

## CHAPTER 10

# HOUSTON COLE LIBRARY JACKSONVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY 1836-1988

Thomas J. Freeman  
Martha Merrill  
*Jacksonville State University*

### THE INSTITUTION

**J**acksonville State University celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1983, but its roots are much more than 100 years old. The village of Drayton was legally populated by settlers in 1832 when the Indians ceded the area and were moved westward, and the name of their village was changed to Jacksonville in 1836. Those settlers quickly established educational institutions.

The Jacksonville Male Academy was chartered by the Alabama Legislature in 1836, and the Jacksonville Female Academy was chartered by the Alabama Legislature in 1837. In 1869, stock was sold to finance the establishment of Calhoun College. The male academy and Calhoun College merged in 1871 and operated under the name of Calhoun College. Both the female academy and Calhoun College continued to operate until the state normal school was established in Jacksonville by the Alabama Legislature in 1883. At that time Calhoun College closed, and its land, the one building, the books, and the equipment were transferred to the state normal school.

In 1929, the State Board of Education authorized the normal schools to become four-year, degree-granting institutions. Jacksonville State Normal School became Jacksonville State Teachers College. The third year of the curriculum was added in 1929, and the fourth year was

added in 1930. Because of the variety of the curriculum, the word "Teachers" was later dropped from the institution's name, and Jacksonville State Teachers College became Jacksonville State College in 1957.

In 1966, the Alabama Legislature and the Alabama State Board of Education again changed the name of Jacksonville State College to Jacksonville State University. At that time, the institution changed from supervision by the State Board of Education to administration by a Board of Trustees.

## THE COLLECTION

No number is given for the number of books transferred from Calhoun College to the state normal school. A photograph of the president's office from about 1900 shows a filled bookcase and a desk with a line of books on a shelf above it (Sawyer, p. 44). One source indicated there were probably one thousand books and about twenty magazines and newspapers in the library in 1902-1903 (Wilson, p. 180).

The December 1907 and June 1908 issues of the normal school *Bulletin* indicate there were about one thousand "standard" or "well selected" books in the library. Accession records date from April 7, 1908. No further accession numbers were assigned until November 4, 1908, when two other numbers were assigned. No source is listed in the accession book for most of these books. Numbers assigned at the end of January and the first of February 1909, list two book dealers as the sources from which the books were received. The original accession records verify that there were almost one thousand books at the beginning of the library's professional organization.

The first books listed on the accession records are a fifteen-volume set entitled *Beacon Lights of History*. This set was followed by nine titles by Robert Louis Stevenson, none of which are ones for which he is well known. Other early accessions were Darwin's *Descent of Man*, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, and books by Irving, Spencer, Boswell, Carlyle, Lodge, Poe, Gibbon, and Shakespeare. Also included were the 1904 edition of the *New International Encyclopedia* and a series of books on various countries.

During the 1908-1909 academic year, approximately six hundred volumes were added to the collection. Some of them were apparently bought during the year, and the Class of 1909 donated a \$30.00 set of books to the library. A large number of the added volumes were

government documents, such as the report of the National Archives and the report of the Commissioner of Education. These documents were received through the efforts of the Alabama Congressional delegation and particularly the efforts of Congressman Sidney J. Bowie. Between twenty-five and forty periodicals were received in these early years.

The institution's *Bulletin* lists the following number of books in the collection:

1908 about 1,000	1929 over 12,000
1910 about 1,600	1930 over 15,000
1912 about 2,000	1932 over 16,000
1918 over 2,000	1935 over 18,000
1924 over 3,000	1938 over 24,000
1925 over 4,000	1939 over 25,000
1928 over 7,000	1940 over 37,000

The 1961 Jacksonville State University *Self Study* reported that the book collection contained 67,500 volumes which included 5,780 periodicals. The library budget had increased from \$33,353.11 in 1955-1956 to \$66,760.48 in 1959-1960. There was a \$30.02 per student operating expenditure.

Library use by faculty and students was low. During 1955 to 1960, the annual loan per faculty member was fourteen books, and the annual loan per student was nine books.

