



I L L I N O I S

---

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

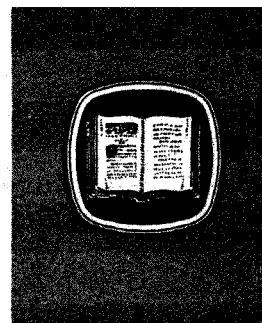
---

PRODUCTION NOTE

University of Illinois at  
Urbana-Champaign Library  
Large-scale Digitization Project, 2007.



## OCCASIONAL PAPERS



Number 46

May 1956

### Survey of Extension Activities of the Illinois State Library - May 16-31, 1956

by Gretchen Knief Schenk

In his letter of appointment, Charles F. Carpentier, Secretary of State and State Librarian, wrote the surveyor under date of April 13, 1956, as follows:

Mrs. Franz Schenk  
Rose Hedge Farm  
Summerdale, Alabama

Dear Mrs. Schenk:

Your willingness to accept the task of making a survey of the extension activities of the Illinois State Library pleases me very much. As you know, this project is sponsored jointly by the State Library and the Illinois Library Association.

As State Librarian, I am extremely interested in improving library services within the State of Illinois. We believe we are doing a good job now, but we recognize that in any field of human endeavor there is always room for improvement. We recognize, too, that those of us who are closest to the situation are in danger of finding ourselves in the familiar position of being unable "to see the forest because of the trees." We will appreciate your evaluation of our program and your suggestions for improving it."

Please consider this letter your official appointment to make the survey.

Sincerely

Charles F. Carpentier (signed)  
Secretary of State and  
State Librarian

The fact that the survey was sponsored jointly by the chief executive of the State Library and the Illinois Library Association augurs well for the eventual success of modernizing and improving library services to the citizens of the state. As a former Senator, the present State Librarian has long evinced

an interest in improved State Library management and once introduced legislation to that effect.

The Illinois Library Association, a group composed of librarians, library trustees and citizens who consider themselves friends of better library service, represents the professional and non-professional library leadership in the state. This group can and must be the voice of the citizens of Illinois who today either lacks local library service altogether, or receives insufficient, yet sometimes extravagantly expensive service. It must furthermore represent the needs of those library specialists within the state who also have a right to look toward their State Library for professional assistance, even though they may occupy the chief library position within their community or their area.

### Definition of "Extension Activities"

For the purpose of this study, the term "extension activities" was interpreted in its broadest sense. Any activity sponsored by the State Library which directly or indirectly improved either the quantity or quality of library service to the citizens of Illinois came within the range of this survey.

The philosophy underlying this interpretation stems from the modern concept of the role of the state library in improving and strengthening all types of library service within a state.\* Eventually the Illinois State Library must perforce stand at the apex of Illinois' library service as guide, mentor and friend, so that any citizen of the state, whether in the capacity of library user, librarian or trustee, may find there the counsel and assistance needed.

### Purpose and Scope of Study

In his charge to the surveyor, the State Librarian asked for an evaluation of the State's program and suggestions for improving it. This evaluation was made in the light of past experience and present-day programs in state library services in Illinois as well as in such states as New York, California, Michigan and others.

Suggestions for improving the State Library's program contained in the following pages have not been made lightly nor theoretically. Each state has its particular strengths and weaknesses and Illinois, one of the great states of the nation, has tremendous strengths and even greater potentialities. Any student of the state's library service, present or future, would be doing Illinois citizens a grave injustice by underestimating those strengths or underrating those potentialities. Yet in like measure any weaknesses in the State Library program are compounded because of the State's size, population, wealth and national importance.

\*Library Trends, April, 1956

National Association of State Librarians. The Role of the State Library.  
January, 1956

a  
IZZ 250

no. 46

copy 2

3

The surveyor was pleased and grateful to receive many excellent suggestions regarding the State Library's present and future activities. Each was weighed in the light of the central question, namely, ultimate improvement of the total level of library service within the State of Illinois. This consideration applied equally to all ideas expressed from the insignificant item regarding a minor routine (which eventually becomes a major cost item in terms of time and money) to the most important considerations regarding Illinois' basic library laws.

Every recommendation made in the report has also been made from the standpoint of feasibility and practical experience. In other words, it is the surveyor's conviction that the suggestions can all be carried through and put into operation in time if the ultimate objective - better library service to every resident of Illinois - is constantly kept in mind.

#### Method of Study

Members of the State Library staff and particularly of the Extension Section were most cooperative in promoting the objectives of the study carried on between May 16 to 21, 1956. They willingly and cheerfully answered any and all questions and provided much underlying data. The spirit, too, was good as the Chief of the Extension Section assured both the Illinois Library Association and the surveyor that "no holds would be barred from this office. Just because a situation exists does not mean that it is right, so far as I am concerned."

Field work was done by visiting libraries in northern, central and southern Illinois, discussing the State Library's services with librarians and trustees of small, medium and larger libraries. The Chief of the Extension Section made arrangements for the surveyor to visit three regional service centers and two potential centers, in addition to attending two regional meetings. Conferences were also held with Dr. P. L. Windsor, chairman, as well as several other members of the State Library Advisory Committee in different parts of the state, and with Dr. Robert B. Downs, president of the Illinois Library Association. Several state officials outside of the State Library, willingly gave of their time to discuss library problems with the surveyor.

