

Growth of an Academic Library

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Duke University was barely sixteen years old in 1940, but its sixteen years had witnessed extraordinary growth in every division. Its library of 600,000 volumes had been built upon the 75,000 volume collection of Trinity College which, when the college became Duke University in 1924, served only 62 faculty members and 1,164 students.

Growth since 1940 has followed the pattern of comparable institutions. Although enrollment has been controlled to a degree not possible in state universities, the number of undergraduates has increased from 2,673 to 3,990, graduate students from 303 to 1,383, and professional school students from 724 to 1,708. The demands of the larger faculty-grown now to 919 from 385--and of graduate and professional school students have generated heavy pressure upon the library. The broadening of University interests, in response to the expressed needs of the larger academic community, coupled with the tremendous proliferation of books and journals, has resulted in three hundredfold growth of the library in 27 years.

Evidence of the extension of interest is reflected in active campus programs and groups, such as South Asia, Commonwealth Studies Center, African Studies Committee, Cooperative Programs in Russian and East European History, Cooperative Program in the Humanities, Population Studies Program, and the Center for Southern Studies. In addition, teaching and research programs of every department have been extended, with large implications for the library.

The number of books acquired to support the larger program is presented graphically in Figure A which pictures growth by five-year periods. About 24,600 volumes a year were added each year during the first period, and 61,300 annually during the half decade 1960-65. Yearly growth has ranged from 17,611 volumes in 1944-45 to 82,000 in 1966-67. The total number of books has increased from 600,000 volumes in 1940 to 1,865,000 in 1967, and manuscripts from 627,000 pieces to more than four million. Ten thousand periodicals are received now as contrasted with 3,200 in 1940.

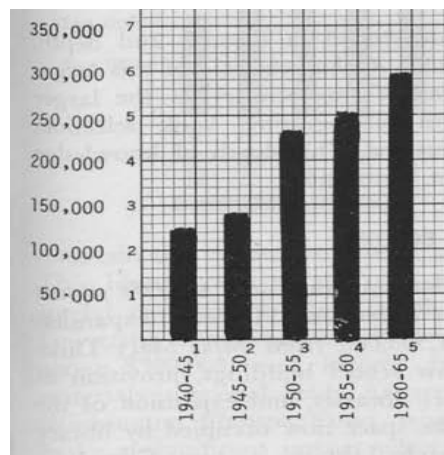


Figure A: Volumes Added

The richness of the present collections may be attributed to the constant support the library has received from the University and to outstanding gifts from generous friends. Though University support has not been spectacular in recent years, it has permitted the acquisition of a few special collections along with the best of the current books and journals.

One of the library's most distinguished special collections is the unrivaled Walt Whitman Collection of books and manuscripts presented in 1942 by the late Dr. Josiah Trent and Mrs. Trent, now Mrs. James H. Semans. Fourteen years later the Trent Collection in the History of Medicine, consisting of 4,000 books and 2,500 manuscripts, was given to the University by Mrs. Semans in memory of Dr. Trent. Continued development of the George Washington Flowers Collection of Southern Americana was insured by a substantial bequest in 1941 by Mr. W. W. Flowers and a later one by President Robert L. Flowers. In the process of building this collection, the library has brought together one of the most extensive collections of Confederate imprints recorded anywhere.

Permanent provision for the Ministers' Loan Library of the Divinity School was made by a generous endowment established by the daughter and sons of the late Reverend Henry Harrison Jordan. Western hemisphere preeminence in holdings of Wesleyana and British Methodica came with the procurement in 1961 of the Frank Baker Collection containing 13,500 volumes and 4,000 manuscripts.

Outstanding strength in the Italian Renaissance was achieved overnight in the acquisition of the Guido Mazzoni Collection of Italian Literature consisting of 23,000 volumes and 67,000 pamphlets. The special interest and efforts of Professor Glenn Negley of the philosophy department have enabled the library to assemble one of the strong Utopia collections in the country.

While collections of the library were thus being developed in breadth and depth, the staff required to administer them grew from 65 to 155. A characteristic of this larger staff, as in other research libraries in the third quarter of this century, is the larger number of subject specialists and linguists needed in bibliography, book selection, cataloging, reference, and administration of special collections. This depth of knowledge is as essential in these areas as it is in the departments of instruction.