The collection expanded significantly in the middle 1960's when the institution envisioned its mission as that of a comprehensive university needing to support the teaching, research, and service functions of the larger and increasingly diverse faculty and student body. According to the 1971 Jacksonville State University *Self Study*, the library budget grew from \$246,156.74 in 1966-1967 to \$491,172.00 in 1970-1971. The library expenditure per full-time student had jumped from \$58.63 in 1969-1970 to \$91.82 in 1970-1971.

The format of materials collected also diversified during this time of expansion. The first microforms received were a gift from Microcards Editions, a producer of 3"x 5" microcards. The library later purchased microforms in all of the various microformats. Primary source materials, such as the U.S. Serial Set, British Sessional Papers, Early English Books, and Library of American Culture, were purchased.

The 1971 *Self Study* indicated that the library contained 177,202 volumes; 1,350 periodical titles; 32 newspapers; 5,228 additional gov-

ernment documents not included in the book volumes; 9,771 microfilm reels; and 505,989 microfiche and microcards. However, circulation had fallen from 120,435 transactions in 1966-1967 to 108,259 transactions in 1970-1971. Part of this drop in circulation was probably because of a reorganization of the physical facilities to get more of the books in open stack areas, which meant that the books could be consulted without having to be checked out of the library.

The 1982 Jacksonville State University *Self Study* reflects the continued expansion of the collection. By 1980-1981, the collection had grown to 390,118 book volumes, 112,285 microform volume equivalents, and 27,486 bound periodicals. The library budget had increased from \$795,000 in 1976-1977 to \$973,212 in 1980-1981.

Circulation statistics decreased from a high of 84,160 transactions in 1976-1977 with a 12.1 circulation per FTE student to a low of 70,805 transactions in 1980-1981 with a 11.9 circulation per FTE student. The only reason cited for the possible decline was the 15% decline in enrollment from 1976-1977 to 1980-1981. Over 70% of the faculty reported that they regularly made assignments requiring the use of library materials, and over 70% of both the faculty and students indicated they were satisfied with the book collection.

Since the middle of the 1980's, library funding has not increased comparably to the increase in the cost of library materials, which has resulted in a decline in the number of titles added. Whereas 19,600 titles were added in 1977, only 7,500 titles were added in 1987. Although the growth of the library collection has slowed, the collection contains approximately 450,000 bound volumes of books and periodicals, approximately 775,000 units of microform, and about 20,000 audiovisual items. Included in the holdings are approximately 4,500 titles of Alabama.

Electronic access to information concerning holdings in other libraries has somewhat offset the drop in the number of volumes added to the library collection. The installation of OCLC terminals in 1975 has resulted in the library's ability to identify other libraries that hold needed titles. Interlibrary loan requests by mail and later by computer can be made in order to borrow the needed material.

## THE LIBRARIANS

The first librarian mentioned in the *Bulletin* of the state normal school was Exa Hames, who was hired in 1901 for class music and librarian.

Mr. L. D. Miller was employed in 1907 as the librarian and was described in the following manner:

Mr. L.D. Miller has been engaged as librarian for the school. This department of the school has long needed a special officer to take charge of it and give assistance to students who are looking for information in any line represented by the books in the library, but owing to the financial condition of the school it has never been practicable in the past to employ a man.

Mr. Miller is peculiarly fitted for this work. He is a man of much reading and is a lover of books and will be able to give a good deal of assistance to the normal school when the two are combined when students are looking for information in the library (*Bulletin*, October 1907, p. 4).

A later issue of the *Bulletin* included this description:

Mr. L. D. Miller, a man of wide reading and of learning, is in charge and will give assistance to all who desire to read or study upon specific lines.

A simple course in library science will be given consisting of directions for raising money; organization of a school library; plans for cataloging and classifying lists of books suitable for general reading and for the different grades of public school work (*Bulletin*, December 1907, pp.10-11).

Mr. Miller was approximately fifty-seven years old at this time. He had been involved in education for a quarter of a century during which he had served as principal at Reidsville Male High School and Alexandria High School and as Superintendent of Education in Calhoun County. He was the author of the *History of Alabama*, which was adopted as a textbook in the state public schools (Alabama Library Association, 1988; Owen, 1921).