Due to circumstances beyond control of the surveyor it was impossible for the Secretary of State and State Librarian to meet with her during the period of the survey. The surveyor still hopes that this meeting will take place during the time of the annual conference of the Illinois Library Association in October, 1956. Having been assured by letter that the Secretary of State and State Librarian is "extremely interested in improving library services within the State of Illinois", the surveyor has proceeded on the assumption that even the farthest reaching changes suggested in the body of the report will be received by all concerned in the spirit in which they are offered, namely, to help make Illinois one of the best and most highly respected "library states" in the nation.

## Illinois State Library

In the following sections matters of basic importance in the improvement of the broadly interpreted extension activities of the State Library will be discussed and suggestions made looking toward future improvement.

### Administrative Structure

It is no news to the present State Librarian and to most members of the Illinois Library Association that Illinois is the only state in which the Secretary of State is also by law charged with the additional, oftentimes pleasant, but totally unrelated duty of being State Librarian.

There is, of course, an historic reason for this law originally passed in 1874. The care and control of state libraries rested in the hands of many and diverse officials in the early 1800's, even to the turn of the century and later. During that period state libraries were considered purely as libraries for state officials, sometimes solely as law libraries. It is not surprising, therefore, to find in the historical records of various states that their "state librarians" were clerks of the Senate, secretaries of state, chief justices, ex-teachers, the capitol's night watchman (to help eke out a meager salary) or "a woman over 25".

Then came the development of a broader concept of the role of the state library as the source and center of state-wide library development and progress, providing both services and counsel to the citizens of the state. As in the case of the medical, legal, educational, historical and other professions, state librarianship became recognized as a separate and specialized field requiring professional training and specific experience quite apart from matters of election, filing of petitions, keeping the state's Great Seal and other responsibilities peculiar to the Secretary of State's office. In other words, there is no more rhyme or reason today for the Secretary of State to carry the title "State Librarian" than that he should legally be saddled with the title "State Director of Public Health."

To overcome this legal "lag" between historical and current interpretations of the functions of a "state librarian", and to modernize Illinois' top library structure in this respect, it is recommended that the Secretary of State have suitable legislation prepared and presented at the next Legislature to divest himself of this anomalous title. The present Secretary of State has undoubtedly long recognized the need for taking this step in the improvement of library service in Illinois and his legislative recommendation will provide the necessary impetus for the passage of this act.

Should the Secretary of State be engaged in too many other legislative matters, it is recommended that the Illinois Library Association relieve the Secretary of this additional problem by having such a measure ready for introduction and seeing it through the complete legislative process to final passage.

The second step in modernizing and strengthening the administrative structure of the State Library is to provide it with a modern-type library board. Every library in Illinois, whether municipal, village, township, town or district, is required by law to operate under a policy-making board. So it is only logical that the State Library set a good example also in this respect.

Because of the historic connection of the Secretary of State with the Illinois State Library as well as his known interest in improving library service in the State, it is recommended that legislation be prepared under which the Secretary of State would appoint a State Library Board of five members, not more than three of which would belong to one party. It is further recommended that these five be representative citizens from various sections of the state with outstanding qualifications to recommend them to this responsibility; that they be appointed for staggered terms of five years each, and that they serve no more than two consecutive terms. This provision would not, of course, prevent a State Library Board member from being reappointed after an interval of one elapsed term. It is also recommended that one member of this State Library Board be a librarian in active service, one a library trustee in active service, and three citizens at large. Whether or not these appointments would have to be confirmed by the Senate would have to be determined by procedure in the matter of other public appointments.

It is recommended that this State Library Board be empowered to appoint the State Librarian and the Assistant State Librarian according to established professional standards, but that all other personnel be subject to the general Personnel Code of the State. The Board would also determine the State Library's broad policies of operation. By thus administering the State Library according to the best and most modern and widely accepted principles of library management, the State Library Board would provide other library trustees of the state with a pattern worth copying.

The appointment of a policy-making State Library Board eliminates the need for the present State Library Advisory Committee. It is therefore recommended that the law relating to this Committee be repealed in order to clarify status. (Chap. 128, Sec. 12.4). Any references to the Advisory Committee in the body of library laws would need to be interpreted to mean the new State Library Board.

Because regional library districts as originally intended in Chap. 128, Sec. 12.3 are no longer operative in the State, and because the words "library district" have acquired a new meaning with the passage of laws concerning public library districts (Chap. 81, Sec. 27.1-17.15), it is recommended that Chap. 128, Sec. 12.3 be repealed to eliminate confusion.

### Materials and Equipment

The Illinois State Library is richer in library materials of all kinds than most state libraries in the nation. These include not only rare and unusual items,

but books, records, pictures, films, charts, and the like which may be borrowed in quantity. This is particularly true of books sent to libraries and schools.

Such "wholesale house" type of service stems from the underlying philosophy characteristic of the Illinois State Library - "ask and ye shall receive." In fact, as the surveyor interviewed both librarians and citizens in the State, the excellent service and great generosity of the State Library in supplying materials was emphasized repeatedly. Part of this reflects the experience gained during the demonstration period about ten years ago. In part this service points to some confusion as to the exact role that the State Library ought to play in strengthening library service within the State, a factor which will be discussed later in the report.

