THE FLYLEAF

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The modern academic librarian made his appearance after the middle of the nineteenth century. This was a period when both academic and public libraries began to grow in number and when sizable collections were being built. It was a period when educators began to recognize a need for librarians trained to care for the collections and to work hand in hand with professors in the selection of books and their use.

Before this time the librarian would have required, as a rule, few qualifications that an educated man would not possess or that could call for special training. In colleges it was customary for one of the faculty (with bookish interests, perhaps) to be the librarian. It is not unusual to read that he would open the library from time to time during the week to accommodate those members of the faculty who needed to supplyment either their lecture notes or their private libraries with something from the library. Neither the general public nor the scholarly world regarded the custody of books as more than a routine matter or the usefulness of books as depending on anything but the user's general knowledge and initiative.

In the transitional period of the second half of the nineteenth century there was increasing need for management and administration in libraries. One practical result of this need was the formation in 1876 of the American Library Association. No one of the persons at the founding meeting possessed
what might be called formal library training because none was available. Even as late as 1876 you had to be a "born librarian" or you had to become a librarian through reading, experience, inquiry, and apprenticeship. It was not until 1881 that the subject of training for librarianship found a place on the agenda of an annual meeting of the American Library Association.

It was Melvil Dewey, the Dewey classification man, who provided the first formal training for librarianship in the Columbia College School of Library Economy, which opened in 1887. For the purposes of this study it is important to note that Dewey's concept of preparation for librarianship was: (1) college graduation, (2) Dewey's course, (3) one or two years of library experience, (4) a return to Columbia for a review of the course. The ALA, on the other hand, through the prompting of its Committee on Schemes and Projects, went on record in 1885 as not considering college training an indispensable qualification for librarianship. Since he was anxious for the backing and interest of organized librarianship in his School, Dewey settled on the following admission requirement:

"Any person of good moral character presenting satisfactory certificates or diplomas or satisfying the Director by personal examination that he has sufficient natural fitness, ability and education to take the course creditably, and thereafter engage successfully in library work may be admitted to the class."

On this basis twenty students—all women—were in his first class, only five of whom could have qualified with a college degree. In 1965 we tend to deplore this compromise, because we recognize that Dewey had a germinal concept of the differences between the work of the public librarian and the
university librarian which, if allowed to develop, should have caused the educational pattern for librarianship to form along lines different from those it followed. What each student received in his three months at Columbia was almost purely a technical course embracing accepted library practices.

The other Library Schools that came along (there were four more within seven years) used an entirely similar approach in shaping their course offerings. Pratt, for example, the second Library School, was prepared to teach "...the library processes in systematic order, beginning with the order department and following a book through its course into the hands of the borrower...." In all of these early Schools the common endeavor was to teach library work as the students would face it, the emphasis being on practical matters, on methods, on processes, on learning by working in libraries. There were no courses in the building of book collections or the servicing of book collections through reference work. More than anything else, the public library, the Carnegie Library, was the exemplar.

This, then, was the general pattern of library training for a number of years. The next important stage of development came with the publication, in 1923, of a report made by Dr. C. C. Williamson to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, called Training For Library Service. The purposes of the study were to present the findings of a thorough and objective examination of the fifteen Library Schools then in operation, and to make recommendations for the improvement of library training.

Williamson was forced to criticize the Schools and the training on many points. Only two of the fifteen Schools required a college degree for admission. The curricula failed to relate training to the types of library work to be done. Three
main types of library work were recognized: (1) complete professional training requiring a broad, general education consisting of a full college course followed by at least one year of graduate study in a Library School; (2) sub-professional training requiring the same broad, general education but not necessarily followed by the year in Library School: (3) training for clerical and routine jobs requiring a general education at the high school level and instruction on the job. Library Schools were giving exactly the same instruction to candidates with widely varying educational background, without due regard for the positions they would later fill.

Too many instructors were poorly qualified; there was a great lack of proper materials and equipment for teaching. Schools were being criticized for smallness, brevity of the course (one year, at the outside), the predominance of women in the student body and on the faculty, the preponderance of the rank of Instructor, and a "total lack of anything recognized as productive scholarship." These considerations, combined with the low salaries being paid the graduates, reflected the popular attitude that "perhaps library work is not a profession but rather a minor intellectual and clerical occupation."

