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Equalizing Library Opportunities In South Dakota

RURAL SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION
OF THE
SOUTH DAKOTA STATE COLLEGE OF
AGRICULTURE AND MECHANIC ARTS
BROOKINGS, S. D.

APPENDIX B.—(Continued)
Library Service in Towns and Villages in South Dakota*
 (Arranged according to size of towns)
Towns from 250 to 2500

Towns	Population	Librarian		Volumes in Library	Budget		Building Open		Borrowers		
		Full† time + or —	Special† training and experience + or —		Receipts	Expenditures	Days	Hours	Town	Country	Circulation
Woonsocket	1,203	—	—	1,309	1919.65	1117.92	3	4½	497	260	7,553
Scotland	1,186	—	—	1,219	1031.95	864.75	2	6½	462	48	8,572
Howard	1,120	—	—	1,794	835.85	470.40	2	4	350		5,761
Britton	1,113	—	—	893	1809.37	1017.19	6	8	499		
Edgemont	1,092	—	—	470	1062.38	521.94	6	4½	210	36	2,260
Lemmon	1,077	—	—	1,265	1497.96	1212.70	6	4½	350	50	10,000
Waubay	1,007	—	—	670	242.54	241.57	1	3	332	65	
Geddes§	1,002	—	—								
Clear Lake	976	—	—	1,982	953.87	485.82	6	2	1,105	1	6,763
Armour	966	—	—	2,157	1562.95	1244.64	5	5	795	150	6,145
Bridgewater§	934	—	—								
Tripp	927	—	—	291	114.64	59.49	1	1½	112	4	
Ipswich	918	—	—	3,804	1708.70	1653.78	6	7½	678	460	12,443
Alexandria	865	—	—	2,337	343.26	184.66	2	4½	189		
Lake Andes§	849	—	—								
Murdo§	748	—	—								
McIntosh	704	—	—	591	30.00	30.00	2	1			1,089
Carthage	663	—	—	600	422.00	318.18					
Dallas	645	—	—	2,035		565.55	6	3	440	16	2,688
Mt. Vernon	601	—	—	1,754	1612.42	1060.78	6	2½	330	254	5,794
Estelline	585	—	—	2,125	979.22	431.60	3	3	291	289	5,103
Wilmot	567	—	—	861	420.28	420.28	6	7	167	28	2,340
Castlewood	559	—	—	800	975.11	668.39	2	3	251		3,659
Presho	537	—	—	763	437.50	247.43	2	5	358	96	2,240
Timber Lake§	537	—	—								
Fairfax§	512	—	—								
Faith§	506	—	—								
Towns below 250											
Wakpala	50	—	—	216	32.79	30.67			32	5	205
New Underw'd	186	—	—	197	83.63	63.82			26	6	508

*Based on seventh biennial report of the South Dakota Free Library Commission (1926).

†The + and — signs in column 1 are meant to indicate "yes" and "no" respectively.

§No report for 1926—11 of the smaller towns not making reports are omitted from the list.

Equalizing Library Opportunities in South Dakota

W. F. KUMLIEN¹

The free public library is now accepted as an integral and essential part of American life. Next to the school and the church it is probably becoming our most useful community institution.

The type of public library in this country is peculiarly a product of democracy. It is the invention of a democratic people seeking both expression and self improvement. It is one form of a community continuation school.

As a public institution supported through taxation, the public library is of relatively recent origin. In 1876 there were only about 300 in the entire United States, but during the next 50 years (1926) the number grew to 5,954.²

Owing to their newness, public libraries are not yet distributed as uniformly throughout the entire United States as are public schools and churches (Figure 1). As might be expected, the more compact, thickly populated and incorporated areas were first to adopt the public library. The city, town, or village has been and still is the most common unit of library service and support.³ However, the rural sections are now beginning to demand equality with the town in library opportunity.

