

# MOVING A LIBRARY

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THE NEW RUTGERS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY building was opened for business at the beginning of the fall term 1956. The building itself was sufficiently finished in June so that it became practical to start the major operation of moving the collection. The methods of moving a Library apparently vary with each institution. A careful account was made of the plans and the methods employed at Princeton a few years ago and in Iowa, Wisconsin, Harvard, and M.I.T. more recently. Several complicating factors were involved in this move for which there seemed to be no precedents. One was that already twenty-five per cent of our collection was in storage three miles away. This material had to be integrated with material from the old Library as it was put on the shelves unless great confusion was to follow. The other complicating factor was that the University Library had to remain in normal operation until the end of summer school on August the sixth. The decision was made to start moving the material in storage to the new Library, and initially we recruited a crew of fifteen undergraduates and local school boys who operated under the general management of Mr. Van Horn and Mr. Westling. They proceeded to move material from our storage building to the Main Library. This process went on quietly during the last two weeks of June and the whole of July.

Meanwhile, through the expert cooperation of Professor Kuebler of the Engineering College, a survey of moving equipment was made and recommendations were received from him which proved to be most valuable.

The United States Army through Colonel Gergin of the Raritan Arsenal leased to us five hundred wooden boxes of the exact size we wanted. We augmented this supply of boxes with one thousand more which were able to hold eighteen books and were light enough for a good, strong man to lift. One hundred and fifty pallets with semi-live skids and jacks were acquired. Many lengths of gravity rollers were installed in the old building to facilitate the movement of loaded

boxes which from the exits went on movable belts to the skids on the waiting trucks. We secured the services of three trailers and one prime mover and endeavored to establish a schedule after August sixth that insured the loading of one trailer, the unloading of a second trailer, and the movement between the old and the new Library of the third trailer. Each box was marked with crayon and numbered for each trip. Nine boxes were on each skid and they were hauled from the unloading platform of the new Library to the elevator and then dispatched to the appropriate floor where checkers watched them to see that they were directed to the proper spot in the stack where they were put in the best order that could be done quickly, and a crew came immediately behind arranging the order exactly according to an elaborate plan worked out by Mr. Van Horn.

Essentially the plan was to use the floor stack which coincided with the floor of the Main Reading Room for bound periodicals and Government Documents. Immediately below that floor, it was decided to place all the monographs of the social sciences, and immediately above that floor it was planned to place the monographs of the humanities and social sciences. This particular arrangement was thought to be a good initial one and by the opening of college it was in operation.

It is always the pride of the Library that it does not remain closed for more than twenty-four hours at a time, and Rutgers in this instance managed to do just that. The lending service came to an end at 9:00 a.m. on August the 20th and at 4:05 p.m. that same day it was possible to borrow a book from the new Library. To the borrower it seemed that everything was in shape, although there still remained a great deal to be done behind the scenes in order to make the Library operate efficiently.

All the problems familiar to everyone in moving from one house to another had to be met plus a great many which are peculiar to Library movings all on a scale for which we had no experience of our own. Thanks to Professor Kuebler, Mr. Westling, Mr. Van Horn, and the thirty-six undergraduates and schoolboys who worked so faithfully with us all summer, the August moving was accomplished with a minimum of confusion and almost on schedule.

Already between the time of the opening of the Library and the dedication exercises on November the 16th and 17th, there was

ample evidence that we were moving into an entirely new era of Library usage. We are still learning what takes place in our building. The student pattern of use is not exactly as it was in the old building. It is very much enlarged but the peak loads apparently come at different times. There are all sorts of minor problems that have arisen in adjusting to this larger building. The air conditioning is still to be tested and it would have been very welcome during some weeks in September. During colder weather in the fall, it was discovered that the heating system was still out of balance. There are many details which remain to be completed but already we are paying more attention to the operation of the Library than to the building details.

The acceptance of the new building with enthusiasm on the part of the undergraduates is most heartening. Two Fraternities have asked and received permission to establish study headquarters in a seminar room in the stack. There, underclassmen can report to their own upperclassmen for help and assistance and everyone thinks that this plan bears fruit; at least the Librarian is delighted with such an understanding on the part of the undergraduates. The graduate students have been slower to take advantage of the sixty double carrels which we have, though graduate students of the Departments of History and Political Science are making excellent use of them.

Henry Rutgers scholars, who are special senior honor students, have been allowed the privilege of using these locked carrels until the pressure of graduate students becomes stronger. Faculty Studies on the top floor have proved to be popular.

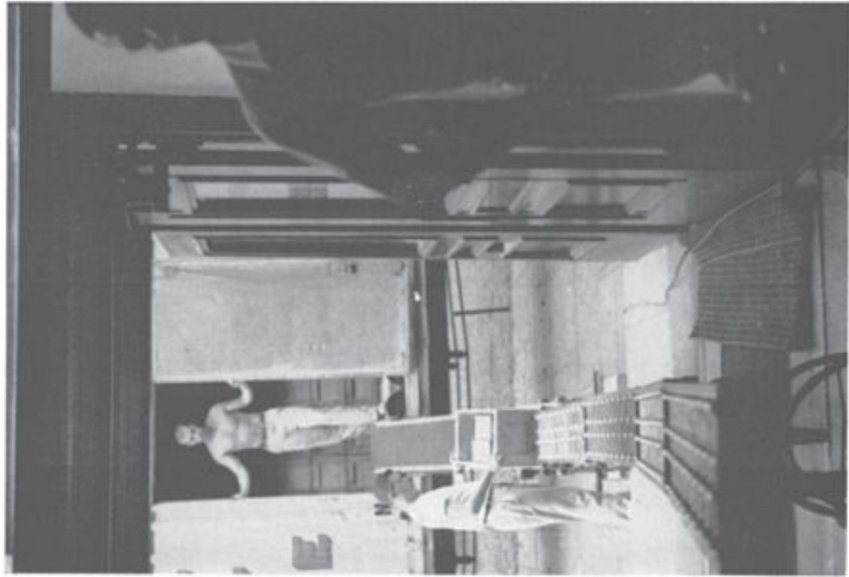
The New Jersey Room and the Department of Special Collections has been handicapped to some extent by the delay in the delivery of special exhibit equipment which unfortunately was not here in time for our rather ambitious exhibit of New Jerseyana which had been planned for the dedication.



Mechanical conveyer emptying the lower stack



Moving a thousand trays from the card catalog



From front door to truck by mechanical conveyor



Moving books from the lower stack