

ROBERT B. DOWNS

The Role of the Academic Librarian, 1876-1976

IT IS DIFFICULT for university librarians in 1976, with their multi-million volume collections, staffs in the hundreds, budgets in millions of dollars, and monumental buildings, to conceive of the minuscule beginnings of academic libraries a century ago. Only two university libraries in the nation, Harvard and Yale, held collections in excess of 100,000 volumes, and no state university possessed as many as 30,000 volumes.

As Edward Holley discovered in the preparation of the first article in the present centennial series, professional librarians to maintain, service, and develop these extremely limited holdings were in similarly short supply.¹ Generally, the library staff was a one-man operation—often not even on a full-time basis. Faculty members assigned to supervise the library were also expected to teach courses in their fields of competence.

EARLY VIEWS OF THE ACADEMIC LIBRARIAN

The idea of the college and university librarian being accepted and recognized as a bona-fide member of the academic community still lay in the future. A representative sampling of university catalogs during the 1870s reveals that none of these institutions conferred academic titles on their librarians unless

they were members of the teaching faculty. The ordinary practice was to list librarians with registrars, museum curators, and other miscellaneous officers. Combination appointments were common, e.g., the librarian of the University of California was a professor of English; at Princeton the librarian was professor of Greek, and the assistant librarian was tutor in Greek; at Iowa State University the librarian doubled as professor of Latin; and at the University of Minnesota the librarian served also as president.

Further examination of university catalogs for the last quarter of the nineteenth century, where no teaching duties were assigned to the librarian, indicates that there was a feeling, at least in some institutions, that head librarians ought to be grouped with the faculty. What the specific relationship should be, however, was undetermined. By the beginning of the present century, modest advances in the status of librarians were evident. On the other hand, among eighteen major universities checked, in no instance did the librarian hold an academic title as librarian *per se*.

The librarian as educator received some support in the famous 1876 United States Bureau of Education's special report *Public Libraries in the United States of America*. F. B. Perkins and William Mathews proposed the creation

of "professorships of books and reading" to guide students through the mazes of what even then was regarded as a bibliographical explosion. The instruction recommended would be primarily for the acquisition of knowledge, "the scientific use of books," i.e., sound methodology, and for "literary production." A chair of books and reading, it was suggested, might be filled by "an accomplished librarian."² The first library school was still eleven years away.

By the year 1900, we find that Brown University was listing the librarian, assistant librarian, and four library staff members with "Officers of Administration and Instruction"; California at Berkeley included the librarian in the Academic Senate, but without academic rank, while the remainder of the library staff appeared under "Assistants and Other Officers"; the University of Chicago recognized the librarian by making him a member of the University Senate and University Council; at Columbia, the librarian was among "Officers of Administration"; Cornell listed the librarian and his staff under "Officers of Instruction and Administration"; Harvard did the same.

At Illinois, the librarian was a member of the Senate and Council and a professor, but by virtue of being director also of the library school, while other librarians were listed with "Laboratory and Other Assistants"; Indiana used the heading of "Library Officers," following the listing of "Faculty"; at Missouri the librarian was one of "Other Officers"; North Carolina included him among "Officers of Administration"; Northwestern's heading of "Officers of Instruction and Government" included the librarian; Pennsylvania named its librarian and assistant librarian under "Administrative Officers"; Texas and Wisconsin grouped the librarians and their staff together following the listing of faculty and other of-

ficers; and, finally, at Yale the librarian and assistant librarian were under the heading of "Faculty and Instructors," without titles, while the remainder of the library staff were with "Other Officers" at the end of the faculty list.

Thus, there was little consistency seventy-five years ago in the classification of library staff members among the nation's universities. The sampling technique, however, finds a definite trend in the direction of rating the chief librarian as faculty, despite the fact that no breakthrough had been made toward conferring formal academic titles or ranks on them. Other than the head librarian and one or two top associates, it is obvious that professional library staff members lacked any definite place in the educational hierarchy.