What are the actual library conditions in South Dakota? What library agencies already exist? What library policy is now in operation, and what modification, if any, does it need to be reasonably effective? To attempt to throw some light on these and other related questions has been the purpose of this study.

Method of Study

In view of the fact that the total number of free public libraries⁴ of all types in South Dakota⁵ is only 72, it was thought best to include the whole state in the area to be studied.

Quite uniform and fairly comprehensive statistical records of this work done by the various public libraries have been collected and printed biennially by the State Free Library Commission covering a period of fourteen years. As this and other statistical materials were readily obtainable through reports and correspondence, it was decided to make the field work more of a qualitative study of the kind of service offered by the library units, and the response of the borrowers and general public to the library idea.

In order to get a fair statistical sample of the different types of free library service rendered in the state, some fourteen different libraries and groups of their respective borrowers were personally visited during the summer and fall months of 1926 and 1927.

¹ This study was made in co-operation with Dr. C. J. Galpin, in charge of the section of Rural Life Studies, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. D. A.

² Committee on Library Extension, Library Extension, American Library Association (1926), p. 20.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

⁴ Dr. A. E. Bostwick, the American Public Library, Appleton, 1923, p. 20, says, "In general, a 'public' library in the United States is either owned or controlled by the public, or free accessible to the public; or it has two of these features or all three of them."

⁵ Seventh biennial report of the South Dakota Free Library Commission (1926), p. 12.

In the study of each of these libraries, the main aspects considered were "the five essential unit requirements for an efficient library service unit" as suggested by Dr. J. H. Kolb⁶ and discussed in part in various library publications of the American Library Association.

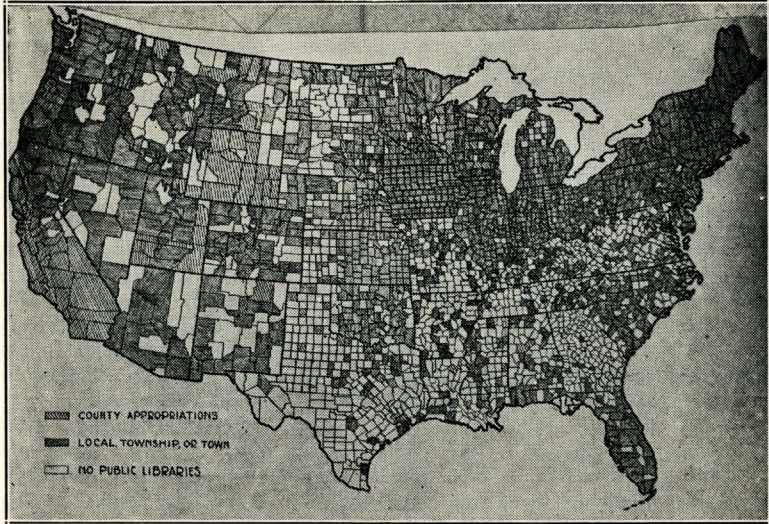


Fig. 1.—Present public library facilities in the United States.

Briefly, the unit requirements suggested by Dr. J. H. Kolb are:

1. A full time and trained librarian.
2. An active circulating book collection of 5000-6000 volumes, together with an appropriate supply of needed bulletins, magazines and periodicals, based on the needs of the local community.
3. An annual budget big enough to adequately care for the service (under present Wisconsin conditions—1925—it would amount to somewhere around \$4000, or approximately \$1.00 per capita in the area of support.)
4. A modern library, building or space, centrally located to adequately house the books and other reading material and provide suitable reading rooms.⁷
5. There should be a group of active and enthusiastic borrowers back of each library unit.

In discussing the library situation in South Dakota, the writer has had three general phases of the question in mind, namely, what he has more or less arbitrarily called, Library Conditions, Library Agencies, and Library Policies. These will each be discussed in turn.

⁶ "Service Institutions for town and county." Research Bulletin No. 66, Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of Wisconsin, p. 34-36.

