

Princeton's New Julian Street Library

By WARREN B. KUHN

FIFTY YEARS AGO Woodrow Wilson as president of Princeton University spoke out vigorously in favor of an underlying Princeton concept, the "habit and freedom" of independent reading. His preceptorial system of instruction had just been inaugurated, and he was explaining how it would help create and stimulate the reading habit.

On December 2, 1961, a half century later, when Princeton dedicated its newest library venture, the Julian Street library, that "habit" was still being actively cultivated and had been implicit in every step of the new library's planning and construction. Designed primarily to be a highly selective collection for the Princeton undergraduate, the Julian Street library is housed in an entire wing of a new dining and social building known as Wilcox Hall. The hall itself is the center of a new five-dormitory quadrangle with quarters for two hundred undergraduates. It contains in addition to the library a dining hall, lounge, seminar, music and meeting rooms, and a residential penthouse for guests.

In early 1957 when, as part of a major capital fund campaign, planning began for alleviation of dormitory overcrowding and an alternate mode of life for nonclub upper classmen, a faculty-administrative committee working closely with the university librarian developed the fundamental concept of the new quadrangle, of which a compact, undergraduate working library was to be a supremely important part. From the beginning it was visualized that this must be a place where undergraduates would live in an atmosphere conducive to intellectual and cultural growth, and

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where in the words of William S. Dix, the university librarian, "a real library would do more than any other architectural feature to bring this about." Such a library, too, necessarily had to be an integral part of the university library, but in a way permitting a definite sense of pride in their library to be built up by resident students.

The Julian Street library contains principally those books most in demand at the main library for the curriculum-stimulated reading of its undergraduate patrons. In addition, it includes lively and important supplementary material, standard classics essential to the development of the "whole man," a basic reference collection, light literature for recreation, and books of value suggested by residents of the quadrangle themselves. As a result its titles cover the entire range of the Princeton curriculum: religion, politics, economics, art and archaeology, sociology and anthropology, science, music, Oriental studies, including Asian and Near Eastern materials, and Slavic studies, plus the traditional academic fields. At present the collection consists of five thousand volumes which will be increased by one thousand books each year to the library's maximal capacity of ten thousand volumes.

As to specifics, textbooks have not been included, nor literary sets. For example, only five of Dickens's works have been chosen; if an undergraduate desires to read further he is encouraged to de-

velop his specialty in depth with the full resources of the university library. In foreign literature both the original and the translation are purchased; for example, Thomas Mann is represented in both English and German editions, and the same practice is repeated with other important writers such as Balzac, Lorca and others.

Although the library is open to all, actual circulation is confined to residents of the new quadrangle and members of the Woodrow Wilson Society, an undergraduate campus society that uses the new hall as its social and intellectual center. These last two groups number 465 persons.

The collections have been housed in an attractive modern room with book-lined walls and alcoves with more shelving, study tables, and comfortable chairs. Its entrance is on ground level and as a separate wing is free from any noise or disturbance from the dining and social wing of the new hall. Smoking is permitted, and a single student on desk duty near the combined entrance-exit permits use of the wing from 1:00 P.M. until midnight, seven days a week. The Princeton identification card is used for all circulation control.

Participation on the part of the undergraduates in the development of the new library has been encouraged by the appointment of an advisory committee. This is composed of representatives of the Woodrow Wilson Society, residents of the quadrangle, and faculty and library staff. It meets regularly to consider matters of policy and to make decisions on book selection.

The collection has been visualized as primarily an extension of the Princeton University library. It is not intended to support advanced research of any nature, but a student will be able to study for general courses in the new library and to find books for general reading and browsing. There will also be a modest number of scholarly periodicals.

These are expendable, and no back files are maintained.

All planning, book selection, processing, and administrative responsibility was placed in the hands of a senior university library officer, the author of this article, who, early in 1957 made initial visits to both Harvard and Yale to study the strengths and weaknesses of residence hall libraries. These visits helped establish several primary operating rules. Not only must a library be integrally part of the university library, but financial control of all residence library funds must remain in the hands of the university library. Growth is dependent on the staff and facilities of the main library, and far more efficient cataloging and purchasing can be accomplished in this manner. In the Yale and Harvard experience many of their older residence hall libraries were the results of early gifts, bequests, and accretions, the latter coming about through interest in certain subject fields by masters and tutors of the various houses. Drastic weeding had been forced upon them, and they complained of lopsidedness that had existed. By their generous warnings about such dangers, the Julian Street library was able to avoid many pitfalls and mistakes.