Additions in Space and Books

Development of the library's buildings, which in 1940 provided only 101,000 square feet of floor space, has lagged behind development of the collections. However, expansion of the General Library, made possible by a gift of \$1,500,000 from Mrs. Mary Duke Biddle in 1946, construction of new engineering and law school buildings, provision of new quarters for biology-forestry and physics-mathematics libraries, and expansion of the Divinity Library have increased to 218,000 square feet the space now occupied by library activities. Buildings under construction—a new Research Library, a new Chemistry Library, and further expansion of Divinity—will raise the square footage to 444,000 in 1968.

The increase in library expenditures for books and salaries since 1940 is shown graphically in Figure B. Annual cost of books and journals increased from an average of \$103,624 for the period 1940-45 to \$477,223 for the years 1960-65; during the same period salaries rose from \$104,553 to \$597,748. Last year \$985,000 was spent for books and about \$900,000 for salaries. Total annual expenditures, which from 1940 to 1945 averaged \$237,000, increased to \$1,198,899 in the first half of the 1960's and last year—1966-67 - to more than \$2,000,000.

These spiraling costs, which necessitate an increase in the book budget each year to maintain the imperative rate of growth, are difficult for any private university to absorb. This library receives annually about \$100,000 from student fees and \$25-30,000 from special endowments, and for the remainder of its budget must depend upon regular University appropriations. Endowment funds expressly for the library amount only to about \$500,000, and income from each fund is without exception earmarked for materials in special fields. All are important to the growth of the library, but the George Washington Flowers Fund, which is about \$400,000, is the only one large enough to make a significant impact upon a broad subject area. (It has supported the acquisition of 2,300,000 manuscripts, 74,000 books and pamphlets, and a quarter of a million newspapers, broadsides, maps, photographs, and the like since the collection was started over 40 years ago.) During the 1930's and 1940's foundation grants for cooperative acquisition with the University of North Carolina Library accelerated development of the library in several fields, including Latin America. As assistance from such sources is unlikely in the future, the University must find ways to supply the necessary funds.

Major Developments

Highlights of the library's development during the last 27 years have been: (1) the establishment of the Rare Book Department with special quarters in 1943, (2) revival of the Friends

of the Library in 1945, (3) completion of the major addition to the General Library building in 1948 with more generous accommodations for research, especially for rare books and manuscripts, (4) addition of the millionth volume in 1950-51, (5) long-range planning in the late 1950's, (6) appointment of a Board of Visitors for the library in 1964, and (7) naming the General Library in 1966 for the late Judge William R. Perkins, a long-time associate of James B. Duke and author of the Duke Endowment. A Committee on Systems Applications to Library Procedures was appointed this year, and study of implications of data processing for the library has begun.

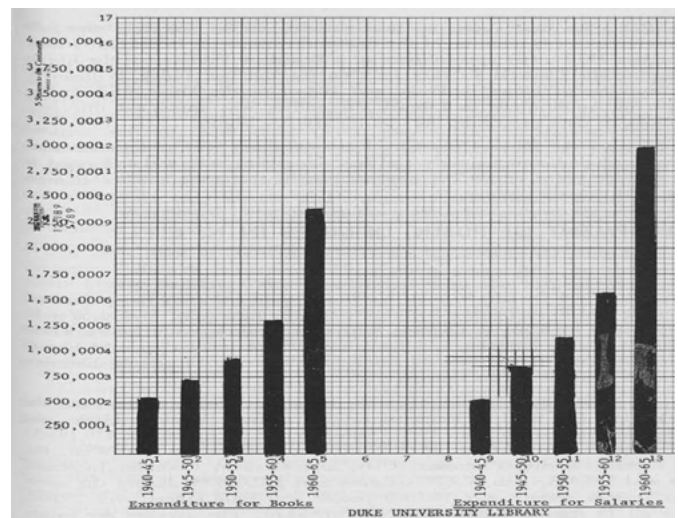


Figure B: Expenditure for Books and Salaries

During the last 27 years the Duke University Library—along with almost all other research libraries—has developed conspicuously and has undergone substantial changes in character. From the vantage point of 1967 it appears certain that even greater changes are in prospect for the next quarter century.