Voices crying in the wilderness were trying to make themselves heard at an early date. H. A. Sawtelle, writing on college librarianship, in 1878, states:

Time was when if a college librarian cataloged and placed his books and for half an hour twice a week charged the borrowed volumes and checked the returned ones, he had sufficiently discharged his duty. But it has come to be understood that it becomes him to be daily ready to be consulted in relation to any book or subject, to converse freely with the students in regard to their reading, inspiring their literary interest, guiding their taste, bringing to their attention the right kind of appetizing works, and if needful gently leading on the reader from light and tasty books to those of high quality and permanent utility. To us nothing in the life of the college student seems to be of greater importance than just this inspiration and guidance. But all this is time consuming and requires no small amount of understanding and skill.³

The writer concluded that such college librarianship as he described "ought not to be annexed to a professorship, but be itself a professorship."

As early as 1891, President Daniel

Coit Gilman of Johns Hopkins University, himself a former librarian, asserted that "the librarian's office should rank with that of professor. . . . The profession of librarian should be distinctly recognized. Men and women should be encouraged to enter it, should be trained to discharge its duties, and should be rewarded, promoted, and honored in proportion to the services they render."⁴

TRAINING FOR LIBRARIANSHIP

The matter of training for librarianship, mentioned by Gilman, was in its infancy at the time that he was writing. The pioneer institution in the field was, of course, Melvil Dewey's School of Library Economy at Columbia University, which began instruction in 1887. The establishment of such a school had been in Dewey's mind for at least a decade, but he had found little enthusiasm for it among his most influential professional colleagues. Their point of view is represented in a critical statement from William F. Poole, compiler of *Poole's Index to Periodical Literature*, who commented: "I have entertained the idea that practical work in a library, based on a good previous education in the schools, was the only proper way to train good librarians."⁵

Another dominant figure in the American library world, Justin Winsor, Harvard University librarian, also adhered to the view that practical experience in a well-organized library was the best preparation for librarianship, and John Shaw Billings, later director of the New York Public Library, spoke emphatically against the proposal to create a school to teach librarianship.

Nevertheless, despite discouragements, Dewey persisted. In 1883 he persuaded the American Library Association conference, meeting in Buffalo, to endorse an experimental program, though there were dissenting voices. In the same year, Dewey was appointed college librarian

at Columbia and given permission to open a new school. Every possible roadblock, however, was placed in the way: no money, no faculty, no equipment, no space, and Dewey was directed not to admit women, who at the time were banned from Columbia.

The School of Library Economy opened officially on January 5, 1887, with an enrollment of twenty students—three men and seventeen women, from which might be marked the beginning of the feminization of the library profession. Immediately, stormy weather was encountered. Dewey was determined to accept women students, and the Columbia trustees were equally adamant against the institution's becoming coeducational.

Thus acting in direct violation of the explicit orders of the trustees of the college, Dewey set the course for a head-on collision. Almost exactly two years after the opening of the library school, he was forced to resign as Columbia's librarian. But Dewey was not unemployed for long. He moved to Albany to become New York State Librarian, taking the school with him and establishing it as the New York State Library School, which was for more than thirty-five years thereafter the leading American school for librarians.

The School of Library Economy at Columbia and other early library schools, following Melvil Dewey's leadership, were heavily weighted on the practical side, emphasizing perfection in technical details and preparing students to step directly into the management of library routines. In many of their aspects, the programs resembled an apprentice system. This fact doubtless militated against academic recognition of college and university librarians. They were regarded by their faculty colleagues as technicians, rather than scholars. On the other hand, Louis R. Wilson, in discussing the first school at Columbia pointed out that "even

though the curriculum was severely practical and limited, it was developed systematically, and afforded the student an opportunity of mastering in a minimum of time the various subjects embraced in the curriculum and of seeing them through an over-all and unified perspective impossible through apprenticeship in a single library. To this decision, more than to any other one thing, may be attributed America's acknowledged leadership in the field of modern library procedures."⁶

PREPARATION OF LEADING UNIVERSITY LIBRARIANS

What kinds of preparation did America's leading university librarians bring to their positions in an earlier era? There is no common pattern, except that a majority lacked professional training in librarianship. The records were examined for twenty individuals who rose to prominent posts after 1900, with the following results:

William Warner Bishop, University of Michigan, A.B. and A.M., University of Michigan; Fellow, American School of Classical Studies, Rome; Professor of Greek, Missouri Wesleyan College; Instructor in New Testament, Garrett Biblical Institute; Librarian and Instructor in Latin, Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn; on staffs, Princeton University and Library of Congress.