While quantity service is furnished, the necessary equipment to handle this type of service is still lacking in the cataloging and processing procedures used. Again, as in previous studies, it is recommended that cataloging and processing routines and records be streamlined and still further simplified, that duplicating and other machines be installed to reduce labor time in the catalog department, and that special procedures be worked out for the processing of materials acquired in large quantities, with large duplication of copies that wear out quickly and require early replacement. This reorganization, last recommended in 1952, has now become imperative and should be delayed no longer.

One additional type of equipment should be mentioned. The state-owned bookmobiles (now three in number) fulfill highly useful purposes in improving library services in the local community. By borrowing a bookmobile from the State Library for a specific period together with the books necessary to stock this library-on-wheels, both community and school libraries succeed in demonstrating that such service is feasible. It is recommended that this bookmobile equipment be continued and be kept up-to-date, so that other communities may experience the growth in library services recorded by five cities which borrowed state-owned bookmobiles in 1952-54. In those libraries books circulated increased from 1,301,604 to 1,559,145 or 17 per cent, not to mention the improved service available to these readers. In the city of Joliet alone library use increased 30 per cent within those two years, thanks to the use of a state-owned bookmobile.

### Library Extension Problems

The following sections analyze problems connected with improving and extending library service in Illinois.

#### Service Patterns

Among the purposes outlined in the law governing the Illinois State Library are the following:



- (c) Be a supplementary source of reading materials unavailable in the local libraries.
- (d) Assist local libraries in their plans of cooperation for better work and services in their communities and to loan them books and other materials in furtherance of this objective
- (e) Be ready to help local groups in developing a program by which library service can be arranged for in rural communities. . . now without such service.
- (f) Be a clearinghouse, in an advisory capacity, for questions and problems pertaining to the administration and functioning of public. . . libraries in Illinois

An analysis of these points reveals that the State Library's service pattern must necessarily be three-fold: working with those citizens still without local library service, assisting small and medium sized libraries in meeting their problems, and finally, providing a staff of specialists to work with the largest libraries in the state.

### State Planning

Before discussing any new or strengthened service patterns for the State Library, reference must be made to the tragic results of the demonstrations conducted between 1945-50, in order to point out some of the pitfalls to be avoided. A few of those were found to have been:

1. Inadequate advance planning based on a careful study of all facts and possibilities.
2. Spreading resources and personnel too thin.
3. Selection of districts. . . without obtaining advance assurance of broad citizen interest.
4. Lack of intensive promotion effort and public relations work to gain the active interest and support of local organizations and leaders and of the people in general, and failure to organize a strong sponsoring committee of citizens in each demonstration area.\*

Now in the year 1956 with the new Library Services Act in force and Federal money available for purposes of demonstrating effective library service to rural areas, the Illinois State Library again is faced with "inadequate advance planning" to take full advantage of this program. Whether or not the State eventually accepts the funds is not as important as the fact that the surveyor could find no evidence of current, sound state-wide professional planning, involving the State Library staff, the Illinois Library Association and citizens groups. (Sec. d, State Library Law). All three need to become involved, the sooner the better. Successful service plans are the result of

\*Illinois Libraries, Nov. 1950, pp. 617-23 and Illinois Libraries, Jan. 1953, p. 5.

group thinking, since it is the group which must finally put its stamp of approval on the plans and make them work.

Because of the urgent need for such a modern, state-wide plan for library service in Illinois, it is recommended that the State Library and the Illinois Library Association organize such a planning conference at the earliest possible moment. Even were Federal money never to reach the State, the plan jointly worked out and jointly adopted would serve to bring together several divergent groups after a period of many professional difficulties and great lack of professional trust in the administration of the Illinois State Library. If the central objective - the improvement of state-wide service on all levels - is constantly kept before such a planning group, individual and institutional differences will be minimized.

Furthermore, devoting several days' time and study to this important project would also help to evolve a "first things first" list of priorities in Illinois' library development program. Attention would be focused on needs and projects on which all could agree, so that the weight and prestige of the Illinois Library Association and especially Illinois trustees could be marshalled in support of the state plan.

The recently adopted public library standards, PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE TO AMERICA, are now available to use as a guide in the proposed state plan and will be essential in evaluating present services and charting future needs.

### Library Service Centers

At the same time that a cooperative study is undertaken to formulate a total library service plan for the State of Illinois, it is recommended that a sub-committee begin work on a reappraisal of the library service centers as now operating in Bloomington, Mattoon, DeKalb, Savanna, as well as previously in Chicago and Kankakee.

These service centers as presently constituted, carry out the State Library's purpose to "be a supplementary source for reading materials unavailable in the local libraries." (Sec. e, State Library Law.) The first one was opened in DeKalb, May 20, 1952, operating on a "come and get it" plan from the beginning. The Mattoon service center, for example, is located in the basement of the Mattoon Public Library. On Tuesday and Wednesday of the fourth week of the month a library consultant from the State Library is present to meet librarians and trustees who come to select books and discuss local library problems. This same pattern of operation is followed in the other centers.

The idea of the service center supplementing existing local library service is sound, as demonstrated here as well as in New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut and other states. This is particularly true of some states such as Massachusetts where tax-supported township libraries cover the entire state,

and every area pays some local tax for the support of public library service. In New York State, however, the Watertown Regional Service Center faces the same problem currently plaguing the Illinois centers. Serving only existing libraries, the centers are not reaching the unserved areas until these libraries either extend their services or new tax-supported library units are established. Individuals lacking local service can, of course, come to get materials at the centers if necessary, but that is a far cry from actual local service. So inertia, coupled with a lack of incentive on the part of citizens to embark on the task of organizing stronger and larger units to reach all the people needing local library service, have kept the areas served by the centers still library-poor.