Miss Susan Lancaster, a 1907 graduate of the Carnegie Library Training School in Atlanta, Georgia, joined the faculty in March 1908. She was the first professionally qualified librarian to be employed. Miss Lancaster was also cited as an instructor in library science.

An issue of the *Bulletin* gives the following description:

The books are classified according to the Dewey Decimal System, and the dictionary and [sic] catalog is used, which makes all books available. It is kept open all day, and a trained librarian is in charge. A course in Library Methods is given to the seniors, the purpose of which is to give such instruction as is needed in the formation and care of a library. The course includes such subjects as the selection of books, simple methods in accessioning, classifying and organizing, also methods of raising money for the establishment of school libraries (*Bulletin*, June 1908, pp. 27-28).

In 1917, Miss Lancaster left the faculty to become the librarian at Florida State College for Women in Tallahassee, Florida. After her departure, the library was "kept by the teachers with a young lady assistant, Miss Lassie Pittard" (*Bulletin*, October 1917, p. 2). In 1919, a bulletin cites "Mr. George Hatchett (student), assistant in library" (*Bulletin*, October 1919, p. 2).

In 1921, Ramona Middleton (Mrs. C. R.) Wood was appointed librarian. She temporarily left the institution to work on a master's degree at Peabody, and in 1922 Mrs. Mary Inge Hoskins is listed as librarian, and in 1924 Mrs. E. R. Wren is listed as acting librarian. Mrs. Wood returned as librarian in 1925, but she did not receive her M.A. degree until 1928. Mrs. Wood was married to C. R. Wood, who was the extension director and head of the mathematics department. He obtained his doctorate from Peabody in 1928 and became the first academic dean of the institution in 1931 (Sawyer, p. 51; *Bulletin*, October 1928, p. 3).

From 1929 to 1942, Annie Forney (Mrs. Clarence W.) Daughette was listed as assistant librarian. Mrs. Daughette was the wife of the sixth president of the institution.

When Mrs. Wood died in 1953, Miss Mildred Johnston, who was the librarian at the Jacksonville High School, became the librarian. Miss Johnston had earned a M. S. L. S. degree from Columbia University. When the Jacksonville city library was organized, it was named in Miss Johnston's honor.

Miss Johnston died in 1957, and Miss Doris Bennett, who had joined the faculty in 1955 as an assistant librarian, became the head librarian. She served until 1968 when, disappointed about the fact that she and other librarians were excluded from the planning of the new library building, she resigned. Miss Bennett joined the faculty at West Georgia College.

In 1968, Dr. Alta Millican, who had returned to Jacksonville after having received her master's degree in library science from Florida State University and her doctor of education from Auburn University, was appointed librarian. Dr. Millican had previously served as a teacher in Jacksonville High School and a dormitory director and history teacher at Jacksonville State University. In addition to directing the library, Dr. Millican served as Dean of the School of Library Science and Instructional Media and later as Dean of the College of Library Science, Communications, and Instructional Media. She was responsible for the initiation of the television service, the development of the non-print instructional media services, and the re-establishment of a program of teaching library science accredited by the State Department of Education and by NCATE for master's and educational specialist degrees. Dr. Millican retired in 1986.

Upon Dr. Millican's retirement, Mr. DeLeath Rives, an assistant professor who had been director of the audiovisual center since 1982, was named acting librarian. During this interim period, the university administration diverted part of several floors to non-library use, and library funding was reduced.

In February 1988, Mr. William Hubbard was appointed as librarian. Mr. Hubbard has a master of library science degree from the State University of New York at Genesco. He previously served at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and as director of library services at the state library of Virginia.

## **THE BUILDINGS**

There have been several sites within the city of Jacksonville for the grounds of what is now Jacksonville State University. The original location of the male academy was on South Pelham Road at the former site of O'Riley's Restaurant and the current site of Golden Catfish Restaurant. The female academy was located at 202 South Church Street (Sawyer, pp. 6, 8).

In 1883, with the emergence of the state normal school, the building and grounds of Calhoun College were given to the state normal school, but the growth of the state normal school necessitated larger facilities. In 1899, the county seat was moved from Jacksonville to Anniston, and Jacksonville, thus, had a vacant courthouse building (*Bulletin*, October 1934, pp. 3-4). In 1900, the state normal school was relocated to the former courthouse building, which was located on the southern end of the city square (Sawyer, p. 32; *Bulletin*, October 1934, pp. 63-64).