Harry Clemons, University of Virginia. A.B., Wesleyan University; M.A., Princeton; student at Oxford University; Professor of English, Nanking University, China; Instructor in English, Princeton; on staff of Library of Congress.

Archibald C. Coolidge, Harvard University. A.B., Harvard; student at University of Berlin; Ph.D., École des Sciences Politiques, Paris; diplomatic service; Professor of History, Harvard.

Charles W. David, University of Pennsylvania. B.A., Oxford; M.A., Wisconsin; Ph.D., Harvard (history); Pro-

fessor of History, Bryn Mawr and University of Pennsylvania.

John C. French, Johns Hopkins University. A.B., Johns Hopkins; Ph.D., Harvard; on English faculty, Johns Hopkins.

James T. Gerould, Princeton University. A.B., Dartmouth; Assistant Librarian, General Theological Seminary; Librarian, University of Missouri and University of Minnesota.

Andrew Keogh, Yale University. Student, Durham College of Science, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, England; M.A., Yale; Reference Librarian, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne Public Library; Librarian, Linonian and Brothers Library, Yale.

Otto Kinkeldey, Cornell University. A.B., City College of New York; A.M., New York University; student at Columbia, University of Berlin, and Institut für Kirchenmusik, Berlin; Professor of Music in various institutions; Chief, Music Division, New York Public Library.

Theodore W. Koch, Northwestern University. A.B., Pennsylvania; A.M., Harvard; student, University of Paris and Collège de France; on Library of Congress staff; Librarian, University of Michigan.

Harold L. Leupp, University of California (Berkeley). A.B., Cornell; student, New York State Library School; on staff of John Crerar Library and University of Chicago.

Earl N. Manchester, Ohio State University. A.B., Brown University; student, New York State Library School; on staffs of Brown and University of Chicago Libraries; Librarian, University of Kansas.

M. Llewellyn Raney, University of Chicago. Educated at Centre College, Kentucky; Ph.D., Johns Hopkins; Librarian, Johns Hopkins.

Ernest C. Richardson, Princeton University. A.B., Amherst; A.M. and Ph.D., Washington and Jefferson; graduate, Hartford Theological Seminary; Assis-

tant Librarian, Amherst; Librarian, Hartford Theological Seminary.

Charles W. Smith, University of Washington. A.B. and B.L.S., University of Illinois; Assistant and Associate Librarian, University of Washington.

Nathan Van Patten, Stanford University. Educated at Union Classical Institute; Reference Librarian, M.I.T.; Librarian, Queen's University, Canada.

Frank K. Walters, University of Minnesota. A.B. and M.A., Haverford; B.L.S. and M.L.S., New York State Library School; Assistant in English and German, Haverford; Librarian, General Motors Corporation.

Charles C. Williamson, Columbia University. A.B., Western Reserve; Ph.D., Columbia; Librarian, Municipal Reference Library, New York; Chief of Economics Division, New York Public Library.

Louis R. Wilson, University of North Carolina. Student, Haverford; A.B., A.M., and Ph.D. (English), University of North Carolina.

Phineas L. Windsor, University of Illinois. Ph.B., Northwestern; student, New York State Library School; on staff of Library of Congress; Librarian, University of Texas.

Malcolm G. Wyer, University of Denver. A.B., Minnesota; B.L.S., New York State Library School; Librarian, Denver Public Library; Dean, University of Denver Library School.

