KNOW YOUR LIBRARY PATTERN

Introduction

By ERNESTINE GRAFTON

As any survey must of necessity be based on values, we introduce KNOW YOUR LIBRARY PATTERN with the following characteristics:

North Carolina, one of the states in the Southeastern Region, fits into the pattern which Odum uses in characterizing that region: rural, farm tenancy, many children, tobacco, cotton, textile mills, poverty, and potential plenty. Although the state ranks “42nd” in the desirable features of the United States, it is in the upper ranking of the Southeastern Region.

The sound political organization of the state has all the essential powers of government to be exercised through the peoples’ representation. The 100 counties, which serve as political units of representation and administration for many fields including health, public welfare, library service and education easily fit into state-wide planning. Actually the county is little more than an agency of the state and its commissioners administer functions which the state imposes upon it.

The 52,712 square mile area of the state extending 503 miles from the coast to the mountains is geographically divided into four distinct areas which must be noted in any consideration of state planning.

The vast swampy Tidewater Region, extending from 30 to 80 miles inland, is very sparsely settled and almost entirely rural. Transportation is poor and peoples are excessively individualistic.

The Coastal Plain, comprising one-fourth of the area of the state, has a dense agricultural population and produces one-half of the tobacco and cotton crop wealth. A large ratio of Negroes results in a high farm tenancy.

The Piedmont Region, comprising 45 per cent of the land area, is producing four-fifths of the state’s textile, (continued on page three)
shared part-time with public libraries. Three schools had lent books to the public library for the summer.

One hundred sixty-five stated that definite instruction in the use of the library was given.

In answer to the question, If you do not have a trained school librarian and the public library does have one, do you feel free to seek her advice?, only one person said that she, as an untrained librarian, did not; one trained school librarian supplemented with the fact that she advised the untrained public librarian.

To the question, Is the public library sending collections of 10 or more books to the school library or class-room?, 42 gave an affirmative, 120 a negative reply.

In 12 schools teachers gave reference assignments that could be found at the public library only. Twenty-one included on parallel reading lists books at the public library only. The seemingly small number of 32 reported sending copies of lists to the public library and 45 allowed trained public librarians to make substitutions; many schools filling the questionnaires have not parallel lists. Eight were unwilling to check up on delinquents among students for the public library. Forty-eight gave additional reading credit for summer public library reading.

Is one explanation of the small amount of cooperation between school and public libraries attributable to the fact that very few of our public libraries have trained librarians for special work with children and young people?

Have you college, university, special, and public librarians visited the school libraries in your communities? Do you know what they are trying to do? Are they doing what you think they should and have they the resources they need for tomorrow’s college and university students, professional men and women, or, simply and inclusively, America’s citizens?

At the May meeting of the Greensboro Library Club it was voted to establish a Scholarship Fund to be granted every three years to a member for study in the field of Library Science.

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According to the census of 1930, North Carolina had a population of approximately 3,300,000. Tobacco, and furniture manufacturing output.

The beautiful mountainous Carolina Highlands, comprising 17 counties is definitely rural and individualistic, partially dependent on tourist trade for income.

The state is predominantly rural with more than a fourth Negro population. The many young people obviously place a great burden on public facilities and the adult tax paying population.

Local facilities are being equalized through State Aid and State-wide Planning. State-aid moneys expended for trained public librarians is gradually increasing the public library scope and unifying college, school, and public library facilities. Research resources, described in Dr. Louis R. Wilson’s Geography of Reading, are rapidly being made more accessible to any corner of the state through cooperation between large institutions and small public libraries.

This survey, it is hoped, will throw light on unifying forces as well as state-wide plans for the near and post-war future.

1 Wilson, Louis R. Geography of Reading, p. 117-156.