

# The Medical Library of the University of Missouri

**T**HE MEDICAL LIBRARY of the University of Missouri is currently enjoying the most productive and active era in its history. The beginning of the library is shrouded in the mists of missing records.

In 1846 the St. Louis Medical College (better known as the "McDowell Medical College") served as the medical department of the University. This articulation was severed ten years later. During this decade all course work was carried on in St. Louis.

The medical school in Columbia was established by the curators of the University on December 10, 1872. Instruction, patterned after the system at the University of Virginia, began on February 17, 1873. The Medical Library probably had its origin shortly after this.

In 1886 a cooperative arrangement was made with the Missouri Medical College in St. Louis. This enabled the students who had spent their two years in Columbia to finish up the third and fourth years in a closely affiliated institution. This arrangement proved to be unsatisfactory and was canceled in 1890.

Before 1903 the Medical Library was located in the school's quarters or in the main library. When McAlester Hall was built room was set aside for the library. The library took over enlarged quarters in the new wing, opened in 1923.

The Medical Library is a branch of the university library system. A major effect of this centralization is to decrease the space needed for processing in the

branch libraries. Current expenses for the medical library are included in the University Library's budget. The furnishings, however, were paid for by the School of Medicine.

The old library was separated from the hospital and was several blocks from the School of Nursing. This led to the growth of collections outside the library. The lighting and seating arrangements were inadequate. The students were not able to lose themselves in their books in the library because of the biochemistry and pathology laboratories just below. On a typical Missouri summer day the readers were well aware of the "practical" side of medicine.

Overcrowding in McAlester Hall had reached desperate proportions before the move. Each new shipment from the bindery meant the removal of a sufficient number of books and journals to provide space for the newcomers. This older material was scattered around the campus making efficient service difficult. The lack of space led to higher and higher shelving until ladders were needed to retrieve some of the more distant volumes. The small, chopped up, reading area discouraged attendance. The current journals were shelved in cubbyholes where they often became crushed or torn. The night assistant was convinced that the library had mice, but was unable to explain why the marauders nibbled only French journals.

The State Legislature in 1951 authorized the expansion of the School of Medicine to a full four-year curriculum. The first full class of seventy-five was ad-

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mitted in the fall of 1956 and the first class to receive the M.D. degree was graduated in June 1957. The expansion of the student body to approximately three hundred (from fifty) combined with increases in the School of Nursing and in the staff of the Teaching Hospital affected the seating and space requirements in the new library.

During the planning stage for the new Medical Center the dean of the School, and various committees and officers of the University, visited some thirty medical schools throughout the country. These tours and the services of two medical-librarian consultants were extremely valuable.

The Medical Center is a single building composed of three parts. The seven-floor Teaching Hospital faces south, the four-floor Medical Sciences Building faces north. Joining these is a two-floor link. This link contains the library, auditorium, several offices and small laboratories.

The main entrance of the library is on the level of the main floor of the Medical Sciences Building and of the second floor of the Teaching Hospital. Elevators at each end of the link place the library within easy reach of the whole Center.

The library has three levels, can seat 139 readers, and hold 100,000 books. The total area is just under 13,000 square feet. This includes approximately 7,750 square feet of stack space, 4,200 of readers' area, and slightly less than 1,000 of work space. The library is air-conditioned and has controlled humidity. This adds to the comfort of the readers and staff as well as to the preservation of the collection.

The upper level includes the reading room (central study area and the current periodicals section), seven study rooms, the work room, and the librarian's office. The reading room is seventy-three feet in length and is forty feet in width in the central study area and fifty-five in

the current periodicals section. The current periodicals section is set off from the central study area by waist-high island shelving.

The four large windows comprising most of the east wall run from the ceiling down to waist-high shelving. The ceilings are white acoustic tile, and fluorescent (standard cool white) strip lights have been set flush with the ceiling. The floors are natural-color cork tile, another aid in damping sound. The walls of the central study area and the eastern two-thirds of the current periodicals section are a light green. The western third of the current periodicals section, the entrance to the library, and the card catalog and shelf-list area, are done in a sunny yellow as this part of the reading room is the farthest from a natural light source.

Paging lights are located at the north and south ends of the reading room.

The apronless library tables in the central study area have a light wood finish. They are arranged to combine maximum seating with a feeling of space. The tables are of several shapes and sizes. The fifty-eight wooden side chairs with upholstered backs provide a varied color scheme. The backs are solid colors and include eight different color and finish combinations. The circular tables have chairs with wooden arms. A large periodical index table provides space for the recent volumes of the major indexing tools. Six small wooden stools provide easy-to-handle seating for this table. The main entrance is located near the south-west corner of the reading room. The circulation desk, just south of the stairs to the stacks, is some distance from the main entrance.