Thus of the total group of twenty, only six had graduate study in library science. The strong hold of the Albany school is indicated by the fact that all except one of the six held degrees from or had been students at the New York State Library School.

EARLY STIRRINGS FOR RECOGNITION

Enlightened librarians realized that they ought to have clearly defined status, as is revealed by stirrings in the profession early in the present century. W. E. Henry, librarian of the University of

Washington, speaking at the ALA conference in Pasadena in 1911, after defending the training and scholarly nature of the work of scholarly librarians, declared:

With such preparation and such relationship to the educational process I shall claim that the library staff must rank with the faculty or teaching staff of any department. The librarian or head of the staff should have the rank and pay of a professor; the assistant librarian . . . should be accorded the rank and pay of an associate professor; and the other members of the staff that of assistant professor or instructor, this to be determined by the nature of the work, the preparation and particular ability required; and those not fitted to so rank should not be members of the staff but some other name should be adopted.⁷

Henry's goal had not been achieved at the University of Washington at the time of his address. The librarian and five members of his staff were grouped under "Library Staff," without academic titles, near the end of the section on "Faculty and Officers." According to returns from questionnaires sent by Henry to sixteen college and university libraries across the country, however, he reported, "it appears that the librarian usually has the rank of a professor. Below the librarian all sorts of conditions prevail."⁸

An important step forward was taken in the same year, 1911, by the Columbia University trustees, who ruled: "The librarian shall have the rank of professor, the assistant librarian that of associate professor and the supervisors shall rank as assistant professors and bibliographers as instructors." President Nicholas Murray Butler held that the library was coordinate with the various professional schools and main departments of the university, the librarian ranking as a dean, and various members of the professional staff standing in parallel order with professors, assistant

professors, and instructors of the other faculties. From Harvard University it was reported that "librarians and assistant librarians" were eligible to participate in the faculty retirement system.

A few years later, E. C. Richardson, noted librarian of Princeton University, reviewed the place of the library in a university and concluded that its position would be determined by the effectiveness with which its teaching function was discharged. Richardson pointed out that the growth of research work, the advent of the research professor, and the establishment of library schools had brought librarians "into the circle of the teaching faculties."⁹

At approximately the same time a strong statement from W. N. C. Carlton, librarian, Newberry Library, objected to the fact that in some institutions "the librarian is not granted a seat and vote in the faculty. This," the writer went on, "is a viciously bad practice. Its evils are too patent to need illustration. If a man is not qualified for the duty and responsibility of sharing in the debates, consideration and decisions relating to general university policy and administration, he ought not to be appointed librarian, whatever his technical qualifications may be."¹⁰

A subordinate staff member was heard from nearly sixty years ago when J. T. Jennings, then reference librarian of Iowa State College, wrote on "Librarianship as a Profession in College and University Libraries." Jennings was convinced that the chief librarian's position in most college and university communities had become well established "in dignity, in importance, in salary," ranking as the head of one of the most important departments. "But what about the remainder of the staff?" he asked. "With the exception of a possible assistant librarian they are usually considered 'mere clerks,' as is shown by their salaries, their hours of work, and the attitude of their superiors toward

granting them opportunities for advancement." Jennings was inclined to blame this state of affairs on the head librarians who were not sufficiently energetic in encouraging and assisting junior staff members to improve their educational and professional preparation as junior members of the teaching faculty were expected to do.¹¹

The same conclusion was reached by another reference librarian, Edith M. Coulter, of the University of California, writing in 1922. Even the chief librarian, she points out, lacked certain privileges customarily belonging to the teaching faculty, such as extended vacations, leaves of absence, and sabbaticals for advanced study and research. Proper recognition would come to librarians, Miss Coulter held, if they participated more actively in teaching, e.g., bibliographic instruction to university students, if the programs of library schools were standardized, more doctoral degrees were held by librarians, requirements for appointments to university library staffs were raised, professional and clerical duties were differentiated, and more study and research were done by librarians. Miss Coulter displayed remarkable foresight in urging a doctoral program in library science several years before the establishment of the Graduate Library School at the University of Chicago.¹²