In other words, the service center alone is not enough where unserved areas continue to exist in heavily populated states. Instead, the centers are actually helping to perpetuate generally underdeveloped, though often potentially good library service.

The service rendered by the centers is appreciated by those who can and do avail themselves of the opportunity to get more materials for their patrons. Librarians "think the service center idea is wonderful, like going to a bookstore and selecting your own books." They also enjoy getting recordings, pictures, viewmasters, and flannelgraphs, as well as books, according to Charles Haggerty, former library consultant.

The presence of an experienced field worker at the centers has brought about improvements in book selection, experimentation in types of service, re-decorating and remodeling of buildings, increase in the hours of service and the like. Since the consultant is seldom able to visit a library more than once a year, if that often, librarians and board members instead consult the librarian at the center. "Meetings are held periodically for librarians and library trustees to provide training in library processes, enable participants to discuss their local library problems, and keep informed on developments in the library field."

But all this is only a beginning. The library consultant at the center has no time to go into an area and stay there possibly for several weeks in order to assist citizens in organizing a larger unit. (Sec. e, State Library Law). The work at the centers is heavy and not enough clerical help is available at present to free the consultant for work with those librarians who cannot use the centers.

Staff and funds have been lacking so far to embark on a potentially more vigorous program of team-work both in the centers and in the organizing of unserved areas. Such a program might well include the organization of the centers as the hub in the wheel of a federation of libraries; as the center of cooperative buying of library materials for the libraries in the area, cooperative processing, and similar services which the service center could furnish local libraries through local funds. So far, however, the center's potentialities have never been fully measured, because not enough has been demanded of them, except that they be chiefly book distribution centers.

Furthermore, if the State and the local library are in partnership here to provide citizens with better service, then both partners should also agree on

some rules. Public schools are required to spend \$1.50 per child or no less than \$350 per school for books in Illinois high schools, and the same amount (\$1.50) or no less than \$50 per room in an elementary school if the enrollment is under 200 pupils. Yet so far as the surveyor could discover, no rules whatever governed the use of books and materials from the centers. In other words, the centers are currently in no position, except very indirectly, to help local communities bring their library service up to standard, even though some progress has been recorded as noted above.

The present location of the service centers also deserves considerable study. Haggerty states that centers were located in "a progressive library in a natural trading area, that would provide space for the service. Other important considerations were transportation facilities and proximity of several libraries to the headquarters. Within a fifty-mile radius of Mattoon there were 23 tax-supported libraries and six public libraries supported by private agencies and groups."\*

At the time of the study the Kankakee center was being closed due to parking difficulties and resultant lack of use. Though this transfer was not a sudden move, no definite program had been evolved to transfer the books to specific new locations. This situation was undoubtedly due to lack of staff and other personnel problems in the Illinois State Library and especially in the Extension Section, where the staff has been dwindling year after year. The service center plan is too important a factor in eventually upgrading the state's library services to allow those centers to be located and administered haphazardly.

This by no means implies that the Extension staff is not aware of the problem. It is merely a case where the centers still lack direction and objectives and are as undernourished in staff and facilities as many of the libraries they serve. The centers' ultimate purpose, their eventual needs, their future programs, the probable number required to serve the state, and their permanent location have suffered from the same "inadequate advance planning" which characterized the ill-fated demonstrations. For this reason a complete re-evaluation is recommended.

### Legal Basis for Service

One of the State Library's responsibilities for extending library service is to keep library laws current and suggest improvements in line with modern experience in library management. Illinois' library laws are no exception to this. It is, therefore, recommended that a committee study present laws and bring them up-to-date along the lines suggested in the following paragraphs. Since the government of public libraries rests principally in the hands of trustees, it would seem logical that trustees would be most concerned in assisting in the study and helping to formulate the final recommendations.

Illinois' library laws show changing conceptions of library administration.

\*Haggerty, C. E.: Experiment in Library Extension. Library Journal, March 15, 1955, pp. 624-626.

Later laws reflect greater faith in our American principle of democratic government than the earlier ones. The following table regarding BOARD OF DIRECTORS and PERMISSIBLE TAX SUPPORT will show the extent of these variations:

LIBRARY BOARDS OF DIRECTORS (TRUSTEES) and PERMISSIBLE TAX SUPPORT

Form of Government	Date of Orig. Law	Number of Trustees	Method of Appointment	Length of Term	Permissible Tax Support
Cities, Vil- leges, Incorp. Towns & Town- ships	1872	9	Appointed by Mayor; approved by Council	3 yrs.	1.2 mills (not to exceed 2 m. by vote)
Town, Village and Township	1872	6	Elected	6 yrs.	.10% of assessed val.
Villages under Commission Form of Government	1943	6	Appointed by Commissioners.	6 yrs.	.10% of assessed val.
Counties	1919	5	Appointed by Co. Commission- ers	5 yrs.	2/3 m. (not to 2 m. byvote)
Library Districts	1943	6 (5 apptd.)	Appointed by Co. Commissioners	5 yrs	.06% of assessed val.
*Free Public Lib. Founded by Gifts	1891	7-15	Self-appointed by Corp. Members	not stated	-----
*Village libs. Not Tax-Supported	1939	3	Appointed by Bd. of Vil. Trustees	At pleasure of Trustees	-----

\*The last two are omitted in the discussion which follows.