It was decided immediately that all books in Street would be duplicated in the main library collection, and their classification would be similar for easy movement back and forth since eventually there would be considerable weeding of unused titles. An author catalog was planned, as well as a separate shelf list in the main library for bibliographic control. Since by the time the library began operation it was felt the collection should be fairly well established, a figure of four thousands books was aimed at for the starting goal. This also furnished initial budget perspectives.

The next, and single most important step, of course, was book selection. It was then that the project ran up against the common problem: the current awe-

some lack of appropriate bibliographic aids. Most of the standard works were out of date, notably Lamont and Shaw; and the "new Shaw" was still on the drawing boards. Even the newest lists by Jones and Jordan, while good, were annual compilations and of little use for our comprehensive purpose. As the newest (at the time) of the Harvard residence libraries was at Quincy House, Princeton asked for and was obligingly sent an electrostatic copy of its shelf list. This very bulky package of galleylike sheets was broken down into its component Dewey parts and each subject area thus obtained was submitted to our faculty departmental chairmen with a covering letter from the librarian. Each was asked to approve, delete, and make suggestions for new titles. As a guide to setting up a percentage system of books in the subject fields for the original four-thousand-volume list, a percentage breakdown of undergraduate departmental course elections was used. In some areas, such as science, the percentage of books was kept flexible since strict adherence to the numbers of men enrolled in these programs would have overbalanced total library holdings. It is interesting to note that the science section is growing rapidly and is heavily used.

Over a period of months the lists were returned, some indicating fair agreement with the many standard works on the Harvard list, but most with freshly-drawn lists of their own. Many departments were most enthusiastic over the opportunity and submitted extensive suggestions. Others appointed faculty representatives to work with the project, designating particularly those men alert to the requirements and thinking of the undergraduates. At some point soon the cumulative lists will be recirculated among the faculty for further additions and changes. This review will certainly be prior to any distribution of what might be termed a "finished" bibliography.

Once the major proportion of lists

was in, processing personnel were hired and suitable work and stack holding space provided in the main library building. Since all titles were to be duplicated, processing consisted mainly of ordering in bulk, receiving and checking, and cataloging received titles by the book-truck load at the main catalog. Lettering, labeling, and other similar chores were done only when enough volumes had been cataloged to allow for production-line methods.

The processing staff consisted of a part-time supervisory person with previous library and cataloging experience and a full-time clerk-typist. The project begun in April 1960 and scheduled for completion that fall was extended as the result of construction difficulties through September 1961, but this extra time proved necessary for really adequate processing of approximately forty-five hundred volumes. During the summers the project typist was replaced with locally hired college girls who did card typing, lettering, and other processing.

Book orders were divided roughly into three categories: (1) Bulk orders to a single jobber, (2) university press items, and (3) foreign books.

Book orders were expedited by means of typewritten lists, each ranging from several hundred titles to several thousand at a time, with covering letter. Regular blank library invoices, stamped with the project's designation, were sent to the jobber separately. Although it is standard practice at Princeton to cancel titles temporarily out of stock, the jobber was requested to keep these on file for later filing with an agreement that all orders not received after ninety days would be considered canceled. Individual work cards had been typed from the original faculty book lists and these were used in the preparation of all book orders and also as a check-in record.

At first cataloging was accomplished by the simple expedient of the part-time supervisor transferring to a process slip information from the main catalog, the

typist preparing catalog cards from each work slip. However, it was soon discovered that since a good many titles were now available only in new editions, as distinct from copies, these had to be turned over to the main library catalog department for processing. About one-fifth of the way through the project, the increasing number of new editions and the growing burden to the main catalog department resulted in the adoption of LC cards. Project LC orders specified a main card for the university library catalog, a shelf list card, and a full set for the Street catalog.

Once the book was cataloged, all processing was done by project clerical personnel. This included preparation of book pockets, a bookcard, and plastic book jacketing. Attractive covers were particularly wanted and more than 80 per cent of our collection is now jacketed in plastic.

Since the Street Library is a phased operation, its budget was similarly arranged in three distinct phases, although

actual costs are naturally available only for the one completed. (See Table 1.)

An additional nonrecurring cost has also been provided to cover preparation and distribution of a preliminary multi-lithed book list of the library, complete with periodic supplements.