The first full exploration of the status of professional librarians was undertaken by George A. Works, in his *College and University Library Problems*, based on data collected in 1925. Works reviewed types of library work, factors affecting the status of a library staff, current conditions, the relative preparation of library and teaching staffs, comparative salaries, work schedules, and retirement provisions. Among the important conclusions were these:

1. Insufficient distinction was made in libraries between clerical and professional types of service, but

there were a number of positions in every large library whose requirements in professional education and experience were comparable with the requirements for positions in the various grades in the teaching staff.

2. Among the seventeen institutions studied, wide differences were found, varying from those in which librarians held faculty rank to others in which the library staff, except the librarian and perhaps one or two other individuals, were classified as clerical.
3. In some universities, e.g., Columbia and Stanford, librarians were granted equivalent status, but not considered members of the instructional staff.
4. Except for the head librarian, salaries for the library staff were generally lower than those of comparable members of the faculty.
5. The academic preparation of faculty members of all professorial ranks was more advanced than that of library department heads.
6. No account was taken of the fact that annual periods of service were ordinarily longer for members of the library staff than for the teaching staff.
7. Retirement provisions varied—seven institutions had no allowance for faculty or librarians; six had the same retirement arrangements for both groups, and three had different arrangements for faculty and librarians.¹³

A decade later an outstanding university president, Henry M. Wriston, whose ideas have had considerable impact on academic library service, set forth his concept of the proper relationships between the college librarian and the teaching staff. His conclusion was that "the librarian despite his administrative duties is primarily an officer of instruction. He should have the

scholarly interests and tastes which are expected of other members of the faculty. He should be given faculty status and should participate in all the committee and other discussions incidental to that status." In harmony with this proposal, the writer added that the library "should be treated not as an ancillary enterprise but as one of the central sources of motive power for the operation of the institution."¹⁴

ADVANCED EDUCATION

The establishment of the University of Chicago's Graduate Library School in 1928 was a revolutionary development—the first and for some years the only school to offer a doctor's degree in librarianship. The objective, as stated by Frederick Keppel, president of the Carnegie Foundation, whose generous endowment made the new school possible, was to create "a graduate library school of a new type which could occupy for the library profession a position analogous to that of the Harvard Law School or the Johns Hopkins Medical School."¹⁵

The faculty of the Graduate Library School was drawn mainly from disciplines other than librarianship. All members held doctoral degrees in special subject fields, such as education, history, psychology, and sociology. They had little or no background in library school teaching, but were extensively trained in scientific methods of graduate study and research. A program of advanced study, investigation, and publication was set up. The students were expected to develop a critical, scientific attitude, and were taught to question generally accepted notions, to work out experimental techniques for solving problems, and to base their findings on thorough examination and testing. The graduate-professional curriculum developed for the school greatly influenced the programs of other library schools, the effect being, as expressed by Louis R.

Wilson, the school's dean from 1932 to 1942, "to jar the profession out of its prolonged devotion to the practical techniques set up by Dewey." The school's philosophy was spread at home and abroad by its alumni who became prominently engaged in library administration, education, and related fields.

Among the graduates of the Graduate Library School who went on to direct important university and other research libraries or became leading library educators were: Lewis Branscomb (Ohio State), John Cory (New York Public Library), Andrew Eaton (Washington University), Ralph Ellsworth (Colorado), Herman Fussler (Chicago), Herbert Goldhor (Illinois), Herman Henkle (John Crerar), Richard Logsdon (Columbia), Arthur McAnally (Oklahoma), Stephen McCarthy (Cornell), Stanley McElderry (Chicago), Lowell Martin (Columbia), LeRoy Merritt (Oregon), Robert Miller (Indiana), Ralph Parker (Missouri), Benjamin Powell (Duke), Flint Purdy (Wayne), Ralph Shaw (Rutgers), Donald Smith (Washington State), Edward Stanford (Minnesota), Raynard Swank (Stanford), and Maurice Tauber (Columbia).