Williamson made several landmark recommendations: (A) The profession should develop a system of grading and certification that would raise the economic and professional base of library work and thereby attract a recruit of higher caliber for the Schools. (B) An authoritative national board should be empowered to set up training standards, serve as the accrediting agency for the Schools, and promote and coordinate all types of training agencies. (C) Professional Schools should be of a strictly graduate nature and should be related to universities, not public libraries; they should restrict training to
college graduates. (D) A few Schools should offer highly, even minutely specialized work beyond the first year's program.

It should be noted that Williamson was concerned with the growing specialization of librarianship and with ways to meet this trend. Among the fields for which he felt special training should be provided was college and university librarianship. In the organization of specialized training the following points were considered essential:

A. Between the year of general study and any period of special training at least one year of first-class library experience should be required.

B. The comparatively small demand for specialized training makes it necessary to work out a system at minimum expense by utilizing the resources of the stronger professional schools, and using the services of competent specialists on a part-time basis.

C. No one school should be expected to offer courses in all the specialties or to give highly specialized courses every year; in developing such courses each School will be guided mainly by local demand and the character of the local cooperating agencies.

A fair amount of space has been devoted to the Williamson Report because of its fundamental importance and because the profession must still, to a large extent, be measured against it.

In the decade following the Report there was certain and measurable progress. The ALA established its Board of Education For Librarianship to examine and accredit programs. By 1933 all of the accredited Schools were in universities, colleges for teachers, or teaching institutions. Most
of Williamson's major recommendations had been carried out, except, notably, his proposed national certification board and his program for specialization.

What factors helped bring about better education for college and university librarians? Surely the requirement that each candidate be a college graduate helped. So did the improved academic preparation of the Library School faculties, resulting in improved instruction in the Schools. But few Schools incorporated in their program Williamson's recommendations for special training.

There was one bright exception, however, the University of Chicago Library School founded in 1928. Where other Schools continued in the basic traditions, Chicago insisted upon the integration of librarianship with the subject fields. Columbia and Michigan offered a second year leading to the master's degree, but Chicago was long the only Library School established solely for the purpose of research and for providing work leading to both the master's and the doctor's degree. As late as 1946 it was the only Library School offering the doctorate. In the 1930's J. D. Cowley, the Director of the University of London School of Librarianship, remarked, "It would probably assist the postgraduate school materially if more of the universities could develop some plan like that adopted by the University of Chicago, where provision is made for two years of general studies, followed by two years of more specialized and more individual work in one of the four subject divisions. Courses like these would no doubt provide the more intellectually minded undergraduate with the deeper knowledge so often called for by librarians...."

In his American Librarianship from a European Angle, published in 1939, W. Munthe revealed that, apart from the University of Chicago, only Columbia, California, Illinois, and Michigan were making it
possible for the ordinary student to continue beyond the first year of study. In these Schools there was the possibility of combining the Library School courses with other studies that were of help to librarians, but the emphasis was on the writing of a thesis for the master's degree. Unfortunately, out of a total enrollment of 1184 in the 24 Library Schools in 1936 only 119 students were enrolled for advanced work. Munthe records that university libraries particularly were feeling the deficiencies of the one-year Library School program and were convinced that the work of libraries could no longer be carried on entirely by a staff with only one year of training in librarianship. Two alternative courses for combining scholarship and professional training remained open: "(1) take in highly specialized scholars and give them the necessary training in library technique, (2) get Library School graduates to acquire adequate scholarly training afterward.... Either type of equipment is of itself insufficient for positions of importance in a university library...."

During the late 1930's many dissatisfactions with the then current program were being expressed. One dissatisfaction was with the fifth year bachelor's degree. The heart of the complaint was that it was an inferior degree. It lacked prestige, the complaint said, and was inadequate recognition for study usually awarded the master's degree. And there was dissatisfaction with the content of the Library School courses, which were centered mainly upon the routines and techniques of librarianship. Even as late as 1946 Danton concluded that the Library Schools still were not training for leadership, that the Library Schools were still attempting to turn out practitioners to be all things to all libraries, that the curricula still were not professional, and that the faculties still did not have adequate academic training.
After World War II, when conditions were favorable for change, the first big change was the substitution of the fifth year master's degree for the fifth year bachelor's degree. Library Schools also set about developing a curriculum that would prepare librarians for professional service. The minimum preparation for librarianship was established as at least four years of university level work. This was and is a good standard.