From the above table it is obvious that library government could be greatly simplified both as to the number of trustees needed to set library policies as well as the term of office and method of appointment or election. Modern library laws generally stipulate boards of five members appointed for a five-year term with one reappointment allowed. Members can, of course, be reappointed again after one elapsed term.

The surveyor, in discussing these matters with trustees and librarians found that some libraries organized under the law requiring nine trustees had difficulty in getting a quorum for their meetings. Others reported that a three-year

term was actually too short, as it took at least a year to get fully educated with library problems and policies. Since many library programs were of long range duration a member was really just becoming useful when the term was over. Others again reported that a six-year term seemed "endless."

Limiting each newly appointed library trustee to two terms may appear to be a somewhat revolutionary idea, as length of service has been the badge of merit of many trustees who have served their libraries and their communities faithfully and well. Lengthening the term from three to five years would mean that two terms would be the equivalent of  $3 \frac{1}{3}$  terms as now constituted, or two years less than the two terms (12 years) for elected trustees. Reappointment after an elapsed term would insure that any trustee could continue to contribute toward the welfare of his library for a total of 20 out of 25 years, or 30 out of 40 years. Having served the first five or ten years, the trustee would then make room for another citizen to be trained and indoctrinated in the library's program. Thus many more trustees would finally become library supporters, which is, after all what library trustees are constantly seeking. It is recommended that this change, limiting the terms of office of trustees, be incorporated in the library laws.

The election of town, village and township trustees undoubtedly had origin in the fact that towns, villages and townships were often unincorporated when the law was originally passed. Now the present law reads:

"When fifty legal voters of any incorporated town, village or township present a petition to the clerk thereof (or trustees of schools in counties not under township organization)... " Thus it is just as possible for the town, village or township council, board or trustees, or the school board to appoint library directors, as for any other governing body to appoint library trustees or directors, and an election (always an expense to the taxpayer) is no longer needed to select these library trustees. When quizzed by the surveyor as to how these village library elections were managed, one trustee admitted having decided herself to "run for office." The others stated that former trustees had said in effect "now it is your turn", so that the office of trustee under this law had become more or less self-perpetuating in those communities. Since all other trustees are appointed by the official body legally responsible for the support of the library, it is only fair that trustees of town, village and township libraries be likewise appointed. This change is recommended.

The surveyor would like to call attention to another matter requiring study. The new library district law requires that the chairman of the board of county commissioners "of the county which contains all or a larger portion of the district than any other having territory therein" shall be a member of the district library board.

This stipulation may have had its origin in political expediency, but there is no more reason for the chairman of that board to be a member of the district library board than for the mayor, or any other ex-officio member to be part of any other library board. Illinois is happily free of the many ex-officio library board members found in other states, so it is recommended that this ex-officio membership also be eliminated.

The suggestion was made to the surveyor that the district library law had not "caught on" (i. e. that not more districts had been voted since the law was passed ) because of the method of appointing the district library trustees. "What do the county commissioners know about our problems" seemed to be the general complaint. Without having made any conclusive studies on the matter, it would seem that the appointment of library trustees was probably not the major stumbling block. Promoters of good library service will gladly share their knowledge - and their "problems" - with public officials in any jurisdiction, knowing that they thereby will gain further friends of libraries in the end. More publicity regarding library needs, such as talking these over with county commissioners, usually brings forth better library support, too. Experience has proved that modern county commissioners as modern public officials generally are aware of the contributions that good library services make to improved community living. For this reason the election of district library trustees is not recommended.

Great care should also be exercised that the district library law is applied only in instances where no other form of organization is possible, such as binding together large, heterogeneous areas for legal and administrative purposes and strength. A district library should meet the standards set in the recently adopted PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE TO AMERICA, both as to population and income, so that it will measure up to the best potential service possible.

The county library law, passed in 1919, requires revision badly. It needs to incorporate current thinking on county library organization, offer alternate methods of establishment, either by vote of the people or by resolution of the county commissioners, and remove the obstacle of vote control by municipalities already supporting their own libraries. Also, the stipulation that the county librarian shall be appointed only upon the approval of the Illinois State Library, is questionable, since such approval ought to be preceded by some further essential requirement as examination, presentation of general professional qualifications or the like, lest there be charges of autocratic control by the Illinois State Library. It is therefore recommended that the county library law be revised, since "the county library law in Illinois is faulty and cannot be used unless there is no library in the county, and only two counties still have no library in them." Any library organized under the present county library law should be assured, however, that its organization will not be jeopardized. Any tentative cooperative, contractual arrangements now in existence or being developed between counties should also be protected.

It is recommended that trustees and librarians responsible for the revision of library laws in Illinois study the law of other states such as Kansas, Indiana and Ohio which have revised their library laws within recent years. It is also recommended that this committee draw in for consultation those interested in promoting better laws generally, such as Bureaus of Governmental Research, both from the standpoint of gaining further information as well as getting support for further legislative action.

