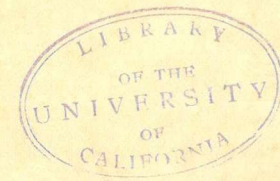


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JUL 9 1919

Twenty-Ninth
ANNUAL REPORT
of the
FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY
ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI
1918-1919



REGISTRATION

	Adult	Juvenile	Total
Number of borrowers registered during year....	2,175	1,726	3,901
Total number of registered borrowers.....	11,818	7,633	19,451
Registration period, 3 years.			

FINANCE

Receipts

Balance	\$	78.39
Cash in hands of treasurer.....		17.77
City appropriation.....		30,031.12
Fines		852.40
Duplicate pay collection.....		173.45
Miscellaneous		220.31
		<hr/>
		\$31,373.44

Payments

Books	\$	7,178.63
Periodicals		933.02
Salaries (library service).....		15,026.98
Salaries (janitors).....		1,599.16
Binding		1,465.84
Insurance		182.22
Heat		52.00
Light		78.60
Printing and stationery.....		324.40
Telephone		126.01
Repairs and equipment.....		2,937.88
Miscellaneous		1,160.05
Bal. appro. for library conference expense and books.....		230.26
Balance on hand.....		78.39
		<hr/>
		\$31,373.44

TWENTY-NINTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY

ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI

1918-1919



ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI

MAY, 1919

NOTE

This, the Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the St. Joseph Public Library, is the first complete printed report since 1916. The usual reports, as required by law, have been filed with the proper city authorities, but owing to high costs of printing and shortage of funds, the usual printed reports for general distribution were temporarily discontinued. The twenty-seventh report was summarized and printed in a four-page folder. The twenty-eighth report was not printed in any form, only the usual manuscript report being submitted to the Mayor and City Council.

the requirements of our own patrons, it is liberally extended as a service by the city to its contingent territory.

The information file, organized in 1918, supplies a useful lot of material of the ephemeral character. The Newark subject headings have been adopted and are supplemented by the headings used in the Readers' Guide. Pamphlets of sufficient value to warrant permanent preservation are bound and treated as books, but pamphlets and clippings which become out of date rapidly are assigned to the information file.

An interesting development in the service rendered to professional men has been a co-operative arrangement with the Buchanan County Medical Society extending over a period of the past few years. This society makes an annual appropriation from its funds for subscriptions to representative medical magazines. These magazines are received at the Library and placed on file for the use of the physicians and surgeons and the general public, being bound by the Public Library and then becoming the property of the institution. In order to derive the greatest benefit from this collection of magazines, the society also subscribes for the indexing service of the Indexers of Chicago and these cards covering all surgical articles and some articles of a general nature in certain of the magazines are filed separately in drawers of the public catalog. The Public Library has within the last year been officially designated as the depository for the records of this society. The minutes and roster of members from organization, a very carefully prepared set of volumes compiled by Dr. Daniel Morton, past president of the society, is the most recent addition coming from this source.

REGISTRATION

The registered users of the Library number 19,451, a very substantial increase over previous years. An analysis of the registrations of the past year shows that a large number of patrons have failed to re-register when their cards have expired. The gain has been made in new registrations. The failure on the part of old patrons to re-register may be explained by their absence from the city or the unusual interest manifested in other activities, principally war work. It is natural to expect a gradual return of these card holders, and the resumption of interest in the Library has been evident since the close of the war. The following table shows the division of the registrations within the system:

	Adult	Juvenile	Total
Central Library.....	8,772	4,923	13,695
Carnegie Branch.....	1,775	1,128	2,903
Washington Park.....	1,271	1,582	2,853
Total.....	11,818	7,633	19,451

Public documents are now handled with the magazines, the checking and filing being the duty of one member of the staff. Owing to lack of shelving space the current numbers of magazines have been divided into two lots, those indexed by the Wilson Publications and those not indexed. The indexed and most used magazines are filed in one alphabetical arrangement convenient to the reference department and the non-indexed periodicals are filed in another alphabetical arrangement in a somewhat less accessible location. Public documents of popular interest are classified, cataloged, and shelved with the general collection, being treated in the same manner as the regular purchased additions. Other documents are shelved with the serial set of congressional publications.

REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

The influence of the war on the activities of the Public Library has been very marked in the Reference Department. Information sought has been along lines somewhat different from the general tendency prior to the outbreak of hostilities. The various industrial concerns of the city have found it more and more important to consult the collections of the Library and in this particular it has been the policy to supplement our resources by immediate purchases of new material to satisfy the demands. The revival of the interest in poetry has been very evident and this naturally brings with it an interest in other literature and the drama. The study of history, international law, and diplomacy has been stimulated by the desire of people to gain an intelligent background for understanding the events of today.

The usual service, increased in both volume and variety, has been rendered to the many study clubs and it is now the policy of twelve of these literary clubs to plan and outline their year's work in the Reference Department. The amount of work incident to the service rendered the clubs, teachers and students, particularly the debating squads of the high schools, has developed to such an extent that we are now enjoying a crowded condition in a room only recently occupied.

During the year there has been a tendency for nearby communities to consult, by correspondence and personal visits, the collections of our Reference Department. A liberal policy has been adopted in regard to extending the privileges of the Library to the citizens and organized bodies from the towns in Northwest Missouri. Maryville, Savannah, Wathena, Ravenwood, Cameron, Fairfax, Mound City, Gower, Platte City, Watson and Barnard have availed themselves of the opportunity to make use of our Library. When that use does not conflict with

To the Honorable, the Mayor and Common Council of the
City of St. Joseph, Missouri.

Gentlemen:

I take great pleasure in transmitting herewith the twenty-ninth annual report of the Free Public Library for the year ending April 30, 1919.

It has been a difficult year for all city departments, but particularly so for the Public Library. The influenza epidemic interfered with all departments of the Library. We are just beginning to recover from its effects and again showing a healthy increase in circulation.

The increased cost of books and other material has made it necessary for us to practice the most rigid economy. People have often made the complaint that our Library does not contain all of the latest books. This complaint is, to a certain extent, justified. However, the fault lies not with the Librarian, or with the Library Board, but in the lack of funds to carry on our work as it should be in a city of this size. The increased cost of living makes it imperative that there be a corresponding increase in the pay of our library assistants. If we are to meet these demands, it will be necessary for us to receive a largely increased appropriation for the coming year's work. We sincerely trust that the members of the Council may make it possible for us to retain our assistants whom it has been our task to train, only to have some other library take them from us, because we could not afford to pay a sufficiently large salary. It must be conceded that the Library occupies a very prominent place in the culture of the community. Its larger worth can be demonstrated only if it be freed from the depressing influence of this practice of most rigid economy.

I call your especial attention to that portion of the Librarian's report with the paragraph heading, "Library Building Problem." It seems to me that this question should receive the careful consideration of the members of the Council, and that some means should be found to erect a library building entirely under the control of the Library Board and with more adequate facilities.

The Library Board takes this opportunity to express to the Mayor and members of the Council, its appreciation for the courteous treatment it has always received.

Respectfully submitted,

LOUIS BERNSTEIN,
Acting President.

REPORT OF THE LIBRARIAN

To the Board of Library Directors of the
St. Joseph Public Library.

Gentlemen:

I have the honor to present to you the twenty-ninth annual report of the St. Joseph Public Library for the year ending April 30, 1919.

The unusual conditions existing in St. Joseph from October, 1918, to the close of the library year, April 30, 1919, completely changed an expected climax to a promising three-year program. The year 1917-1918 closed with the largest circulation in the history of the institution and the beginning of 1918-1919 showed good gains, month by month, over the "big year," but the influenza came and the Public Schools were closed, followed soon by the Public Library for a period of six weeks; the street car company experienced a strike and a complete breakdown of their plant with irregular lighting and car service throughout the entire winter, and the water supply failed, making it impossible to operate heating plants. The use of the Library and the circulation of books dropped under these conditions and had not recovered at the close of the year.

The total circulation was 240,054 books and 2,047 pictures which, all things considered, is very satisfactory. The character of the reading has been notable. History, technology and poetry were subjects showing increased use. The revival in the reading of poetry carried with it increased interest in the drama and literature. The demand for current narratives of the great war was inevitable, but the people were not interested alone in this question of great current interest. Our own history and government and that of foreign states were read with the idea of understanding present day happenings and the acquisition of a perspective as a background for better judgment.

A greater percentage of the mass of people are seeking information at the Public Library than ever before. The entrance of the United States into the war and the prominence given the library by the various American Library Association campaigns, with increased numbers of citizens realizing the practical use of books, have accelerated the desire to learn. It seems to be realized, as never before, that the Library is a tool

the epidemic of influenza. Locally we have had to contend, also, with complete failures of street car, lighting and water service and strikes. While these unusual conditions within the city affected the use of the Library by the public, it offered excellent opportunities to make necessary changes within the Library.