It is necessary, however, to make clear the point that most Library Schools are still requiring all students, regardless of subject background, to follow the same basic program of studies. There are 30 to 39 semester hours which constitute the professional component of the education of a librarian. Ten to fifteen courses are entailed. The question always is, how much of this time can be reserved for any specialized education? The profession does not wish the training period lengthened beyond one calendar year. There is as yet no internship program to provide librarians with the specialized knowledge many consider necessary for effectiveness in particular fields of service. The master's degree is the terminal degree for the great majority of librarians. Moreover, a high degree of mobility is characteristic of the profession. A significant number of librarians cannot or do not determine the kinds of library service or the types of library work which they will choose and stick with. Any one librarian may spend part of his career in a public library, part in a special library, and part in a college or university library. So long as these conditions exist, compromises are involved in constructing curricula.

At this point with the omission of detail only, we have the background of the conditions of the Library Schools and of library education in the 1950's and 1960's. What is the present state and the future prospect of academic library service against this background?
Despite all its shortcomings, librarianship within the past half century has made a definite and heartening advance toward becoming a learned profession. The academic contributions of college and university librarians are increasing in depth also. Unfortunately, there are not enough well trained and experienced persons among their number. Wayne Yenawine, Director of Syracuse University's Library School, stated in 1958 that it was conservatively estimated that colleges and universities were operating at ten percent below budgeted library staffs. This meant between 500 and 800 unfilled positions. He concluded from his survey that half of the academic libraries in the country would, between 1958 and 1968, be attempting to increase their staffs by 50 per cent, resulting, of course, in further vacancies and competition.

The supply of professional replacements emerges then as a critical factor and it is apparent that the importance of this factor will not diminish in the years ahead. Assuring an adequate supply of college and university librarians, of librarians for all types of libraries, is largely dependent upon the vocational attractiveness of librarianship, the success of recruiting programs, and leadership among library educators. It is worthwhile now to examine some of these points in detail.

Enrollment

There are small annual increments of persons entering the library field, and there are librarians who claim that this condition is largely due to the non-accredited programs springing up over the country. The growth rate, percentagewise, is higher in the non-accredited than in the accredited Schools. The ALA Schools in 1954-55 conferred 1351 master's degrees; in 1959-60, 1430 (a 5.7% increase). In 1962-63 the number conferred was 2078, representing a 6.7% increase over the preceding year, which has been the average percentage of increase for
the preceding seven years. As for the doctorate, nine Library Schools now offer it, but only ten Ph.D's were awarded in 1961-62 and sixteen in 1962-63. This program is therefore not yet the answer to the vacancy problem whatever answer it may prove to be to the leadership problem. It is certain that academic libraries alone could use half of this year's graduates in the master's program.

**Education**

It has already been noted that there is no significant difference in the preprofessional educational requirement for academic librarianship from that of any other kind of librarianship. It has been noted, too, that professional education is largely the same for every candidate for the master's degree. Whether good or bad, this program has, at least, been developed on the following principles:

A. That the primary instructional objective of the five-year program shall be to develop professional personnel grounded in the fundamental principles and processes common to all types of libraries and all phases of library service.

B. That instruction for specialized service in libraries may occupy a place in this basic program but not at the sacrifice of necessary general academic and professional preparation.

That not everyone is satisfied with this state of affairs is well highlighted by the following remarks of Ralph Ellsworth (Director of Libraries at the University of Colorado) made when he assumed the presidency of the Association of College and Research Libraries:

"...On the negative side we have limited our ability to attract into our ranks enough people
who have a good background of subject knowledge and professional training because we have allowed our system of professional training to become a bottleneck. We place too much emphasis on the particular kind of professional training we have developed at a time when we should have been adapting our Library Schools to meet the needs of higher education. We are probably the least doctrinaire of all the professions in this respect, but that does not relieve us of the responsibility for acting more quickly. I will begin to rejoice when I see the Library Schools stop pretending that one kind of program meets the needs of all kinds of libraries."