For some years after the opening of the Graduate Library School, considerable skepticism prevailed in the profession about the value and need of the doctorate in librarianship. That attitude gradually changed, especially in academic institutions, where a doctor's degree frequently has been a requirement for appointment to higher positions. Some seventeen American library schools are presently offering the Ph.D. or the D.L.S. degree in library science.

The emphasis on graduate study and degrees in professional library schools has played a significant role in improving the status of college and university librarians, helping to gain recognition for librarianship as an established profession.

CURRENT POSITIONS ON FACULTY STATUS

Academic or faculty status has been a long-time goal of librarians in institutions of higher education, as noted earlier. During the past forty years, the literature relating to questions of status has proliferated. Two collections of the numerous articles on the subject were assembled in *The Status of American College and University Librarians* (1958), edited by Robert B. Downs and *The Case for Faculty Status for Academic Librarians* (1970), edited by Lewis C. Branscomb, both published by the American Library Association.

The trend throughout the U.S. and Canada, especially in public colleges and universities, has for some time been running strongly in the direction of full academic status for librarians. With few exceptions, professional librarians in university members of the Association of Research Libraries have academic or faculty standing. The exceptions are principally in the long-established private universities. Among the states to which the nation has customarily looked for educational leadership, California is most backward in this respect. In neither the University of California nor the California State University and Colleges are librarians recognized as faculty members. In the state of Illinois, by contrast, all of the state senior colleges and universities have granted faculty status to their professional librarians. The publicly-supported institutions in New York City and State have followed the same pattern. Prerogatives which have customarily followed such recognition include tenure, rank, voting rights, retirement benefits, group insurance, and generally sabbatical and study leaves.

Objections to faculty status for librarians on the part of college and university administrators have been most often voiced on the ground that they are academically unqualified. Some fields have, of course, tended to empha-

size the doctorate more than others. In the past, librarians have been in the company of engineers, architects, lawyers, artists, musicians, and certain other groups who belong to the college or university community, but who have customarily followed different patterns of training. The situation in the library field is gradually changing, as previously indicated, as more and more schools offer the doctorate in library science. Combination masters degrees in library science and a subject field may in some instances be accepted as equivalents to the doctorate, e.g., in the City University of New York.

In any case, academic librarians have come to see merit in the contention that librarians should establish their place in the academic world by proper preparation. Like the teaching profession, librarianship has become a career for specialists with diverse requirements. The criteria normally considered for faculty promotions, it is agreed, should be applied to librarians: professional writing and publication, research in library science and related fields, participation in the activities of professional associations, bibliographical instruction to students at all levels, and aid to individual faculty research. Another essential is strict separation of professional and nonprofessional activities. It has been demonstrated that two-thirds or more of the work in an academic library can be done successfully and economically by nonprofessional personnel.¹⁶

In 1971 the Association of College and Research Libraries, the Association of American Colleges, and the American Association of University Professors adopted a "Joint Statement on Faculty Status of College and University Librarians," with the aim of establishing standards in this area. The document was widely distributed and is expected to exert a favorable influence on efforts to expand the number of insti-

tutions granting full academic standing to their librarians.¹⁷

RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION

A generally accepted criterion for measuring any profession is its members' contributions to research and published literature in their field. Librarianship, being a book-oriented profession, would naturally be expected to be productive of professional writings. There are, of course, wide individual variations; librarians with outstanding reputations seldom wrote anything, even an occasional article, while others have had a prolific output.

Among early authors, beginning with 1876, Justin Winsor published extensively, though mainly in the field of history rather than library science. Melvil Dewey's and Charles Ammi Cutter's major contributions were on library classification. Two of their contemporaries, Josephus Nelson Larned and Reuben Gold Thwaites, both presidents of the American Library Association, are remembered as historians, instead of as librarians.

