

OHIO STATE LIBRARY  
ANNUAL REPORT  
1949

Part I

STATE LIBRARY OF OHIO  
274 E. FIRST AVE.  
COLUMBUS, OH 43201

NOV 13 2008

DEPOSITORY 0460

Statistics are dry but necessary, so we will try to tell you in a few words what the figures show.

People did read some of our books. We handed out over the desk 41,485 - a ten-year high; we mailed out 13,002; we shipped out to other libraries 44,905 - a grand total of 99,392. It is estimated the books shipped out are recirculated by local libraries an average of ten times, so that the actual circulation of our books is probably five times greater than the above figure (approximately 495,000). Books mailed out require special handling: wrapped, addressed, weighed, stamped, posted and records kept; unwrapped when returned. All such requests come by mail; 5,682 letters last year.

People did ask questions. 9,120, to be exact.

We bought and "gifted" 7,560 books, and wore out 4,288 for a net gain of about 3,300. We averaged about two copies of each title bought, which means we bought in 1949, 3,708 different titles. Now here is an important figure. There were published last year 10,892 titles. We got about one-third of these - not too good for the library of the state of Ohio, is it? We subscribed to 198 periodicals, received 4,539 U. S. Government documents; 207 publications issued by the state of Ohio, and an estimated 794 publications of the other 47 states. Our total book collection has been estimated to be 900,000. No inventory has ever been taken, so the figure is purely an estimate. Probably a little high, in my opinion.

People also wanted to know where they could find books which we didn't own.

We filed 42,700 cards in our Union Catalog, or finding list, which now

DOES NOT CIRCULATE



numbers about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million cards, listing the books in 46 of the larger public libraries in Ohio.

We made 135 visits to libraries over the state to meet with trustees or librarians to advise them. Most of their problems were either organizational (territory to be served), financial, or personnel management. We helped a great deal, too, with building planning. We believe that librarians and trustees look to the State Library for leadership, and that they have high respect for our advice. We, in turn, believe Ohio librarians and trustees are tops, and when compared with other states, should get first honors.

Great strides were made with legislation two years ago; and in 1949, additional changes were brought about. A law permitting regional libraries to be established by two or more counties, was secured, and the right to share in any surplus intangible tax was given public libraries. This has meant an additional \$300,000 to some of the libraries. Dayton got \$90,000, Cleveland and Cuyahoga County libraries close to \$100,000, Akron \$13,000, and others smaller amounts. Most of the libraries receiving surplus are in industrial counties of the state, leaving the rural counties still hard-pressed to finance their library service.

A staff of 18 full-time persons and 8 part-time, accomplished the above results.

I want to take a moment here to say that we have a highly individual, hard-working and most efficient group of staff members. I sincerely believe they are held in high respect by other state employees, and set an example for them.

What do people think of libraries and library service? Are libraries essential, worthwhile? A national study of public libraries, financed by Carnegie Corporation of New York, and conducted by Social Science Research Council, has been in progress for the past two years. Their report is now being issued



(in 7 volumes). This study, known as the Public Library Inquiry, has a great deal to say about what states and state libraries should be doing. I hope to get some of this to you before long.

Public libraries are continuing to shift to the county district-type library.

We now have 17 such libraries. When one remembers that two years ago we had only three such libraries, this type of library is gaining rapid favor. Horn-blowing. We got our share of honors this year. An article on library personnel in the Library Journal, with editorial comment. Member of the Council of the American Library Association, Chairman of the Finance Committee of the American Library Association and chairman of a committee of the N.A.S.L.\* to study the organization of state libraries. Co-Surveyor of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County libraries. Like all honors, they require hard work if anything is to be accomplished.

#### What's Ahead?

We've told you what's been done or in progress, but now what needs to be done. We are going to point out some of these - not as complaints, but as tasks to which we may turn our attention.

(1) The State Library needs strengthening financially. For six years, we have been giving our time and efforts to legislation intended to help libraries over the state. Like the shoemaker's children, we haven't given much thought to our own problems.

The library's salary budget for 1949-50 was 6% less than in 1948-49. In other words, we were short about \$2,500. With the new salary classifications effective last month, our salary budget will be short at least \$5,000 on the current year. If this must be squeezed from other items of the budget, it would probably mean no library binding for a year. This would be a shortsighted policy, if continued for any length of time.

\*National Association of State Libraries



It would be preferable, however, to the next alternative of reducing staff. In order to make up the difference by cutting staff, we would have to dismiss  $3\frac{1}{2}$  employees. This could not be done without closing some of the desks and discontinuing some of our regular library services.

(2) Equally as important, our book collection and book funds are bringing us criticism. Cut 5%, our book budget cannot begin to meet the demands of 47 bookmobiles operating in the state, as well as of other libraries giving extension service. Many individual requests coming to us are left unfilled for lack of material. \$15,000, our current annual book budget, won't do the job.

