

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA NEWS LETTER

Published Weekly by the
University of North Carolina
for its University Extension
Division.

The news in this publication is released for the press on receipt.

SEPTEMBER 13, 1922

CHAPEL HILL, N. C.

VOL. VIII, NO 43

Editorial Board: E. C. Branson, S. H. Hobbs, Jr., L. R. Wilson, E. W. Knight, D. D. Carroll, J. B. Bullitt, H. W. Odum. Entered as second-class matter November 14, 1914, at the Postoffice at Chapel Hill, N. C., under the act of August 24, 1912.

DOES NORTH CAROLINA READ?

OUR PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Does North Carolina read? Does North Carolina believe in owning automobiles? Does North Carolina believe in having good roads? All three of these questions, put to the average North Carolinian a dozen years ago, would have been answered instantaneously in the affirmative. But in all three instances the answer would have been accompanied by a mental reservation implying that books, automobiles, and roads were, after all, the luxuries or the hobbies of rich people or visionaries. Like book-farming, they were held in but slight regard and certainly were not considered as tools to be used by the average man for real assistance in the work of the world.

On March 31, 1922, three months before the registration year closed, North Carolinians owned 148,527 automobiles, approximately one automobile for every single book in the public libraries of North Carolina. Or, one automobile housed in a garage for every book shelved in a public library! And there is not a farmer in the State who does not consider his Ford an indispensable means to promote the welfare of his household and farm. To him his machine is not a luxury. It is an absolute necessity!

And so with good roads. They cost money, piles of it, millions of it. But they are worth every penny they cost and more, and everybody knows it. They are the solid realities over which an awakened State moves to a higher plane of civilization.

But so far, books remain in the luxury class. North Carolina, by and large, has not recognized them as tools to be utilized like automobiles and good roads in building a finer civilization.

Books are Tools

Lawyers require books to try cases. Highway engineers plot curves and grades with instruments and engineering handbooks. Doctors read journals to keep informed concerning the progress of surgery and medicine. Teachers study books in order to be better teachers. But, so far, the bankers, the merchants, the manufacturers, the farmers, the laborers, the housekeepers of North Carolina have not recognized books as absolute necessities. And as a result they are standing in the way of their own advancement not only in the broader fields of educational and cultural development, but in the primary, fundamental economic concern of winning bread and butter.

For books are tools for getting ahead, a fact which the directors of the highly organized automobile and cotton industries of Detroit and Worcester have recognized, and which North Carolinians and Southerners must also realize if they make all they should out of the wonderful resources they possess.

The laboratory and the library combined must be brought to bear upon the soil, the orchards, the forests, the streams, the cotton in boll and lint, if they yield the State, rather than New England or some other section, the toll which failure to utilize them will inevitably entail, as has already been true in the case of cotton seed oil, fertilizers, and finishing mill industries. Books in this sense are tools, and the State that fails to use them will inevitably pay tribute to those that do.

What Statistics Show

But does North Carolina read? North Carolina bought more books per capita in 1855 than in 1920.

This statement, made in the summer of 1921 by the head of a New York publishing firm which has been in business for nearly a century, does not tell the whole story about North Carolina's reading habits. No statement can; for the necessary statistics covering the subject are not available and they cannot be assembled.

But it tells something. It tells the same story which North Carolina authors hear when they seek a publisher for manuscripts which have only a local, state appeal; namely, that North Carolina is one of the poorest book markets in the forty-eight states. It harmonizes with the fact recently given wide publicity in Schools and Society, the Library Journal, and the Universi-

ty News Letter, that North Carolina had in her public libraries two years ago only 144,204 volumes, or 56 to every 1000 inhabitants, in which particular she was saved from the disgrace of standing at the foot of the column of the sisterhood of states by Arkansas with 36, while New Hampshire topped the list with 1778, or 35 times as many!