Under each phase, there inevitably enters a comparison between town and country. As stated before, the incorporated towns have been the first to adopt the public library as a community institution while the country districts have lagged behind. What is true in this respect of the nation as a whole is equally true of South Dakota.

LIBRARY CONDITIONS IN SOUTH DAKOTA

In order to properly appraise the status of the library movement in the state, attention is first called to certain historical, physical and population factors that have unquestionably affected its background.

South Dakota became a state only 39 years ago (1889) and is therefore one of the ten youngest states in the union. Its interests have always been predominantly agricultural and at present 53 per cent of the state's population live on farms.⁸ (Figure 2).

Of the remaining population, most of them live in small towns and villages. There are fifteen towns over 2,500, 219 of between 250 and 2,500, and 630 small villages of 250 or less. A peculiarity of South Dakota towns and villages is that of the 234 with a population of 250 or

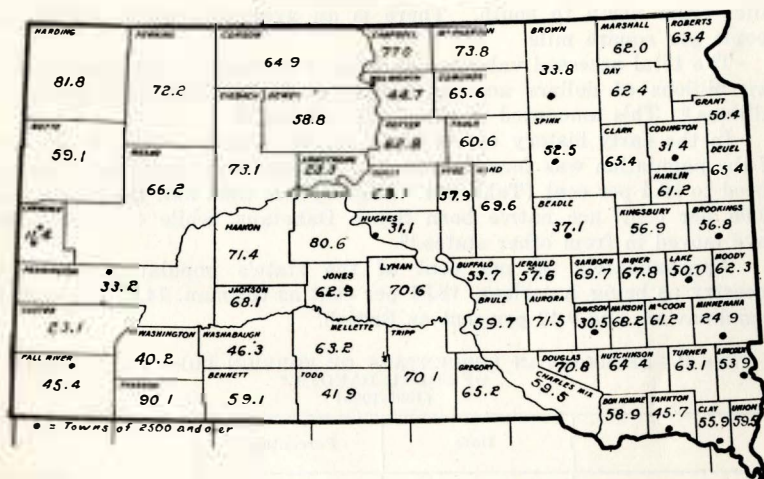


Fig. 2.—Percentage of South Dakota population living on farms—figures by counties.
(Based on Federal agricultural census of 1925.)

over, all but 26 are incorporated. Even 81 of the group below 250 are incorporated (Table I). This tendency for towns and villages to incorporate so freely has had the effect of retarding co-operative tax supported projects between town and country districts.

7 Where an area such as a county is served, branch stations should be provided within proper reach of anyone in the area.

8 Federal Agricultural Census of 1925.

South Dakota, although sparsely populated, is the fourteenth state in the Union in area. It is 380 miles long from east to west and 248

Table I.—INCORPORATED AND UNINCORPORATED AREAS IN SOUTH DAKOTA.
(Their number, population and distribution)*

Area	Number of Cities, Towns, and Villages	Population	Per Cent of Total
Incorporated Places			
2,501 or over -----	15	120,690	17.7
251—2,500 -----	193	130,236	19.1
250 or less -----	81	13,062	1.9
Unincorporated Places			
251 or more -----	26	9,377	1.4
250 or less -----	549	46,116	6.8
Open Country ----		361,779	53.1
Total -----	864	681,260	100.0

*Based on South Dakota State Census of 1925, the federal Agricultural Census of 1925, and the Rand McNally Atlas.

miles from north to south. There is an average density of only 8.7 people per square mile.

The total assessed valuation of taxable property in 1925 was nearly two billions of dollars and the taxes payable in 1926 was nearly 34 millions.⁹ This amounted to about \$49 per capita.

In the early history of the state (1890) slightly under 28 per cent of the population was foreign born, but by 1925 this figure had been reduced to 10.4 per cent (Table II). Slightly less than half the population, 48.06 per cent, are native born South Dakotans, while 41.55 per cent have moved in from other states.¹⁰

Approximately 32 per cent of the state's population list their ancestry as being American, 18.81 per cent as German, 14.71 per cent as Scandinavian, and 9.42 per cent as British.