(3) Our staff, as mentioned before, is excellent, but they can stretch just so far. By the end of March, when library business hits its highest peak, they are at the end of their physical endurance and close to the snapping point. The attached organization chart will show the different jobs that have to be covered.

(4) Something needs to be done about publications of the state of Ohio. I dare say no one knows what is published by the various departments of state. The Library is not able to secure many of them simply because we don't know they have been published. The Library does issue a quarterly list of state publications which is highly useful, but contains only those publications which departments remember to send us. Legislation, requiring printers of state publications to deposit copies of Ohio documents with us, would seem to be in order. This would then catch the material at the source.

(5) We need some method or formula which county budget commissions could use in estimating the intangible tax collection in the county. When estimates are off too far from actual collections, the promised budgets



of libraries and other subdivisions are not likely to mean anything. On the one hand, a library may not get what the budget commission promised them, or, on the other, they may have their budget cut and curtail service only to have more than was promised come in at the end of the year.

(6) We need some studies made showing costs of operation between large county centralized units, and counties with separate library units. One of the most difficult things to convince librarians and library trustees of small libraries is that a combination or consolidation of libraries would provide service more efficiently, and secure more for their library dollar. We need actual figures.



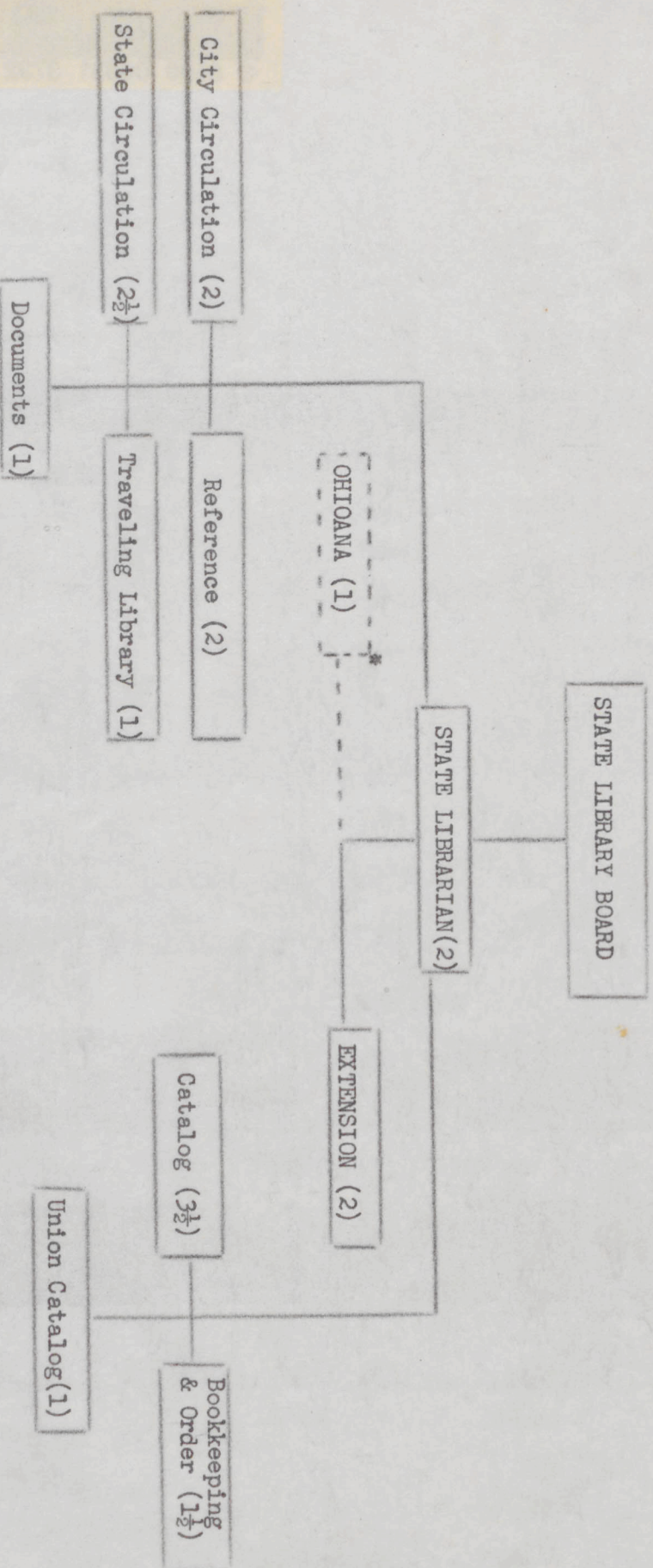


Figure in ( ) indicates number of staff members assigned to that work.  
\*Private incorporated library with separate state budget; in addition, State Library provides salary of Ohioana Librarian.