

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND  
LIBRARY

Brisbane

Australia

Report of the Librarian for 1942

1. It is perhaps time that an Annual Report should be formally presented to the Library Committee, as is customary with most University libraries, since we have occasionally been asked by other institutions for such a publication. As this is the first Annual Report to be drawn up, it will cover a little more than the activities of the preceding year.

2. General. The University Library contains, as far as can be computed, about 75,000 volumes. At present it is impossible to give a more precise figure owing to wartime storage conditions.

It consists of a Main Library, with Departmental Libraries of Anatomy, Architecture, Biology, Chemistry, Dentistry, Engineering, Geology, Medicine, Physics, Physiology and Veterinary Science.

Classification is, in the main and for the present, according to the Dewey decimal system. Cataloguing is by the Anglo-American code, with a few modifications. Standard cards are used and entries are typed. There is a complete author catalogue in the Main Library, with a duplicate in the cataloguing room made up from the original manuscript cards. There is also a typed subject catalogue, in Dewey order, in the Main Library; and each Departmental Library has its author card catalogue. Cataloguing and classification for the Departmental Libraries are done by the Main Library.

3. Use of Library. The whole of the Main Library is freely accessible to students. Only rare books, a special collection of fine bindings, and large illustrated art books are kept in glazed presses, and these are available for reference in the Library. Access to Departmental Libraries is in practice almost as free as to the Main Library. Nearly all books may be borrowed. The exceptions are current text books, works of reference, rare books, large illustrated art books and certain periodicals. The Main Reading Room contains the catalogue and a reference collection. The hours are 9 to 5 and 6 to 9 on week days, and 9 to 12 on Saturdays. The only annual closing is for four days at Christmas.

4. Special Collections. Apart from the Departmental Libraries there are a few special collections. The H. E. Brown Collection is a French library containing the classics of French literature with the chief French histories and scientific works. All the volumes are richly bound in leather.

Recently an agreement was made with the Queensland Branch of the Royal Geographical Society of Australasia whereby their library became the Geographical Section of the University Library. This collection is composed chiefly of long runs of geographical periodicals.

The John Darnell Bequest has made possible the creation of an Art Library and Collection and a Pacific Institute. The former will contain the best illustrated art books, specimens of Australian art, and the best reproductions of famous works of art. The Pacific Institute and Library will eventually be as representative a collection as possible of books illustrating the history, anthropology, and economics of the countries bordering the western Pacific. A magnificent beginning has been made with the Australian section of this Pacific Institute through the generosity of C. A. Fitz-Gerald esq. of Marooka who has presented to the University his very fine and valuable anthropological collection which includes examples of the finest native art and workmanship. It is probable that no similar collection could now be gathered together, and it is hoped to provide a fitting home for these rarities in the new University at St. Lucia.

A fairly comprehensive collection of official publications of the U.S. Federal Government since 1869 is also possessed by the Main Library.

The Fryer Library is a special collection, supplementary to the Main Library's section of Australian literature, devoted to Australian prose and poetry and to illustrative historical material.

Report on work done.

5. Accessions. In addition to the normal annual accessions there have been a few exceptionally valuable additions to the Library in the past three years. The H.E. Brown French Collection mentioned above was received as a bequest from the late Dr. H.E. Brown of Rockhampton. The Parliamentary Librarian (Mr. Worthington) transferred to the University Library the very large collection of U.S. Federal official publications of all kinds.

The Goethe Society's Library was presented to the University in 1929, adding considerably to our German collection. In 1942 the library of the late Dr. Mayne, valuable for its geographical works, was received; and in the same year the choice collection, chiefly Scottish in interest, of the late Dr. W.M. Robertson, a past Vice-Chancellor of the University.

The large library of the Queensland Geographical Society greatly increased this year's accessions.