During the period that the Library was closed on account of the influenza epidemic, arrangements were made to stamp books with the date due, instead of the date of issue and this plan was put into effect when the epidemic ban was lifted. There were also changes in the periods of circulation. Fourteen day books are now issued for twenty-eight days. Magazines were changed from a four-day period to a seven-day period. All seven-day books remain the same. No renewals are made. The use of individual stamping pencils was discontinued and replaced by one set of pencils kept at the charging desks. These changes have proven very satisfactory from the standpoint of the users of the Library and the Library workers. The opinion was freely expressed at the time the changes were being made, that there would be a reduction in the circulation, but if this has been the case, it has been so small as to be almost negligible.

Second over-due postal notices have been replaced by a delinquent letter. This letter seems more effective in bringing back over-due books and has the advantage of being forwarded in case of changes of address. A black list and a delinquent record have been started.

The reserve privilege, heretofore allowed only on non-fiction, has been extended to all circulating books and has been a success, being much appreciated by the reading public.

An experiment has been tried during the past year of making brief reader's notes for each new book of fiction added to the seven-day collection. These notes are brought to the attention of each loan desk assistant and are then filed where they are convenient for reference. It is possible to render a more intelligent service with this information at hand and its success impresses us as being a splendid thing for non-fiction, as well as fiction books.

MAGAZINES AND DOCUMENTS

Some changes have been made in this department, resulting in a slight decrease in the number of journals received. War economy measures removed libraries from the lists of a number of publications heretofore sent free and increased prices in practically all magazines made a further reduction in number necessary in order to keep within the budget.

classified. An important change made was the adoption of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburg scheme of classification for the folklore and fairy tales of the juvenile department. These subjects in this Library were classed as fiction and they have now been changed in accordance with the Pittsburg plan.

CHILDREN'S READING

The activities of the Children's Department have been more seriously affected by the unusual conditions of the "war year" than any other library department. The plans for the year started very auspiciously and a review of the statistics shows steady gains until October and the beginning of the influenza epidemic which closed the schools. The schools remained closed for the rest of the year except for a brief period during the early part of December. When school work was resumed in January, the hours were somewhat lengthened in an effort to make up work and this arrangement continued throughout the first semester. A complete abandonment of instructional work was necessary and the effect of this was very noticeable upon the attendance at the Library and at the "story hour" and in the circulation of books.

During the slack time, the revision of the book collection was completed and the following objectives attained; corrections in classification; improved physical condition of books; completion of a juvenile shelf list; and the removal of catalog cards for books which were no longer in the Central Children's Room. The arrangement of the juvenile book collections in the branches and the Central Children's Room is now according to the so-called "ribbon" system.

The picture collection was reclassified and remounted. The "Subject Headings for Juvenile Catalogs," by Margaret Mann, was used in classifying the pictures for filing in vertical files.

The work in this department with schools has extended to cover eighteen schools, thirteen of which have classroom libraries and five have larger collections designated as sub-branches. New stations of this character were established at the Bartlett School (colored) and at Bliss. There now remain but two small public schools and two parochial schools which have not been reached with library facilities.

CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT

No fair comparison can be made of the work of the Central Circulation Department for the year 1918-1919 and that for previous years. Owing to the conditions existing in the country at large, all libraries have felt the influence of the war and

ready at hand for this self-education which has always been encouraged by librarians.

MUNICIPAL PROGRESS

No report of a public institution in St. Joseph would be complete without mention of the awakened civic pride and progressiveness of the city. As this report goes to press, a bond issue for \$1,850,000, embracing \$750,000 for sewers, \$450,000 for a new city hall, \$500,000 for a lighting plant extension, \$100,000 for a contagious disease hospital, and \$50,000 for the motorization of the fire department, has carried by an overwhelming majority. The unified sentiment behind these propositions was wonderful. Every item of the issue was unanimously approved by every organized body in the city except a "mushroom club" organized by the opposition to the extension of the municipal lighting plant.

Linked with the city hall is the city plan project of the Park Department and the Soldiers' and Sailors' Memorial. The favorable vote on the city hall is regarded as a mandate to the Park Department to proceed with the erection of a Civic Center about Smith Park. Involved in this plan is the erection of a new Public Library building on the east side of the park, facing the park and the new city hall.