Educational Costs

However successful recruiting efforts may be, it must nevertheless be observed that the cost of professional education is an insurmountable handicap to many prospective librarians. Compared with other professions, librarianship offers precious little scholarship aid. The recent experiments with two-year work-study programs in the Library Schools are only a poor substitute for scholarship and fellowship support, especially when there is no concerted effort to make the "work" part articulate with the "study" part. Even the experimental program at Harvard may not be an unmixed blessing. There an internship program comes into play before entrance into a Library School. The internship lasts two to three years. For a select few candidates, chosen on a national basis, individual programs are worked out to make good use of talents and to provide experience that will contribute to professional development. Still an intern and a full-time employee, the person enrolls part-time at Simmons, receiving a subsidy to cover half of his tuition and up to 70 hours per year for classes and exams. One has the feeling that only a Harvard could really make a going proposition out of this arrangement.
There is a real danger in offering professional education virtually free of charge on this work-study basis until it becomes apparent why students don't flock to the Library Schools, and why the profession doesn't attract more recruits. This situation leads quite naturally to a discussion of salaries, status, opportunities for promotion which, when improved, will go far toward changing in a fundamental way the image of the librarian. As Robert H. Muller says, "Instead of the image of the bureaucratized drone with rather limited opportunities for advancement, we should create the reality of a professional person engaged in a rewarding, stimulating, and respected activity carried on in an atmosphere and under work-load requirements which recognize that life-long intellectual and professional growth is indispensable for satisfactory performance of library service."

Everyone is aware of the sharp increase in assistance offered to high-standing college graduates for advanced study in the natural sciences, engineering, modern languages, and some of the social sciences. But there is not one among the important national fellowships—N.S.F., Woodrow Wilson, or N.D.E.A.—that touches or helps prospective librarians. Librarianship must fall back on assistance from the professional schools, general university fellowships, and awards made by the state and national professional organization industry, and individual libraries. Of the sixty major graduate fields surveyed in 1959-60, the average fellowship grant in librarianship ($340) held 56th place. Chemistry, English, and Physics topped the list; entomology, oceanography, and metallurgy closed it out. D. P. Bergen reports that the H. W. Wilson Co. gave each accredited Library School, between 1957 and 1960, a $500 fellowship to be awarded without restriction. While good in itself, one wonders how attractive $500 fellowships appear to the bright graduates of the best undergraduate colleges when $2000 or more can be obtained in other fields. Of the awards made available by professional groups, industry, etc., Bergen found that, while they are unquestionably the most
lucrative aids currently being awarded, practically all are subject to definite restrictions.

Status

There is much concern in the profession about status or, rather, about the lack of status. Librarians write often and heatedly about not being granted social acceptance on campuses, about their vacations and salaries being quite different from the faculty's, about tenure provisions, about the lack of sabbatical leaves, etc. Robert B. Downs, Dean of Library Administration at the University of Illinois, quite rightly says that "the morale, sound development, and all-around effectiveness of professional university librarians are related directly to the place assigned them in the institutional hierarchy." Closer liaison with the faculty is a necessity for this morale, development, and growth. Downs continues, "Just as we can judge the college or university in terms of its library, so we can judge the library in terms of its staff.... If the professional library personnel are in some nondescript category, without clearly defined status, with no institutional understanding of the contributions which they can make to the educational program, and placed outside, or made ineligible for, the usual academic perquisites and prerogatives, we can be...certain that the library is inferior, falling below its potentialities. The institution can pay its money and take its choice."

University administrations are now more and more aware of the fact that they cannot compete in the market place for librarians unless they are willing to give librarians academic status. Librarians themselves will take greater satisfaction in their status when it is based on the same standards--educational, intellectual, professional, and institutional--that apply to faculty members. Downs sets the standard when he says, "In addition to a master's
degree in library science, every librarian should commit himself to a continuing program for acquiring knowledge in an appropriate area or areas. He must know the inside of books as well as the outside. He must be willing to participate in his professional organization, write for publication, and engage in committee work. . . ." To achieve this goal a librarian must serve in an institution which is willing to free its library staff members, whenever possible, from routine work and to encourage them to spend time on projects leading to growth and development.

Improvement in these matters of curricula, training costs, and status will go a long way toward drawing into an attractive profession the superior candidates needed to replace and assist today's academic librarians.

Richard L. O'Keeffe

Associate Librarian, Fondren Library
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