Accessions for recent years have been (books and pamphlets):

|      |        |
|------|--------|
| 1939 | 5,600  |
| 1940 | 12,080 |
| 1941 | 11,984 |
| 1942 | 9,650. |

6. Cataloguing. In the past three years much of the Main Library has been recatalogued; the periodicals of all the libraries (except Biology) have been checked and recatalogued; and all the large bequests have been catalogued. The many catalogues previously existing, although representing an ideal policy, have, by reason of the fewness of the staff,

been reduced to three main catalogues: one author catalogue, one subject (Dewey) catalogue, and an extra author catalogue, formed by the original pencilled cards, for the staff. New author cards are being typed for all the Departmental Libraries. Since detailed cataloguing is a waste of time in the case of ordinary books now that libraries are bibliographical workshops rather than museums, we use only author's full name, short title, size, place of publication and date; and of these, items 2 and 4 are naturally omitted from the subject catalogue. More detailed description is, of course, given to old and rare books and to Australiana.

7. Classification. Much of the Main Library has been checked for re-classification in the past three years. The Dewey Decimal system is still being used, but as this system becomes unsuitable for a University Library which has attained a considerable size and a fair degree of specialization, it is intended to change to Library of Congress as soon as possible. Probably the future will see a movement in libraries towards a loose general classification with shifting sub-divisions, at least for science collections.

A special Queensland Collection has been formed to which nearly all material on the State has been attracted.

8. Periodicals. A complete alphabetical list of all periodicals in the University is being prepared and is nearly finished. It is hoped that this may form a basis for a finding list of all periodicals in the Brisbane area. An Australian-wide agreement about the purchase of periodicals by the chief libraries would be a very desirable thing.

We are inclined to think that much money that could be devoted to the purchase of more periodicals is wasted on the binding of periodicals which could well be boxed in their original parts. This would also preserve much historically interesting material that in the past has, by the ruthlessness of binders and the policy of libraries, been destroyed.

9. Displays. As far as the narrow accommodation of the present building permits displays are arranged from time to time. In the main corridor of the Main Building pictures are hung from the Darnell Art Collection and they are changed every six months. Recently displays were given of artistic Christmas cards, of typography, and of Japanese colour prints.

10. Exchanges. The Library maintains exchanges with 576 institutions, but the war has seriously curtailed the activities of the system. The Geographical Section of the Library has its separate exchanges with geographical societies and libraries.

11. Statistics. We do not trouble to keep statistics of the number of users of the Library, of cards typed, and of books borrowed or consulted; partly because of the smallness of the staff, partly because such figures have little value in proportion to the time spent on their compilation.

The amounts of the book funds for the various sections of the Library for 1942 were as follows:

|                               |        |
|-------------------------------|--------|
| General vote for Main Library | £359   |
| Arts                          | 235    |
| Social Studies and Commerce   | 109    |
| Agriculture and Meteorology   | 107    |
| Architecture                  | 50     |
| Biology                       | 72     |
| Chemistry                     | 70     |
| Engineering                   | 140    |
| Geology                       | 70     |
| Law                           | 107    |
| Mathematics                   | 66     |
| Physics                       | 70     |
| Surveying                     | 5      |
| Dentistry                     | 50     |
| Anatomy                       | 100    |
| Physiology                    | 150    |
| Physiotherapy                 | 15     |
| Veterinary Science            | 140    |
| Clinical Departments          | 250    |
|                               | <hr/>  |
|                               | £2,157 |
|                               | <hr/>  |

Supplementary Notes

What we hope may be a precedent has been created by the generous gift of Professor Duhig of many Australian paintings and drawings to the Darnell Art Collection. These have enabled us to give frequent displays in the Library during the war years when we have not been able to acquire prints from abroad.

The scope of private benefaction in a University is almost unlimited and most of the riches which in Europe have been accumulated by Universities have come to them as private gifts, often to perpetuate the name of a person or a family. A memorial could take no better form than a special collection of books on a particular subject, bearing the name of the donor, and providing intellectual enjoyment for future generations of students.

Library Accommodation. The extraordinary conditions of book storage during wartime have inevitably retarded the Library's service and have resulted in a great waste of the staff's time. Conditions are now such that the addition of a dozen volumes in any one section usually means the movement of 200ft. of books. The Library has long ago exceeded its normal capacity, and so rapid has its growth been in the past few years that it is becoming doubtful whether even the new Library at St. Lucia will be large enough for the collection, without either recourse to a system of ceiling-high metal shelving or the addition of another story to the building.

RICHARD PENNINGTON

James Forsyth Librarian