## Financial Support

While it is probably true in Illinois as in many other states that library support has not reached its legal limit in many cities, counties, towns, villages and townships, the fact remains that citizens are being penalized for using libraries other than those organized under the city library law. In this law the amount of 1.2 mills may be appropriated for the support of libraries, with a limit of two mills allowed if approved by vote. All other types of libraries must be satisfied with less.

The ceiling of support is uneven as shown in the table on PERMISSIBLE TAX SUPPORT, yet books and other librarian materials and equipment cost the same whether they are bought by a city or some other governmental unit. Progressive library legislation seeks to put a floor under the permissible tax support, but allows citizens to determine for themselves through their own elected representatives in local government how much they wish to spend on library support. A case for dynamic library service, well presented, generally receives good support. Citizens willing to finance such progressive service should not be hampered by arbitrary ceilings.

It is recommended that a committee of librarians, trustees and citizens study the entire question of financial support for public libraries, seeking to equalize at least the minimum support.

It is further recommended that the study include a consideration of state aid to libraries in the nature of incentive or establishments grants, provided the library system resulting from such grants will meet the standards set out in the above mentioned PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE TO AMERICA. Other states, notably New York, have spent much time and research on this question and have gained some worthwhile experience which will be of value to Illinois. The hurdle of "getting a start" in establishing and maintaining the larger unit is thus minimized, and the resulting multi-library units will greatly improve and extend library service in Illinois.

## Materials and Services

In THE ROLE OF THE STATE LIBRARY, the importance of proper and sufficient materials is emphasized as follows:

"In order to fulfill its functions, the state library must have strong collections of all forms of educational and informational materials covering the various fields of knowledge, an efficient system of making materials available, and a sufficient number of competent professional and clerical personnel. Definite policies for developing the library's collections are formulated in cooperation with other libraries in the state or region after careful consideration of all the resources and needs."



Again in regard to general library services, the statement makes the following important comments:

"The general services of the library include reference, research and loan functions. No library, however large, can contain all materials that might be needed by library users; therefore, an efficient and reliable bibliographic service and inter-library loan system is essential. The state library is the hub of the state's inter-library loan system. Not only the materials in its own collection are available, but also those of other libraries."

Regarding the first paragraph, the surveyor observed that the State Library ranks among the best equipped in the nation, from the standpoint of "strong collections of all forms of educational and informational materials covering the various fields of knowledge." However, no "definite policies for developing the library's collection in cooperation with other libraries in the state" have so far apparently been formulated "after careful consideration of all the resources and needs." Here again, as in so many other areas, the state's library service program has suffered because of mutual distrust and lack of harmony among the library leaders of the state. With evident good will on the part of both State Library staff members and library leaders in the state and a determination to improve the state's total library service, some definite policies can certainly be developed in the relatively near future. It is recommended that this be done as soon as feasible, in order to establish goals and priorities. Illinois, despite its wealth, will inevitably profit from such study and resultant policy formation.

The second paragraph is equal to the first in ultimate importance in improving state-wide service. The Illinois State Library has a good reputation, especially among the smaller libraries, for its reference, research and loan functions. But if "the state library is to be the hub of the state's inter-library loan system", then a much closer liaison will need to be developed between the State Library and the libraries in the northern and southern ends of the State, where Chicago and St. Louis metropolitan areas dominate community living and library demands. It is recommended that the State Library's bibliographic service and inter-library loan system be strengthened by the installation of a teletype system, comparable to that in use in the Michigan State Library. There the State Library is connected with the major libraries of the state through a teletype system for bibliographic and inter-library loan purposes, with resultant improved service to citizens. Then, and not until then will "not only the materials in its own library collection (be) available, but also those of other libraries" in the fullest sense of the word.

While the actual routines used within the State Library were not investigated except in a few specific cases, the arbitrary division of the State Library's reference service into General Reference and Mail Reference seemed completely illogical to the surveyor. Whether the patron appears in person or is represented

by a written request should be immaterial to the reference staff. Where professional personnel is so limited in number as on the State Library staff, it should be kept as flexible as possible. It is therefore recommended that a State Library staff committee study the integration of these two divisions and propose a method of combining the two to the Assistant State Librarian for action.

The State Library has long been widely noted for its excellent exhibits and publications program. ILLINOIS LIBRARIES is one of the better state library sponsored publications, carrying pertinent information, worthwhile articles and significant statistics. This "clearinghouse function" (Sec. f, State Library Law) is highly important and the Extension staff is fully aware of the challenge, since no other agency in the state is charged with such a responsibility. As the Extension staff is enlarged in the future, it is recommended that additional emphasis be placed on the state-wide collection and dissemination of specific points of information requested by medium sized and larger libraries, aside from the statistical facts found in the State Library's annual compilation.

### Extension Section

"Advisory and technical assistance to librarians, library authorities, interested citizens and state institutions; and the distribution of books and other materials", listed among the extension functions of the modern state library have long been customary with the Illinois State Library. However, as mentioned above, the establishment of standards for library development has lagged far behind. This may have been partly due to the "helping hand (without threat)" which characterized the philosophy of service to small libraries for so long.

On the other hand, "standards" must be set for libraries even as they are set for hospitals, schools and other public tax-supported institutions. Moreover, they dare not be developed in a vacuum by one or two individuals if they are to be effective. Since the State Library did not "take the initiative in promoting state-wide library planning and the development of all types of library service, in cooperation with library associations and other interested groups," as suggested in THE ROLE OF THE STATE LIBRARY, it is not surprising that Illinois library standards still wait to be developed - cooperatively. It is recommended that the problem of standards of service be incorporated in the library development study. Librarians of small libraries especially ought to be encouraged to study and rate their own libraries, following full explanations, in preparation for a future introduction of higher standards of service.