**Table II.—DECREASE IN PERCENTAGE OF FOREIGN BORN POPULATION
OF SOUTH DAKOTA.***
(1890-1925)

Date	Percentage
1890	27.6
1895	26.
1900	22.
1905	19.7
1910	17.5
1915	15.5
1920	12.9
1925	10.4

*See p. 94—South Dakota Census of 1925.

⁹ First Annual report, Department of Finance for South Dakota, 1927, p. 125. The exact figures for the total assessed property valuation was \$1,876,183,001.00 for 1925, while the total tax levied was \$33,892,433.12.

In point of literacy South Dakota ranks high. There is only 1.1 per cent of the white population above nine years of age who cannot read and write.

If we consider only the white population above eighteen years of age, 78.5 per cent have stopped school somewhere in the grades, 13.9 per cent have attended high school, and 7.1 per cent have either attended or graduated from higher institutions of collegiate rank.¹¹

URBAN WITH

54,404,568

URBAN WITHOUT

3,415,418

RURAL WITH

9,624,939

RURAL WITHOUT

47,054,168

Fig. 3.—Urban and rural people in the United States with and without library service. ("Rural" here includes all towns and villages up to 2,500 population.)

Distribution of Library Service

One of the first questions that arises in a library is to find out who and where the people are with and without library service. Figure 1 shows the distribution of library service in the entire United States. There are 1,135 counties out of 3,065 which have no free public libraries of any kind within their boundaries. This map, however, tells only part of the story. With the exception of the 223 counties which are cross hatched, and some 475 libraries in addition having township support, the rural districts are practically without public library service of their own (Figure 3).

Narrowing the story down to conditions within South Dakota, we find a similar situation¹² (Figure 4). There are 17 counties out of 66 which have no free public libraries within their boundaries. There are a total of 68 city, town and village public libraries, all in incorporated places, but only four counties with county libraries which are supported by and serve both town and county on an equal basis. In the remaining 62 counties of the state, the rural districts are limited to such service as

¹⁰ State census of 1925.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Data taken from seventh biennial report of the free library commission (1926).

they can obtain from the state free library commission, or such service as the town libraries, supported by towns people, may choose to render.

In further comparing South Dakota library statistics with those of the United States as a whole, we find that the state ranks thirtieth in

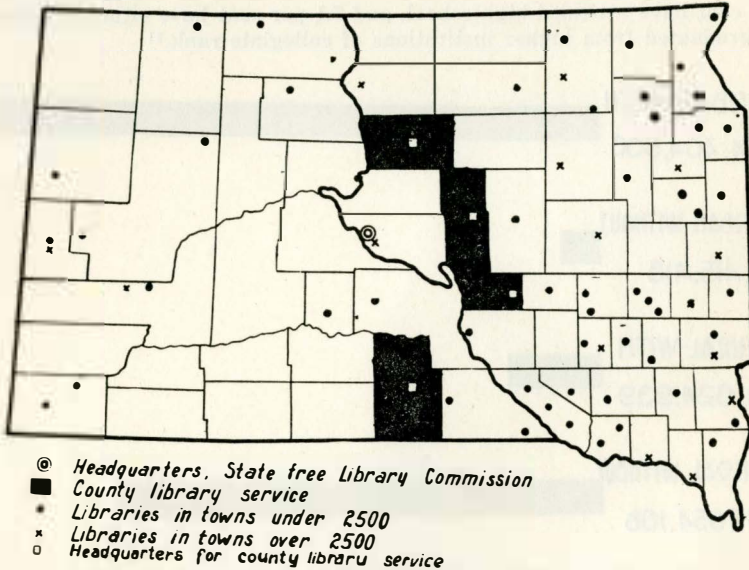


Fig. 4.—Public library agencies in South Dakota, 1926.

the number of public library volumes per capita, and twenty-eighth in the average number of volumes circulated per borrower. In terms of actual figures, South Dakota has approximately one-third of a book per capita in her public libraries, and circulates the equivalent of $1\frac{1}{2}$ books per person per year. In contrast to this, the public libraries of the whole United States own about two-thirds of a book per capita and circulate 2.13 books per person.¹³ (Table III.)

