reference service. In order to promote this method of housing records, agencies must be shown that their records are "as near as the telephone". However, with the limited staff now available this has been almost impossible. The telephone, of course, is only one means of answering requests for information. The Bureau also supplied messenger service, prepared duplicate copies through its darkroom facilities and accepted personal visits from agency personnel. During March, April, and May of this year over 3000 requests for information were processed by the Records Center.

Records Surveys

Two important surveys were completed during the year. The first covered the records maintained by the Division of Academic Credentials in the Department of Education; the second, the records maintained by the Division of Law in the Department of Law and Public Safety. In both instances, written reports were submitted summarizing the findings and making specific recommendations leading to new and improved methods of records keeping, including such aspects of office management as office layouts, forms designs, records retention schedules, microfilming, and filing systems. Both divisions have put portions of the recommended procedures into operation in a successful manner.

A retention and disposal schedule for the Division of Vocational Education was approved by the State Records Committee. A schedule for the Division of Secondary Education was submitted to the Commissioner of Education for initial approval and another is being prepared for the Division of Higher Education. The limited staff of the Bureau did not permit the continued inventories of State agencies, but every effort will be made to extend the surveys into other major departments in the year ahead. Surveys of a preliminary nature were made in the Department of Labor to determine which types of records should be microfilmed and in the Division of Employment Security to determine the scope of the records problem in that agency.

At the request of the Attorney General, the Supervisor of Public Records served as a member of the Governor's Committee to study the procedures involved in motor vehicle licensing and registration. The Supervisor's activities on the Committee, in addition to attending meetings and conferences, included a trip to the State of Delaware to review that state's motor vehicle organization, visits to mechanized punched card installations and surveys of motor vehicle inspection stations.

County and Municipal Records

Of foremost importance in the work with the counties and municipalities

was the adoption of a general schedule governing the retention and disposal of their records. This schedule was developed by the Bureau after several conferences with local officials and with representatives of the Division of Local Government. The final draft, as approved by the State Records Committee, is believed to be the most complete guide prepared by any state agency for use by local officials. It received nation-wide attention and such organizations as the Public Administration Clearing House, the Municipal Finance Officers Association, the Society of American Archivists, and the New Jersey League of Municipalities have called attention to the guide in their publications. The complete schedule was published in a national report by the Committee on Records of the Municipal Finance Officers Association.

Visits were made to several counties and municipalities to provide Technical assistance on such matters as microfilming, records storage, vault construction and filing. Passaic, Newark, South Plainfield and Camden and the counties of Passaic, Essex, Camden, Somerset and Atlantic were among those visited.

New Law Covering Destruction of County Court Records

Another important law affecting records was enacted in 1953. Chapter 269 provides for the systematic destruction of records filed by county clerks and registers of deeds and mortgages after specific periods of time. The Bureau of Archives and History is given a 60-day period to review such records prior to their destruction. Upon request, the Bureau may obtain records of historical significance for permanent preservation. Several counties submitted the required 60-day notice of intention to destroy records and arrangements were made by the Bureau to review those records for their archival value. The main collection to date was obtained from Somerset County, which was visited by the Supervisor of Public Records and the Curator of the Rutgers University Library. Due to the great variety of documents involved, it was deemed advisable to take the collection in bulk and review it in Trenton.

Microfilm Operations

The adoption of rules and regulations pursuant to the Destruction of Public Records Act extended significantly the activities of the Microfilm Unit. In the past the Supervisor of Microfilm had confined his activities to the supervision of microfilming in the state agencies. This year, however, because of the great interest in records management displayed by the counties and municipalities, a number of visits were made to officials seeking technical assistance. The installation of the Records Center in the Switlik Building also resulted in many additional demands upon the microfilm personnel to prepare records for storage and to provide reference service.

As in past years, the microfilm projects started in 1953 were begun only after a detailed analysis of the necessity for placing the record series on film. Microfilming was carried on in ten divisions of the State government; a total of 2,671,433 images were recorded. Although this total was considerably less than for 1952-1953, the output per worker was actually larger because the work was done solely by the staff of the Microfilm Unit. In past years the microfilm staff had been supplemented by members of the various agencies for whom the work was done. Since the Motor Vehicle project, which was terminated at the beginning of this year, included over 5 million images prepared by Motor Vehicle personnel, the production by the Bureau equals, if not surpasses, last year's unit production.