At this point, too, the question of a much needed certification law should again be broached and explored. During a period of acute personnel shortages, a library certification law will be motivated by other considerations than the laws passed during the depression years when an oversupply of librarians made selection comparatively simple. Such a certification law would demonstrate that librarians, even in the smallest communities, require ability, knowledge

and training. The Extension Section, together with some of the institutions of higher learning offering courses in library organization and management, has made manful attempts at in-service training for local librarians. But a well-framed certification law will clarify requirements, so that librarians of larger units will later be fully qualified to carry in-service training down to the smallest unit. It is therefore recommended that a modern certification law be prepared for study and later introduction in the Legislature.

In the course of all these suggested studies it cannot be emphasized strongly enough that "other interested groups", especially governmental associations, such as the league of cities, county commissioners associations, League of Women Voters, bureaus of research and government and the like become involved in planning for Illinois' improved library service. Where one million people are still without local library service, and possibly a second million receive only "token service", there library extension actually becomes "state business".

### Service to Schools

Book service to schools still looms very large in the activities of the Illinois State Library, the "Collections Unit" responsible for this activity, no doubt accounting for many thousand shipments to schools of the 112,262 pieces of mail and packages sent out by the State Library in 1954-55. A friendly, cooperative spirit seemed to prevail between the Supervisor of School Libraries in the State Department of Education and the State Library staff. Both seemed aware of the fact that schools, especially in rural areas, still leaned too heavily on the State Library to supply what local or county school districts should be furnishing, or be supplied by local public libraries. It is therefore recommended - again as in previous studies - that the Illinois State Library "cease and desist" from sending general reading matter to schools. The arguments for such discontinuance are too well known to require repeating here. The method of this discontinuance can vary as it has varied with the different states which once offered this service, such as Michigan. Working cooperatively with the State School Library Supervisor, some definite policies will need to be set, schools will need to be notified that loans will eventually be discontinued, and any exceptions, such as schools struck by disaster, studied. While it has been the goal of the Illinois State Library "to make reading materials available and accessible to every citizen in Illinois", the long way around does often become the shortest way to really adequate state-wide service. By continuing to offer books and materials, which ought to be available locally, to these schools, the State Library is indirectly hampering library extension. The California State Library has never supplied children's books of any kind, so that school and public library service has been forced to develop in order to care for school needs. This development has taken place even in areas as poor as some of those in Southern Illinois, because California also has its "poverty row" communities.

### Personnel

Following are the standards of quality and quantity which ought to guide the Illinois State Library in its personnel program. They are recommended

for future application.

The State Library, because it is the State's library, must necessarily stand at the apex of all library service in Illinois. Some libraries may be larger, some may be wealthier, but none should exceed it in excellence of personnel. Such personnel must be able to exercise outstanding leadership in all library matters within the state, since both professional librarians and laymen have a right to expect the highest type of advisory service from their State Library.

This is setting exalted and difficult standards for the personnel of the Illinois State Library, yet rightly so. In a state that has within its borders three of the nation's outstanding library schools, several more institutions of higher learning offering library courses, the headquarters of the American Library Association, and a number of the nation's largest and finest libraries, the standards for service in the Illinois State Library must naturally be high. Only such standards can hope to meet the needs of all libraries within the state, and since Chicago and Cook County are still a part of Illinois, completely urban library problems are just as much the responsibility of the Illinois State Library as the many rural library problems "downstate."

Coupled with quality, the Illinois State Library staff must also consist of sufficient quantity to meet the needs of the state's program. Sufficient specialists need to be on hand, including consultants who can stay in a community long enough to help citizens organize their own larger units, that the state's citizens will finally receive uniformly good or even superior library service.

So far no standards for state library staffs have been devised, comparable to the one which suggests a professional librarian for every 20,000 books circulated. Besides, simple book circulation is not a state library's chief business. But it is obvious that when an Extension Section staff has dwindled from twelve and more down to a Chief of Extension, two consultants, one field visitor and the head of the Collections Unit, then a crippling decimation has set in which hampers any major extension development. Even the accomplishments of day-to-day demands by such a staff are nothing short of a minor miracle in a state as large and varied in requirements as Illinois.

#### Morale Builders

As was stated in a previous report, "The status of morale in the State Library's professional staff cannot be characterized as "high" or even as "good". There is a state of emotional tension which is not due primarily to frustration, but which has elements of frustration. There is no simple cause, but a complex of many causes." As one professional staff member wrote the surveyor, "We are surfeited with surveys, inspections, calibrations, questionnaires, and all such formalities without anything much being done about it." Another wrote, "I am afraid we are even sicker than I realized."