LIBRARY BUILDING PROBLEM

The citizens of the city have a positive misunderstanding as to the status of the Public Library in the so-called Free Public Library building at Tenth and Felix Streets. Very few persons know that this building is not the property of the city, but belongs to the School District of St. Joseph, being erected by the District from a bond issue voted for the purpose of erecting a library building in which the School District may have its administrative offices. The Library occupies a portion of the building at the pleasure of the School District and has no authority within the building beyond the actual library contents. The Board of Library Directors are assessed a monthly charge based on the maintenance expense and the portion of the building occupied by the Library.

The conditions of the occupancy of the building are such that the development and progress of the Library are hampered, and there is no remedy except a separate Library building under the complete jurisdiction of the Board of Library Directors.

With the development of the new Civic Center, a Public Library must eventually be a part, and the ideal location is

that designated by the members of the Citizens' Committee—on Twelfth Street opposite Smith Park, between Jule and Francis Streets.

WAR WORK

The Library's contribution toward the winning of the war has consisted chiefly in the distribution of material about the war and its allied phase, the conservation of food and other resources. Early in the conflict, the federal government discovered the great advantages of public libraries as disseminators of information and the plan was adopted of making the Library a place for the display and distribution of placards, posters and bulletins of the various departments of the government.

The assembly rooms of the branches were used extensively for war work activities. Permanent headquarters of the Washington Park Branch of the Red Cross were established in the Washington Park Library.

BRANCHES

The Carnegie Branch, located in South St. Joseph where are situated the packing house industries, circulated a total of 41,315 volumes, and the Washington Park Branch, in the residence district of North St. Joseph, circulated a total of 43,605 volumes. While not reaching the previous high record in circulation in either case, the work of the branches has been highly satisfactory during the year. A great bulk of work has been started and in some cases completed which eventually will extend the service and usefulness of the branches.

Reorganization work has covered principally the juvenile collections. During the year, the head of the Central Children's Room was given supervision of the children's work in the entire system and the branch collections of children's books and catalogs were revised and brought into agreement with the collections at Central Library. Here, as at the Central Children's Room, the policy is adopted of having the collections contain the best there is in children's literature instead of having all the titles possible. It is the intent to have only the best and many copies of each title.

In the case of book purchases for the branches, the policy has been adopted of buying only titles for the branches that are in the Central Library. A possible exception in this practice is the Carnegie Branch where there is a need for expensive books on the packing houses and allied industries, in which case copies are bought only for the branch.

The auditoriums and assembly rooms in the branch buildings were extensively used throughout the year for various war activities.

CATALOG DEPARTMENT

A thorough investigation of the operation of the catalog and classification departments resulted in a recommendation that these two departments be consolidated under one head, and early in 1918 authority for this action was granted by the Board of Directors. The head cataloger was made chief of the new consolidated department and the routine thoroughly revised and systematized, having in mind a desire to expedite the passage of material through the department and to the public shelves. The results of the changes have been highly satisfactory to all persons concerned, and it is very gratifying to note that books are now put in work immediately upon their receipt at the Library and are brought to the shelves in a very brief time after their receipt. Books are now held up in the catalog department only in cases of delay in the receipt of printed catalog cards.

The inventory taken during the year showed 624 adult and 161 juvenile books missing. The additions to the Library for the year totaled 6,913 volumes, of which 4,642 were added to Central Library, 830 to Carnegie Branch, and 1,441 to Washington Park. Withdrawals numbered 3,662, making a net gain for the year of 3,251 volumes. The actual number of volumes now in the Library system is 81,998.

Book numbers for fiction have been discontinued and all fiction is now shelved alphabetically by author and title, the book slips being revised in accordance with this plan.

The juvenile catalog has been thoroughly revised, cards being removed for books that were not in the Library, and cards being written for books that had been added to the collection but never cataloged. With the revision of the filing, the catalog of this department will be in excellent condition. In connection with the division of the juvenile collection and the organization of the schools collection, it is necessary to remove the cards from the juvenile catalog for all books made a part of the new schools department.

Duplicate accession records formerly kept at the branches have been discontinued and the department is gradually working toward the point of having books for the branches completely prepared for the shelves before being sent to the branches.

Reclassification of the adult collection was continued during the year. There are 2,515 volumes remaining to be re-