The current periodicals section at the south end of the reading room, has been broken into thirds to provide a sense of intimacy and comfort by two peninsular sections of double-faced waist-high shelving jutting out from the south wall. Six-

foot shelving covers the south and west walls of the area. Waist-high shelving is under the window on the east wall. The shelving in this section is wooden and adjustable. Sloping and flat shelves are combined so that current and back issues are immediately available. Lounge furniture, two- or three-man sofas, comfortable chairs, and low circular tables provide an atmosphere of relaxation and ease.

The seven study rooms are located at the north end of the reading room. Five of these are equipped with blackboards and have a table and chairs for either six or four. The tables are similar to those in the reading room but the chairs are all wood. The remaining two rooms are for typing and are equipped with individual tables (one room has two such tables, the other has one). All seven have electrical outlets for microfilm readers, dictating machines, phonographs, etc. There is no natural light in this area and the use of a bright coral on the walls livens up the rooms and connecting hall. The ceilings are of white acoustic tile and the floors are natural cork tile. Large glass panels in each room and door prevent feelings of claustrophobia and also facilitate supervision.

The work and librarian's office are located on the west side of the central study area. The walls and ceilings of both rooms are in the same light green found in the reading room. The floors are mottled green and white asphalt tile. The furniture in the two rooms is gray steel with black washable tops (desks and tables), and the chairs are upholstered in cinnamon. The work room has a separate entrance from the hall, doors to the card catalog area, circulation desk, and librarian's office. The room contains two typist's desks, several tables and filing cabinets, a large sink, combination wardrobe and supply closet, and adjustable metal shelving which covers the north wall. An electric typewriter speeds up

clerical work and enhances its appearance. The upper level entrance for the book-truck elevator is located here. The book-truck elevator serves all levels of the library. By this means the shelvees are able to take the loaded book trucks directly to the stacks and so substantially cut the time involved in this daily task. The librarian's office is just north of the work room and has doors to the work room and to the reading room.

The two levels of stacks are identical in lay-out. A central north-south aisle connects with the stairs and a second north-south aisle provides access to the sixteen individual gray study carrels located on each level. The carrel desks have washable composition tops and the aluminum chairs have bright red upholstered backs, arm-rests, and seats. Fifteen double-faced sections of adjustable gray metal shelving run east and west on each level, with single-faced shelving at each end. Windows cover the upper half of the east wall. The white ceilings reflect the fluorescent lights, the green walls add a touch of color, and the treated concrete floors facilitate maintenance. Two tables back on to the book-truck elevator shaft and provide ample sorting space.

The third entrance to the library opens into a vestibule at the north end of the lower stack level. This vestibule contains space for storage of furniture or books (adjustable metal shelving lines the west wall) and a large sink. The outer door opens onto the lowest floor of the Medical Sciences Building. As a result of this arrangement any part of the Medical Center is accessible either by person or by book truck.

The move into the new library was complicated by the previous enforced scattering of the collection among three different buildings. The major portion was that shelved in the old library in McAlester, but there were approximately ten thousand volumes shelved or boxed

in the University Library and in the maintenance building.

The move presented an excellent opportunity to rearrange the bound journals alphabetically by title. They had previously been shelved according to the classification number. A master list of journals, arranged alphabetically by title, was compiled with notations for shelf-footage required and the location of the volumes themselves. Because of the desperate space problems in McAlester a single journal title often would be located in two, three, or even four places on the campus.

Twenty-seven book trucks were unearthed in the different parts of the university library system and were commandeered for the move. The shelved portions of the collection were transported on these. Each truck would be "double shelved," roped securely, and then taken to the nearest loading dock. The only elevator in McAlester had no stop on the library floor so the loaded book trucks had to be carried down two flights of stairs. When nine book trucks were on the dock they were loaded on a two-ton truck and transported to the new library.

Fortunately, sufficient workers were available to keep the books moving. The shelves in the new library had been labeled. Professional staff members were at each end of the move with the appropriate lists. Experienced shelvees from the University Library loaded and unloaded the book trucks. A group from the student labor force shuttled the book trucks between the various locations. The complete move, from the taking-off of the first book to the opening of the new library, took eleven and a half days (the work force varied between five and fifteen).

The library is now open eighty-three hours a week (an increase of sixteen over the McAlester era) and has a full-time staff of three (two professional, one

clerical). There are also six student assistants (including a typist) who provide a total of eighty hours a week.

Photoduplication is one of the more active services currently provided by the library. A Cormac is used for this. The machine is easy to use and maintain. Student assistants do most of this work. The usual varieties of work are done but the library also performs an additional service. Twice each week photoreproduced tables of contents of selected journals are mailed to nine of the eleven departments in the School of Medicine (two have recently joined the original seven) and to the School of Nursing. Departmental selections range from six to eighty-five journals but overlapping has kept the total number of titles near two hundred.

The library puts out a news bulletin each month during the academic year, and bimonthly in the summer. This contains a selective list of recent acquisitions, items describing the library's activities, a list of staff publications, and historical notes primarily about local physicians and events.