### Assistant State Librarian

Undoubtedly the first and most important step toward building better morale which needs to be recommended is the prompt appointment of an Assistant State Librarian. The present Acting Assistant Librarian has found himself in an absurd and completely untenable position for well over two years, and the uncertainty as to the future has brought about "confusion, bafflement, dissension, dissatisfaction and antagonism to the whole staff," in the opinion of one member. To most individuals it would be a spirit-breaking, morale-crushing experience to be required to handle a budget of over one million dollars and administer a program with a staff of over 125 full time and part time workers without actually having been given the full authority commensurate with such responsibility. This situation has placed an undue and indefensible, from the standpoint of the appointing authorities, burden on the shoulders of the present Acting Assistant State Librarian, who has carried the load so well. This situation was understandable for the first twelve months, but should now be settled without delay. Then the staff would no longer need to feel that it is "a herd of sheep without a shepherd", as was expressed to the surveyor.

### Position and Salary Revision

A second morale-builder urgently required and recommended is a complete re-study and revision of State Library positions and salaries. The salary of the administrative head of the Illinois State Library ought to be on par with and even above the best library salary in the state, or at least \$12,000 to \$14,000, while its present range is from \$6,000 to \$8,000.

The salaries of members of the Extension Section also have been so poor that a new housing project public library in Cook County succeeded in luring away one of the best and most widely experienced Extension workers. Other members of the Extension staff have also been forced to take positions elsewhere, simply for economic reasons. This is extravagance of the worst order, inasmuch as high calibre state extension workers are exceedingly hard to find and require considerable training on the job. No library school can teach all that such state workers need to know. New York State, being most nearly comparable to Illinois in population and wealth, to quote but a few salary figures, pays its "Principal library supervisor" a salary of \$9800 (Illinois State Library Assistant V - \$6600), its "Associate library supervisor", \$6886-\$7182, its "Senior library supervisor", \$6896 (State Library Assistant IV - \$5400). Other salaries would undoubtedly be comparable and point up the need for this revision of positions and salaries. Michigan and California State Libraries' experience proved that such a position and salary study is most beneficial in upgrading and reevaluating the State Library's personnel program.

To make certain that such a restudy of the State Library's personnel system was feasible, the surveyor interviewed the President of the Illinois Civil Service Commission, Miss Maude Myers, who gave her assurance that such a study could be made provided that the entire staff be included in the study.

In this connection it is also recommended, as in the first part of this report, that the remaining staff members now outside of civil service jurisdiction, approximately one-half of the clerical workers or one-fourth of the total staff, be accorded the same benefits as the other 75% of the staff, after they have met the same standards and requirements. If three-fourths of the staff must meet them, it is no more than fair that the remaining one-fourth do likewise. And if all are equal before the law, then a further cause for dissension and low morale will have been removed. Miss Myers expressed herself as well pleased with the cooperation currently received from the State Library and promised full cooperation in return.

### Personnel Code

It is also recommended that the State Library be reinserted as one of the departments of state government to come under the new Personnel Code. This is not the place to discuss how, why or by whom the State Library was deleted from this important morale-building law, But it is important that both the Secretary of State and the Illinois Library Association make sure that this deletion is promptly corrected. What is good and suitable, just and advantageous to the citizens of the state and their employees generally is likewise desirable for the employees of the Illinois State Library.

### Working Quarters - Extension Section

Another morale builder, particularly for the Extension Section staff, is the arrangement of better working quarters. State libraries are notoriously overcrowded and the Centennial Building housing the State Library has long ago demonstrated its gross inadequacies as an efficient library. Yet when one Extension Section staff member (the field visitor) rarely if ever visits headquarters, and another has to share the other side of the desk with the Chief of the Section - a desk not intended for two people's use - then efficiency dwindles even lower. So it is recommended that the ingenuity so amply demonstrated by State Library staff members be put to work once more to find more adequate quarters for the Extension Section. Such a rearrangement would also eliminate the half-joking, half-serious jest, "Where would we put more extension workers if we had them?"

### Conclusion

This report contains numerous recommendations, many of them old and familiar. The surveyor is well aware of the fact that their accomplishment will be beset by many difficulties, some of them quite formidable. Time and changing circumstances will alter others.

Yet the plight of Illinois' library service was already the subject of frequent discussion, even while the surveyor was still a student at the University of Illinois Library School. Much has been accomplished in those intervening years, but some of the basic difficulties continue, though more than a quarter of a century has gone by.

If anything this means that the time has come for concerted action and a long-term, dogged determination to eliminate those basic difficulties. The

Illinois State Library is a great library today. Potentially it can become one of the greatest in the country. Those same citizens, librarians and trustees who helped to make it great can also help to make it stronger, so that library service of good quality will be locally available throughout the state. To this end, and to this end only, were the recommendations made and that is the spirit in which they must be carried out in order to achieve the rich and rewarding goal of state-wide high quality library service.

\* \* \* \* \*

Numbers in this series are issued irregularly and no more often than monthly. Single copies of any issue are available free upon request; appropriate institutions wishing to receive a copy of all issues should so indicate in writing. The Occasional Papers will deal with some phase of librarianship, and will consist of manuscripts which are too long or too detailed for publication in a library periodical, or are of specialized or temporary interest. The submission of manuscripts for inclusion in the series is invited. Material from these papers may be reprinted or digested without prior consent, but it is requested that a copy of the reprint or digest be sent the editor. All communications should be addressed to Editor, Occasional Papers, University of Illinois Library School, Urbana, Illinois.

PUBLICATIONS BOARD

Harold Lancour, Chairman and Editor  
Janet Phillips, Editorial Assistant

Robert B. Downs  
Leslie W. Dunlap  
Thelma Eaton

Frances B. Jenkins  
Arnold H. Trotier