The statement is also in keeping with the fact published in the June number of the North Carolina Library Bulletin, that only 35 of the 62 towns in the State having populations of from 2,000 to 48,000 have public libraries, and that the State contained only 64 public and semi-public libraries for all of its more than two million and a half inhabitants, or an average of one library to every 40,000 inhabitants. Furthermore, thirty of these 64 libraries reported incomes for all purposes ranging from \$16.95 to \$950.17, and the 64, plus three colored branches, reported a total income of only \$83,031—the price of 170 Fords, or 59 Buicks, or approximately 3.25 cents per man, woman, and child for all North Carolina. Winston, with a population of 48,395 led with \$861—a per capita expenditure of eighteen cents, whereas the standard recommended by the American Library Association is \$1 or five times as much. Charlotte, Raleigh, and Greensboro had library incomes above \$8000; Asheville and Durham received \$7445 and \$6757 respectively. The grand total spent for books by the entire 64 public libraries of North Carolina was \$22,162 for the 2,550,123 inhabitants of the state.

Small Circulation

The statement tells something more. A State which does not buy books does not read books. Only 85,822 North Carolinians were registered as borrowers of these 67 libraries, an average of one person in every 30 in the State, and the total circulation of the 213,408 volumes in the libraries amounted to only 727,905, or slightly more than three readers per volume. Asheville, with a book collection of 10,949 and a population of 28,504, circulated 99,218 volumes, the largest total for any North Carolina city, which, when measured by the standard turnover of five per capita should have been 142,520. Concord, with 4378 volumes and a population of 9903, circulated 51,729, thereby winning from Burlington by the narrowest sort of margin and establishing the highest turnover recorded in the State—11.8 per volume, or 5.2 per inhabitant.

In addition to these loans, the North Carolina Library Commission circulated 616 traveling libraries of 40 volumes each in 414 stations in 98 counties, and loaned a total of 15,659 titles through its package library service. But with all this done, the circulation of publicly owned library books in 1921 amounted to less than one volume to every three persons in the State!

Bricks without Straw

Barring the specially favored localities served by the 67 town libraries and the library Commission, more than 2,000,000 North Carolinians had no library facilities in the usual meaning of that term, and lacking these, they were attempting to make brick for a finely constructed, abiding civilization, without a very necessary sort of straw.

Local Authors Fare Badly

Miss Nell Battle Lewis, writing recently in the News and Observer about North Carolina's failure to produce outstanding names in the fields of literature and art, might have said that no local authors work save those of O. Henry and Tom Dixon (local by courtesy, as their work was done elsewhere) had broken into the class of what the Bookman styles best sellers. Information concerning sales of publications by local authors is extremely difficult to secure. But except in the case of books placed on the school lists no book published in the last ten years, has, so far as I can discover, reached the 10,000 mark attained by Wheeler's History of North Carolina in the fifties, which, by the way, was the period mentioned by the New York publisher. Hamilton's Reconstruction in North Carolina, a serious piece of historical writing covering possibly the most interesting period of history in the life of the State, stopped selling at the 250 mark. Dr. E. C. Brooks in three years sold an edition of 1200 copies of his compila-

Released week beginning Sept. 11. KNOW NORTH CAROLINA Nature's Conspiracy

A glance at the map tells about the whole story of Nature's conspiracy to make North Carolina great. Seacoast at one end that provides ocean transportation to ports of the world. Short rail carriage to the centers of population. Mild climate in summer and winter, which makes a good agricultural section and a desirable place to live in.

High mountains in the west. These shelter the state from the blizzards of the west and also affect rainfall, giving an abundance all over the state. Liberal rain falling on the high altitudes affords vast water-power, as the streams carry the water downward to the sea. From the mountain summits to the fall line is a long distance, giving a big drainage area, consequently a big volume of water to drop to the sea, as well as a big drop. So North Carolina has a great electrical possibility.

Soil and climate conditions make easy the production of crops like cotton, tobacco and timber that are the raw material for mills and factories driven by electric power, and the state annually renews both its raw material and its power. While other states use up their iron ore and glass sand, and their coal and their gas fuel, North Carolina goes ahead making its material and its power from its constant resources, and it is the one state of the Union that has its manufacturing plants based on a permanent source of power and material.