Not until the twentieth century were there any very significant additions to library literature. Solid contributions then began to come from such writers as John Shaw Billings, Ernest Cushing Richardson, Arthur E. Bostwick, James I. Wyer, William Warner Bishop, and Harry Miller Lydenberg. Over the past forty years, the publication rate has vastly accelerated, as an examination of the record, *Library Literature*, reveals. Certain names stand out: Louis Round Wilson, Ralph R. Shaw, Guy R. Lyle, Lawrence S. Thompson, Lawrence Clark Powell, Louis Shores, A. F. Kuhlman, Keyes D. Metcalf, Ralph E. Ellsworth, Carl M. White, J. Periam Danton, Jerrold Orne, Julian Boyd, Fremont Rider, Robert Vosper, and William Ready.

PARTICIPATION IN ASSOCIATIONS

Another criterion for determining the

character of a profession is participation in organizations for the advancement of the field. College and university librarians in the United States have played active roles in the American Library Association since its establishment a century ago. Among the university and college librarians who have served as ALA presidents are Justin Winsor, Ernest Cushing Richardson, William Warner Bishop, Azariah S. Root, Andrew Keogh, Louis Round Wilson, Charles Harvey Brown, Keyes D. Metcalf, Errett W. McDiarmid, Robert B. Downs, Flora Belle Ludington, Benjamin E. Powell, Frederick H. Wagman, Robert Vosper, William S. Dix, and Edward G. Holley. Their efforts were of signal importance in creating the largest and most prestigious of national library associations.

Other professional associations have also felt the influence of university librarians, notably the Association of Research Libraries, the institutional membership of which has from the beginning been composed principally of university libraries. Eighty-three of the ninety-four members of the ARL, as of 1975, were university libraries. Executive secretaries or directors since the ARL's founding in 1932 have included a number of leading university librarians: Donald B. Gilchrist (Rochester), Keyes D. Metcalf (Harvard), Charles W. David (Pennsylvania), Robert A. Miller (Indiana), William S. Dix (Princeton), Stephen A. McCarthy (Cornell), James E. Skipper (California), and John McDonald (Connecticut). Resources and materials for research have been at the center of the ARL's attention, and it has had a profound impact in such areas as bibliographic control, international cooperation in acquisition and cataloging programs, microreproduction projects, preservation of research materials, and administrative problems of research libraries.

Since World War II, the influence of American librarianship has spread over the world. American advisors and consultants have gone abroad in increasing numbers to aid in the establishment of national libraries, to create and teach in library schools, to organize or reorganize university libraries, and to take part in international library conferences. A list of U.S. academic librarians who have participated in such activities would represent virtually all the leading institutions of the nation.

CHANGING ROLES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Much attention in recent years has been focused on the changing nature of the university librarian's position. An article by Arthur M. McAnally and Robert B. Downs in 1973 summarized various facets of that phenomenon.¹⁸ The study revealed that the head librarian's post, which had been highly stable in the past, was experiencing a rapid turnover. Important factors at the root of this problem, it was pointed out, were growth in student enrollment, changes in the world of learning and research, the information and publication explosion, tight budgets and inflation, new technologies, changing theories of management, staff unions, and growing control by state boards. Internally, friction with the president's office, faculty criticisms, staff and student pressures played a part in making the library director's position untenable. In the background, the chief causes of these growing problems were the library's declining ability to meet needs, lack of goals and planning, an inability to accommodate quickly to educational changes, a decline in the director's status, and inadequate financial support. The director was blamed for failure to make maximum use of modern computers and other forms of technology. Staff demands for a greater voice in decision making and administration have outmoded the traditional hierarchical and

authoritative style of library management.