Again, the growth of the institution forced another change. The former Calhoun College building was renovated, and the normal school was located there from 1908-1929. Hames Hall, this renovated building, was located on the site of the present Jacksonville Elementary School (Sawyer, p. 48).



Houston Cole Library.

A General Plan campus map in the 1913 through 1915 normal school *Bulletins* shows a library building at the corner of West Francis and Spring Streets on this old campus site. However, faculty members who were at Jacksonville as early as 1924 (Dr. Reuben Self, faculty 1924, and Dr. Alta Millican, student 1934) state that no library building was ever constructed there.

The library facility itself is first mentioned in the institutional *Bulletins* during this time period. The library was housed in Hames Hall, and, in 1924, it was reported that a partition was removed in the library in order to more than double its size (*Bulletin*, October 1924, p. 2).

In 1929, seventy acres of land were purchased for the growth of the institution. One of the new buildings to be erected included an administration building, which housed classrooms, offices, and a library. Bibb Graves Hall was built on this new campus site in 1930, and the library was housed on the third floor in the room over the entrance (Sawyer, p. 72).

In 1939, a library building was constructed with the help of the Public Works Administration. The library cost \$85,000 and had a capacity for fifty thousand volumes and a reading room for one hundred sixty people (Sawyer, p. 78). After the death of long-time librarian Mrs. Ramona Middleton Wood, the building was named for her. When the collection outgrew the building, a wing was added on the western end in 1963 and another on the eastern end in 1968. After a new library building was completed in 1972, the Ramona Wood building was renovated and now houses the College of Education.

The thirteen-story, white marble library building was completed in 1972. This tallest academic building in Alabama cost \$5,000,000 to complete and was dedicated to Houston Cole, President Emeritus of Jacksonville State University, on October 15, 1973 (Sawyer, p. 162). The lobby floor contains the circulation desk, a display of photographs of the presidents of the university, and a plaque honoring the members of the Alabama Teachers Hall of Fame. The ground floor, i.e., the floor below the lobby, contains the card catalog, audiovisuals, acquisitions, and cataloging. On floors two through seven and nine through ten, a subject approach is used. Each floor houses a subject and is under the supervision of a subject specialist. Books, periodicals, and microforms are arranged by subject matter on these floors. The eighth floor contains the office of the library director, a conference room, and offices for non-library use. The eleventh and twelfth floors are for non-library use.

## FEES

The 1905 *Bulletin* indicates fees that the students were expected to pay. The fees were listed as per term of three months. One incidental fee listed was for the library. The \$1.00 fee was payable upon entrance. In the March 1923 *Bulletin*, the library fee was listed as only an annual expense. By June 1929, no itemization was listed for the incidental fee expense.

## SERVICES

During the evolution of library services at Jacksonville State University, the hours of service have increased, the number of librarians has increased, and the physical plant has increased.

The first mention of library service occurred in the June 1908 *Bulletin*, which reported the "library is kept open all day, and a trained librarian is in charge" (*Bulletin*, June 1908, p. 27). The June 1940 *Bulletin* has the first mention that the library is "kept open all day and part of the night" (*Bulletin*, June 1940, p. 10). The 1961 *Self Study* indicated that the library was open sixty-six hours a week, and subsequent self studies indicate the hours of service have increased to eighty hours a week.

The current direction in improving library services is in the area of automation. The library was a charter member of SOLINET and participated in shared cataloging and interlibrary loan service through OCLC from the time these services became available. Cooperative agreements and funding through the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries provided increased interlibrary loan traffic with public and academic libraries. The library has been a net lender in interlibrary loan transactions since the installation of the OCLC terminals.

In 1986, the library obtained access to the BRS online database. In 1987, Wilsonline and InfoTrac, on optical disk technology, were added. Access to the Dialog database was added in 1988. An electronic database is being generated for use in an automated catalog and circulation system. Plans are in progress to install an integrated automated library system using bibliographic records generated through the OCLC system.