Here is an agreeable section in which to live. People from everywhere come to North Carolina for recreation and holiday. Here is a section in which industry is encouraged by an abundance of the things needed for many times the population we have. Here is a section from which products can be carried away on sea or land. We have no mountains to cross to get to sea, or to the big buying markets of the North and East—which means, to the bulk of the people of our own country and the bulk of the people of the world. No man lives who will see the day when North Carolina does not have ample power for all its industries, ample raw material to supply them, or ample agricultural products for its people. This is one state that cannot squander its assets nor exhaust them. No other one quite like it exists. That is Nature's conspiracy to make North Carolina great. —Bion H. Butler.

tion of North Carolina Poems. Education and Citizenship, the memorial volume of addresses by the late President Edward Kidder Graham, in spite of the fact that there were from 10,000 to 12,000 living alumni of the University and thousands of North Carolinians who held him in highest esteem, reached a total sale of only 1500 copies. Songs Merry and Sad, and Lyrics from Cotton Land, by McNeill, and Idle Comments, by Avery, ran through two editions of 1000 each. Where Half the World is Waking Up, an interesting book of travel by Dr. Clarence Poe, and backed by the advertising department of the widely circulated Progressive Farmer, reached 3000 sales and then stopped still; while Connor and Poe's Life and Addresses of C. B. Aycock, the friend and idol of untold thousands of his fellow citizens, reached a total of 5000, or one half the number of the copies of Wheeler's History sold back in the fifties.

Current Books

Statistics for current books by outside writers are difficult to secure. The Greensboro Daily News recently noted

editorially and repertorially that since it had been printing a book review page in its Sunday editions a decided increase in the sale of books in the local book stores had been witnessed. Local libraries have also stimulated the sale of current publications. But North Carolina is not getting her capita quota of new books. The following record of sales of four of the most important books of recent years, secured from a representative book dealer for his store in seven North Carolina cities, bears damaging testimony. The books were Main Street, by Lewis; The Outline of History, by Wells; The Economic Consequences of Peace, by Keynes; If Winter Comes, by Hutchinson.

Main Street - Asheville 300; Charlotte 250; Winston 100; Greensboro 250; Durham 50; Raleigh 200; Wilmington 30; total 1180.

Outline of History - Asheville 25; Charlotte 45; Winston 1; Greensboro 50; Durham 15; Raleigh 100; Wilmington 3; total 239.

Economic Consequences of Peace - Winston 1; Wilmington 2; none sold by the dealers reporting in Asheville, Charlotte, Greensboro, Durham, or Raleigh. Total 3.

If Winter Comes - Asheville 125; Charlotte 250; Winston 50; Greensboro 100; Durham 25; Raleigh 200; Wilmington 34, total 784.

Obviously, these are not complete records. Yet they are the partial records of seven of the most representative communities of North Carolina whose book stores, public libraries, and study clubs reach as high a state of organization as can be found in the State

and whose book buying habits are unquestionably far in advance of those of village and rural sections whose book stores and libraries are wanting and whose knowledge of the book market is slight.

Size of Libraries

A year ago, while visiting the libraries of Massachusetts, I made the discovery that a city like Salem, Massachusetts, with a population of 42,529, had a public library of 70,000 volumes, an association or subscription library of 30,000 volumes, a scientific library of 120,000 books and 405,000 catalogued pamphlets, and a law library of 30,000 volumes. I found that this one city of Salem, with its 100,000 volumes in its public and association libraries, had 16,000 volumes more than the combined book collections of the public libraries of Asheville, Winston, Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, Raleigh, and Wilmington (89,033); that its law library of 30,000 volumes was the equal of the libraries of the University Law School and the Supreme Court of North Carolina combined; and that its scientific library (the library of the Essex Institute) contained approximately 60,000 more catalogued titles, including pamphlets, than all the 39, North Carolina colleges and universities, white and colored combined. Or, stated differently, the catalogued, accessible books of the combined libraries of this one city of 42,000 inhabitants, more than equaled those of the 64 North Carolina public libraries, with 406,000 catalogued monographs and pamphlets to boot!—L. R. Wilson, Librarian University of North Carolina.

STATISTICS OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

In North Carolina, in 1921-22.

Abridged and reprinted from the North Carolina Library Bulletin for June, 1922.

