

The North Carolina Union Catalog

by Cindy Knight

RECENTLY, a student at Guilford College asked the college librarian for a copy of John Kerouac's *On the Road*. The library did not have the book in its collection. Yet, within a few days, the student was furnished a copy of the book from the Duke University Library in time to meet the deadline for his term paper. How did the librarian at Guilford know that Duke had the book, and how was the Student able to obtain the book so quickly?

The fast referral or requests for books to other libraries throughout the State of North Carolina and the furnishing of those books to readers through interlibrary loan has been made possible largely through the establishment of the North Carolina Union Catalog at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Yet few Carolinians are aware of the existence of this useful resource and how it may serve their reading needs. Since an understanding of the organization and purposes of the catalog is essential to its optimum use and to the development of the catalog to its full potential, a brief description of the catalog and its history may be useful.

To begin with, the North Carolina Union Catalog,¹ located in the Louis Round Wilson Library at Chapel Hill, is a cooperative enterprise made possible by the efforts of many librarians and interested citizens who have labored over the years to make library resources quickly available throughout the state. These efforts have been financed, to a large extent, through available federal funds. As a result of these efforts, public, technical, and college libraries in North Carolina are now able to call the State Library in Raleigh, toll free, and within one day determine the locations of copies of the desired book in libraries in the state. Here's how the system works. The calls which come into the State Library are recorded and each morning a daily list of books requested is forwarded by TWX to the Interlibrary Service Center at the Wilson Library in Chapel Hill. The list of books is then searched in both the North Carolina Union Catalog and the catalog of the University of North Carolina. The names of libraries in the state which have the books in their collections are noted on the list, and it is returned to the State Library in Raleigh the same day. Requesting libraries are then notified by telephone of the locations of the books, which may then be directly requested on interlibrary loan.

The North Carolina Union Catalog began in the 1930's as a small, cooperative project of Duke and UNC; it has grown and expanded its facilities and services over a period of almost four decades into the useful tool it now is. The catalog had its beginning in 1935, when the libraries of Duke and Carolina agreed to maintain card catalogs of each others' holdings as a means of sharing their resources. The initial exchange of cards was made possible by a grant from the General Education Board, and the expense of maintenance of the catalogs was borne by the two institutions. While this exchange of cards continues today, the catalog maintained at Chapel Hill expanded rapidly to become the North Carolina Union Catalog. As other institutions of higher learning recognized the need for a central catalog of library holdings, they joined the Duke-Carolina project. One of the first libraries to add its holdings

to the catalog in Chapel Hill was the D. H. Hill Library at North Carolina State in Raleigh, a development made possible by a grant from the Works Progress Administration.

The number of participating libraries grew rapidly. Although statistics on those early years are lacking, it is estimated that approximately 97 libraries contributed cards to the union catalog. Dr. Jerrold Orne, Librarian of the University of North Carolina, estimated in 1956, that there were 15 libraries which contributed on a regular basis to the catalog and that the catalog contained approximately 500,000 cards.

In 1958, an important step in the development of the union catalog was taken with the disbanding of the University Library Extension Service and the activation of the Interlibrary Service Center at Chapel Hill. This center was established to supplement the services of the State Library and of the college, special, and public libraries throughout the state. One important aspect of the activities of the new center was the emphasis given to the expansion of the union catalog to include other significant library holdings which had not been previously included. As a result, since the founding of the center there has been a steady increase in the number of cards received annually and in the number of institutions participating regularly in the union catalog program.

Recent statistics show graphically the expansion of the catalog during the past twelve years. In the six months from July to December, 1969, 136,426 new cards were received at Chapel Hill, bringing the estimated number of cards in the catalog to approximately 1,500,000. During that same period, 42 libraries throughout North Carolina contributed cards to the catalog.²

The rapid increase in card holdings and service during those years placed a heavy burden upon the facilities in Chapel Hill, and by 1968, lack of adequate funds and library staff resulted in a backlog in the filing of about 420,000 cards. However, with the help of matching funds made available by the North Carolina State Library from Title III monies,³ the North Carolina Union Catalog was made a separate department within the Interlibrary Service Center at UNC, Chapel Hill, with its own staff, headed by a professional librarian. As a result of the added support and the reorganization, by February, 1969, the backlog of cards had been eliminated completely and the catalog was once again on a current basis. During this same period, the holdings of the North Carolina State Library were added to the union catalog, thus adding another 15,000 new titles.

In a recent twelve month period, the Interlibrary Center received by TWX from the State Library in Raleigh, 4,860 requests for the locations of books in libraries in the state. Service in locating books and materials is furnished to libraries not only in North Carolina, but also in many other states of the Union and in foreign countries.

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MICROFILM EDITION OF NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES NOW AVAILABLE

Backfiles of *North Carolina Libraries* are now available in the microfilm edition. The full price for volumes 1-25 (February 1942-Fall 1967) is \$20.00.

NORTH CAROLINA UNION CATALOG

(Continued)

Although the North Carolina Union Catalog is by no means complete, it is one of the most valuable bibliographical resources in our part of the country. Without it, the extensive interlibrary loan services furnished by the University of North Carolina Library and the North Carolina State Library in Raleigh, would be severely curtailed. From July 1968 to June 1969, the library received requests from other libraries for 13,010 temporary loans. These titles were first searched in the library catalog, and the Center was able to fill from the UNC collections 7,684 of these requests. The remainder of the titles were then searched in the union catalog. Many of the requests are referred directly to other libraries in the state shown by the catalog to hold the needed materials. The requesting library is then notified of the referral.