Further complications in the lives of all academic administrators, including library directors, are found in the guidelines laid down by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, in return for federal financial aid. Most troublesome is the Affirmative Action Program for Equal Employment Opportunity, which has set up numerous regulations to bring about racial and sexual balance in college and university staff and faculty appointments. Some of the consequences, as they relate to institutions of higher education, were graphically described recently in an article for the *AAUP Bulletin*, by Malcolm J. Sherman.¹⁹

Academic library directors tend to think of their difficulties as a new phenomenon, and remember nostalgically the golden era from the end of World War II to the end of the 1960s. Public relations problems appear, however, to date back for a longer period. According to one story, as President Lawrence Lowell and Librarian Archibald Cary Coolidge were walking away from the dedication of the Widener Library at Harvard, in 1915, Coolidge remarked to Lowell that they should start then to plan a new library building. It is said

that Lowell never spoke to Coolidge again. In a report prepared for the AAU Commission on Financing Higher Education, about twenty-five years ago, John D. Millett, later president of Miami University, recited some of the complaints against university librarians. University presidents around the country accused their librarians of over-emphasizing the size of their collections, the number of staff members, and total expenditures, of filling their shelves with obsolete material, and paying little attention to economy of operation.²⁰

It is readily apparent that academic librarianship in America, and doubtless elsewhere, is in a state of evolution. For some individuals directly involved, there may be traumatic experiences in store, and the shape of the future can only be dimly perceived. A successful academic library director operating under today's conditions requires flexibility and adaptability, willingness to accept change, a stable and equable temperament, emotional balance, and endurance—a difficult but perhaps not impossible combination. In any event, academic libraries and librarians are indispensable and will survive, whatever modifications may be forced upon them by a changing world.

REFERENCES

1. Edward G. Holley, "Academic Libraries in 1876," *College & Research Libraries* 37: 35 (Jan. 1976).
2. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, *Public Libraries in the United States: Their History, Condition, and Management*. Special Report, Part I (Washington, D.C.: Govt. Print. Off., 1876), p.230-51.
3. H. A. Sawtelle, "The College Librarianship," *Library Journal* 3:162 (June 1878).
4. D. C. Gilman, "University Libraries, an Address at the Opening of the Sage Library of Cornell University, October 7, 1891," in his *University Problems in the United States* (New York: Century, 1898) p.245-55.
5. William F. Poole, *Library Journal* 8:288 (Sept.-Oct. 1883).
6. Louis R. Wilson, "Historical Development of Education for Librarianship in the United States," in Bernard Berelson, ed., *Education for Librarianship* (Chicago: American Library Assn., 1949), p.45.
7. W. E. Henry, "The Academic Standing of College Library Assistants and Their Relation to the Carnegie Foundation," *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 5: 259-60 (May 1911).
8. *Ibid.*, p.262.
9. E. C. Richardson, "The Place of the Library in a University," *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 10:1-13 (Jan. 1916).

10. W. N. C. Carlton, "Universities and Librarians," *Public Libraries* 20:455 (Dec. 1915).
11. J. T. Jennings, "Librarianship as a Profession in College and University Libraries," *Library Journal* 43:227-33 (April 1918).
12. Edith M. Coulter, "The University Librarian: His Preparation, Position and Relation to the Academic Department of the University," *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 16:271-75 (July 1922).
13. George A. Works, "The Status of the Professional Staff," in his *College and University Library Problems* (Chicago: American Library Assn., 1927), p.80-98.
14. Henry M. Wriston, "The College Librarian and the Teaching Staff," *Bulletin of the American Library Association* 29:182 (April 1935).
15. Wilson, "Historical Development," p.53.
16. Robert B. Downs and Robert F. Delzell, "Professional Duties in University Libraries," *College & Research Libraries* 26:30-39, 69 (Jan. 1965).
17. *College & Research Libraries News* 33:209-12 (Sept. 1972).
18. Arthur M. McAnally and Robert B. Downs, "The Changing Role of Directors of University Libraries," *College & Research Libraries* 34:103-25 (March 1973).
19. Malcolm J. Sherman, "Affirmative Action and the AAUP," *AAUP Bulletin* 61:293-303 (Dec. 1975).
20. John D. Millett, *Financing Higher Education in the United States* (New York: Columbia Univ. Pr., 1952), p.122-26.

*Robert B. Downs is
dean of library administration, emeritus,
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.*