The physical comfort, attractive surroundings, and convenient location of the library have created some problems. Many of the university dormitories and temporary housing units are closer to the Medical Library than they are to the University Library. There is also a convenient snack bar in the basement of the hospital. All this has necessitated a gradual tightening of regulations concerning the use of the library.

When the library opened in September 1956, everyone was welcomed. In the winter the study rooms were restricted to those connected with the Medical Center. In the spring the stacks were similarly limited and the reading room was restricted to Medical Center personnel during week-day evenings. No student is ever denied access to material here in the library, and undergraduates



wishing to use the library on a long-term basis may apply for permits.

Several surveys of the use of the library have been compiled. The most comprehensive was made late last year (1956), before any restrictions had been put in force. Questionnaires were filled out and returned by 365 readers (187 medical, 178 non-medical). Of the 178 non-medical readers only 12 per cent were using material housed in the library. That decisive measures were needed to remedy this situation is obvious.

After a year of use, several points, predicted or unforeseen, are evident. The study rooms are the most popular part of the library. They receive heavy use during the day and are continuously crowded in the evening. The blackboards are most helpful for working out the mathematical, chemical, and anatomical aspects of medicine. The sound-proofing permits discussion or use of tape recorders, etc., without disturbing other readers.

The sloping shelves for current issues of the journals have met with favorable response, particularly from those who

must keep up with the literature by weekly or semi-weekly visits to the library. The lounge furniture in this area has received considerable praise.

The library shares two wall display cases at a heavily frequented location. This provides a useful point outside the library for publicizing the collection, services, etc.

The circulation desk is the only part of the library that shows the need for pronounced changes. The desk, as shown by a year's use, does not provide enough space or sufficient control for the reserve books, does not provide easy access to the card catalog (to assist readers using the catalog), and it does not provide adequate control over the entrance to the stacks. All these problems, however, can be rectified with only minor changes.

An intra-campus library messenger service has recently started. This considerably decreases the time spent by the reader in locating material. This will undoubtedly become a popular service.

The new Medical Library is an attrac-

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## Rare Books Conference

Plans for the ACRL Rare Books Section conference to be held at the University of Virginia, June 18-20, are now complete. The meeting will cover various topics included in the section's rare book manual, a preliminary edition of which will be ready for distribution prior to the conference. A general discussion and critique of the work will be the subject of the first panel meeting. Subsequent meetings will be devoted to such specific topics as the problems of appraisals, insurance, and tax exemption; Civil War collections; cataloging and classification for the elements other than subject and author; promotion and publishing with reference to exhibitions, keepsakes, catalogs, etc.; the collection of portraits, prints, broadsides, and ephemera; and the problems connected with collecting material related to specific areas or historical periods. Relations between libraries and antiquarian booksellers and auction houses will also be discussed.

The program has been planned by John Cook Wyllie, secretary of the section and librarian, University of Virginia; William H. Runge, acting curator of rare books, University of Virginia.

## New L.S.U. Library

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first day of classes. The staff members in all areas were alert to the numerous questions of location which would be asked, and, identified by small plastic name tags, they were on hand to give what help was needed. From the vantage point of only a couple of months' experience we think the students and faculty found their way with remarkable ease. Naturally this was gratifying to watch.

The L.S.U. Library is big and bright, convenient and comfortable. It has a floor plan which merits study,<sup>2</sup> and it has a plan of operation which may be of interest elsewhere. The most important thing about it, however, is not its size but the flexible, adaptable quality of its interior, and this characteristic is of use in buildings a tenth the size or three times as big.

Such a building does not just happen. It is the result of much thought on the part of many people over many months. University faculty and administration considered various library possibilities for more than a decade. In 1954 the

Louisiana legislature appropriated \$3,500,000 to build it. Even before that consultants, Angus Snead Macdonald and Keyes D. Metcalf, had given advice. The firm of Bodman and Murrell and Smith, known for some time as outstanding Baton Rouge architects were chosen, along with their associates, Post and Harelson, to design the building. Visits were made by architects and library and university personnel to several buildings around the country. Everything possible was done to call on expert advice, and at every stage the library was consulted and was kept informed of all decisions. At all times the library administration was able to make its wishes known—and in almost all cases its wishes became those of the architects and the university. At least the three essential groups knew each other's viewpoint and differences could be resolved or accepted.

While it cannot be assumed that Louisiana State University has perfected its library service, it is safe to say that its new library is a distinguished one which was planned with care and which by design can be altered as new needs arise or new approaches are suggested.

<sup>2</sup> ACRL Library Building Plans Institute. "Proceedings of the Meetings At . . . Rosemeat College, July 3, 1955." Edited by Walter W. Wright. Chicago: ACRL, 1956. (ACRL Monograph Number 15), pp. 146-153.

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tive and efficient place. The effective use of color on walls, ceilings, floors, and furniture is a major factor in creating the comfortable and alive feeling in the library. The use of the collection, oral and written comments by staff, faculty,

and students, and the day-to-day activities of the library staff, all emphasize the advantages of the new quarters. It is heartening to see the library become such an active part of Missouri's new Medical Center.