Funds for construction and the first ten thousand books as well as an endowment which will enable the library to add the several hundred new books each year are the gift of Graham Mattison, Princeton '26, in memory of Julian Street, author and playwright. Mr. Street, whose son, Julian Street, Jr., '25, is a Princeton alumnus, lived for many years in Princeton and remained a close friend of the campus and the undergraduates during his lifetime. A charcoal sketch of him done in 1915 by James Montgomery Flagg has been donated to the library by Mrs. Street, and is mounted within the entranceway. A collection of Street imprints are shelved near the reference section. Bookplates were designed by Thomas M. Cleland,

TABLE 1

Phase I.	INITIAL 4,000 VOLUMES (April 1960—September 1961) <i>Proposed expenditures</i> \$20,000—Books (\$5.00 per volume) 10,000—Processing <hr/> \$30,000 <i>Actual expenditure</i> \$20,000—Books (4,400 purchased) 6,275—Processing (Includes wages, equipment and supplies, moving to new building, etc.)
Phase II.	FIRST FIVE YEARS OF OPERATION Acquisition, 1000 books per year—\$5,000.00 per year Student salaries (including \$75 monthly for student manager responsible for scheduling, daily operation, etc.) Equivalent of junior cataloger (half-time)
Phase III.	AFTER FIRST FIVE YEARS Acquisitions—\$1,000.00 per year (200 volumes per year at \$5.00 per volume) Student salaries Processing (1/4 time, junior cataloger; for addition of 200 new volumes, and withdrawal of a similar quantity of obsolete or little-used volumes)

noted typographer and a close personal friend of Julian Street.

The architectural firm of Sherwood, Mills and Smith designed the entire quadrangle, including the library wing. Traditional Princeton ashlar stone is used for retaining walls and foundations, while the buildings themselves are of brick with limestone facing.

Bookshelves completely line all available wall space to a height of six feet, with shelving 12" deep. The room itself is divided into a number of reading alcoves by the use of freestanding double-faced wooden ranges. Three waist-high ranges form three lounging alcoves, complete with easy chairs and couches, while other alcoves and open spaces are provided with solid birch-wood tables with satin chrome legs. All tables and straight chairs are modeled after those in Firestone library. Easy chairs and couches

are covered in a heavy, durable, attractive plastic. A fruitwood finish is used throughout as the dominating wood tone, including the parquet floor, and all special furniture is finished to match. Seating is for fifty-one. Casement-type windows line the north and south walls with fireproof, full-length curtains. A series of domed skylights provide further daylight illumination and, at night, fluorescent ceiling lighting is used.

As reader space and book duplication grows increasingly necessary at Princeton, the Julian Street library should provide real assistance in meeting those needs. It will also provide, in the way lauded by Wilson so many years ago, continuing opportunity to find in comfortable surroundings a ready supply of those books intended to arouse the appetite of the mind for the "habit and freedom" of reading.

"The End of Education"?

"A core curriculum is one in which the children bring apples to school, eat them, and plant the cores in the school grounds. They watch them sprout and grow into leaves and blossoms and then fruit. This is *Science*. They paste pieces of bark and twigs and leaves on paper and they paint pictures of the apples in a dish. This is *Art*.

"The children sit around under the tree singing 'In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree.' This is *Music*. The story of Johnny Appleseed is told them. This is *Library Study*. They climb the tree and pick the apples. This is *Physical Education*.

"They count the apples, 'taking away' the wormy ones. This is *Arithmetic*. In their own words, they tell what a tree is and what they felt when they saw the cores turn into trees. They also write letters to the National Apple Growers' Association. This is *Language Arts*. The gifted children do enrichment research by reading Kilmer's 'Trees' or by finding out about Isaac Newton, the Apple of Discord, The Garden of Eden, William Tell and other apple-y events.

"They learn such words as *arbor, l'arbre, Apfel, Baum, manzana*. This is *Foreign Languages*.

"The boys build boxes to store the apples. This is *Industrial Arts*. And the girls bake them and sauce them and pie them. This is *Homemaking*. Then everyone eats them and learns about their nutritional value. This is *Health Education*.

"These activities have been performed without a text-book or a workbook.

"When all the apples are gone, they take the cores once again and plant them in the school grounds and watch them grow and flower and fruit. Pretty soon, you cannot see the school for the trees. This is called *The End of Education*."—*Columbia Forum*, as reprinted in *Toronto Education Quarterly*, Autumn 1961.