What does the future hold for the North Carolina Union Catalog? Certainly, its holdings will continue to expand as the rapid growth of participating libraries continues. Currently, consideration is being given to the establishment of a single bibliographical center⁴ and the use of computers in recording and locating holdings. A recent preliminary report⁵ on the feasibility of a North Carolina Libraries Services Network recommended increased emphasis on involving additional state agencies and libraries in the project and the planning and development of its expanded services.

The usefulness of the union catalog, of course, is in direct proportion to the active participation of a maximum number of libraries throughout the state. Accordingly, libraries are encouraged to contribute cards to the holdings of the union catalog. In the past six months, there has been an encouraging response from member libraries of the Piedmont University Center, and it is hoped that this same type of response can be elicited from the Coastal and Southeastern sections of our state. Interested libraries may obtain information on how to join the project by writing to:

Mrs. Cindy Knight, Head
Interlibrary Service Center
Wilson Library
Chapel Hill, N. C. 27514.

In summary, it may be said that from a small cooperative program begun in 1935 between Duke and the University of North Carolina, the union catalog has grown slowly, but steadily, to become the useful, indispensable bibliographical tool it is today, serving libraries not only in the state of North Carolina, but also in many other states and foreign countries. Its continued

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NATIONAL READING COUNCIL

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the combined resources of every organization and every individual who can help cure this Nation's reading deficiencies.

"Universal reading competence is

one of the most important educational goals this country has. The major task of the National Reading Council will be to create national recognition of the gravity of the problem of reading deficiency and to work through every conceivable agency until illiteracy in this country has been eradicated."

usefulness however, will be in proportion to the support it receives in the future, and to the active interest and participation of libraries—academic, special, and public—throughout the state.

1—The North Carolina Union Catalog is a card catalog of main entries indicating the location of holdings, partial or complete, of over 100 public, academic and special libraries throughout the state of North Carolina, using National Union Catalog symbols.

2—Of these libraries, 18 were public libraries, 19 college libraries, and 5 were special libraries. The libraries which currently contribute cards to the center on a regular basis include:

North Carolina State Library, Raleigh
Pack Memorial Public, Asheville
Randolph County Library, Asheboro
Mitchell County Public, Bakersville
Appalachian State University, Boone
May Memorial Library, Burlington
Charlotte Public Library, Charlotte
Johnson C. Smith University, Charlotte
Queens College Library, Charlotte
UNC at Charlotte, Charlotte
Western Carolina University, Cullowhee
Duke University, Durham
American Enka Corporation, Enka
Cumberland County Public Lib., Fayetteville
Greensboro Public Library, Greensboro
A & T College, Greensboro
Bennett College Library, Greensboro
Sheppard Memorial Library, Greenville
UNC at Greensboro, Greensboro
Guilford College Library, Greensboro
High Point Public Library, High Point

High Point College, High Point
Lenoir-Rhyne College, Hickory
Kinston Public Library, Kinston
Montreat College Library, Montreat
Pfeiffer College, Misenheimer, N. C.
Mount Olive Junior College, Mt. Olive
Olivia Ramey Library, Raleigh
N. C. Museum of Art, Raleigh
Richard B. Harrison Library, Raleigh
N. C. State University, Raleigh
Rowan Public Library, Salisbury
Catawba College Library, Salisbury
Wilmington Public Library, Wilmington
Wilson County Public Library, Wilson
Winston-Salem Public Library, Winston-Salem
Reynolds Tobacco Company, Winston-Salem
Wake Forest College Library, Winston-Salem
Duke University Med. Center Lib., Durham
Davidson College Library, Davidson
Durham Public Library, Durham
Gaston County Public Library, Gastonia

3—Funds made available by the Federal Government under Title III of the Library Services and Construction Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-511).

4—That is, a single center would be established rather than having functions shared by the State Library in Raleigh and the Center in Chapel Hill.

5—The North Carolina Libraries Services Network: A Preliminary Report of a Feasibility Study Sponsored by the State Board of Education, North Carolina Board of Higher Education, North Carolina Library Association, and North Carolina State Library. Raleigh, North Carolina, May 12, 1970.

MIDDLEMANSHIP—Library New Careers

(Continued)

peripheries have caused librarianship some earthquakes in the last two decades, or more. One of these is the audiovisual movement; the other the Information Science explosion. Although the rabids in these two rebellions will not admit it, there are many parallels in these two peripheries. I have been deeply involved in both, since Florida State was the first library school in the world to require its graduates to be audiovisually educated; and we were one of six universities represented on the cover of ADI (before it became ASIS) journal, with programs in Information Science. Consequently, *Tex-Tec* has articulated throughout with these peripheries.

Other articulations are also anticipated in *Tex-Tec*. One of the toughest is with vocational education. All of my academic life I have rebelled against the authoritarian definition of the term "liberal" as applied to education. Our disciplines hierarchy has always impressed me as being the antagonist of true liberalism. Often their contention has boiled down to "my subject is more substantive than yours." In the middle ages, theology was tops. Today, the natural sciences are. Some of the Humanities are given the respect that goes to the aging. Sociology is still a little less respectable than some other disciplines; education is on the other side of the railroad tracks. And as for vocational education, no elite liberal would be caught dead in it.