Place	Name of Library	Total Income	Vols. Added	Total Vols.	No. Borrowed	Circulation
Aberdeen	Page Memorial	\$263.24	36	2250	330	1160
Albemarle	Public	169.57	73	981	204	3408
Andrews	Carnegie	492.46	328	1528		6098
Asheville	Pack Memorial	7445.00	1500	10946	4073	99218 2
Beaufort	Beaufort	91.00	193	198	56	
Belhaven	Belhaven	117.00	150	147	260	998
Benson	Young People's	60.91	74	159	79	
Brevard	U. D. C.	357.15	307	1879	235	5456
Burlington	Public	3805.00	411	2415	1935	28659
Canton	Champion Y. M. C. A.		458	1057	165	3238
Charlotte	Carnegie	8664.49	931	11109	8792	66234
Concord	Public	3272.67	870	4378	4772	51729
Davidson	Presbyterian Church	61.11	45	716		1566
Duke	Duke		156	640		
Durham	Public 3	6757.51	2166	9872	5166	63825
Edenton	Shep.-Pruden Mem.	1025.36	229	1333	632	12170
Fayetteville	Civic Association		134	1663	262	
Franklin 1	Public					
Gastonia	Public	3162.63	592	4345	2300	31474
Goldsboro	Public	3320.66	630	4675	1466	18096
Greensboro	Public 3	3341.41	1144	16995	3134 4	56470
Greenville	Public 1					
Hamlet	S. A. L. Traveling			4283		6637
Hendersonville	Public	1217.89	367	3317	1127	20305
Hickory	Public					
Highlands	Hudson	126.88	191	2793	400	3650
Hillsboro 1	Hillsboro					
Hudson	Dixie	45.51	49	845		1129
Kinston	Public	908.30	37	2590	189	
Ledger	Good-Will Free	50.00	50	10020	200	1600
McAdenville	R. Y. McAden Mem. 1			2150		
Marion	Florence Tho. Mem.	142.17	50	690		
Montreat	Cora A. Stone Mem.	56.41	70	3275	177	
Mooreville	Free	324.50	15	1249		
New Bern	Library Assoc.	1161.23	247	4500	394	13915
Niagara	Webster Public 1	16.98	265	1288	35	331
Oriental	Woman's Club		60	57	126	
Oxford	Oxford Sub.	233.50	149	1681	150	2000
Pinehurst	Pinehurst	271.30	197	2347	292	2563
Raleigh	Olivia Raney	8435.46	692	16849	4292	60509
Reidsville	Public 1	200.00	129	1183	1124	2937
Rockingham	Public	1200.00	416	1500	850	
Rocky Mount	Public	2580.00	278	1264	826	
Rowland	Public	338.42	62	934	91	2500
Rutherford Col.	Carnegie	426.75	39	1200	100	
Rutherfordton	Rutherfordton		800	800	75	
Salisbury	Public 1	300.00	24	1547	3375	3441
Saluda	Julia F. Goelet Mem. 1		95	3000		
Sanford	Sanford 1					
Scotland Neck	Public	366.04		739		
Shelby	Public	569.25	77	1060		3125
Smithfield	Women's Club		196	765		2353
Southern Pines	Southern Pines	217.00	1231	1231	200	
Southport	Public	217.15	944	3969	755	5477
Spencer	Y. M. C. A.		500	150		
Statesville	Women's Club	136.00	246	684	612	3374
Tarboro	Edgecombe Pub.	564.00	307	1476	150	3705
Tyrone	Lanier	121.53	375	3961	250	
Washington	Public 5					
Waynesville	Waynesville	629.30	181	4361	212	7140
Whitefield	Public		66	314	145	667
Wilmington	Public	2766.38	952	10168	7509	24174
Wilson	Wilson County	950.17	453	1251	759	8265
Winston-Salem	Carnegie	8861.10	1524	13101	4178	51520
Total		\$80,841.03	21,315	200,142	82,696	681,186
Charlotte (colored)		800.00	122	7666	2658	38513
Durham (colored)		840.00	225	2987	528	4206
Laurinburg (colored)		550.00	500	2613		4000
Total		\$2,190.00	847	13,266	3186	46719
Grand total		\$83,031.03	22,162	213,408	85,882	727,905

1. No report received during this year. 2. Includes 2180 periodicals. 3. Includes county. 4. New registration. 5. Closed for reorganization.