Table III.—COMPARISON OF SOUTH DAKOTA PUBLIC LIBRARY EXPENDITURES, NUMBER VOLUMES AND CIRCULATION WITH THAT OF U. S. A.* (1926)

Area	Income or Expend.		Volumes in Pub. L.		Circulation of Vols.	
	Total	av. per capita	Total	av. per capita	Total	av. per capita
South Dakota...	124,883	.18	219,624	.34	968,266	1.51
U. S. A.† ----	35,347,156	.33	65,561,796	.62	226,142,926	2.13

*Library Extension bulletin, American Library Association (1926), p. 122.

†This data was based on population figures for 1920.

13 Library Extension, American Library Association, Appendix, p. 122.

Number of Library Borrowers

Another check to the problem of finding out who and where the people are with and without public library service is to discover, if possible, the number of library borrowers in each county from both town and country. Fortunately the records kept by the public libraries of the state are fairly accurate on this point and go back over a period of several years. Figure 5 shows the number of public library borrowers for 1925-1926 for both town and country computed in terms of percentages based on the 1925 population. Figure 6 shows the number of library volumes and circulation per capita by unity of support.

If we exclude the four counties of Tripp, Potter, Hyde and Buffalo where county libraries are maintained, we find the total number of town borrowers amount to 73,024, while the county borrowers total only 2,459. Stating these figures in terms of percentages, we find that the town people form 96.8 per cent of the public library borrowers, while the county people form only 3.2 per cent.¹⁴

Type of Reading Matter in Farm Homes

There is not very much in the way of quantitative data on this point for South Dakota but there is one recent study of 150 families

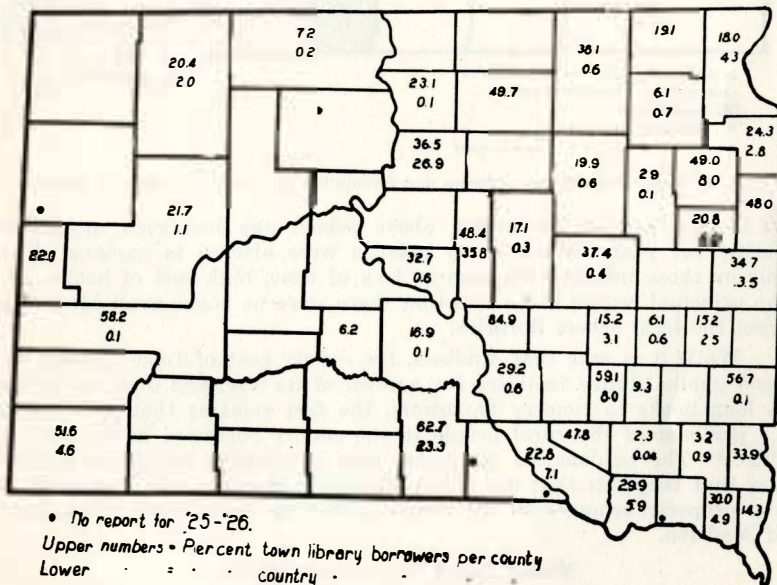


Fig. 5.—Percentage figures showing town and country library borrowers by counties.

made by the writer that confirms the same disparity between town and country where there is no county library.¹⁵

¹⁴ See Table Appendix B.

¹⁵ W. F. Kumlien, Bulletin 223, South Dakota Experiment Station, 1927, p. 12. "What Farmers Think of Farming."

The results of this study indicate that the principal reading matter in these farm homes consisted of newspapers, daily and weekly, farm journals, and magazines materials (Table IV). Only 38 per cent of the

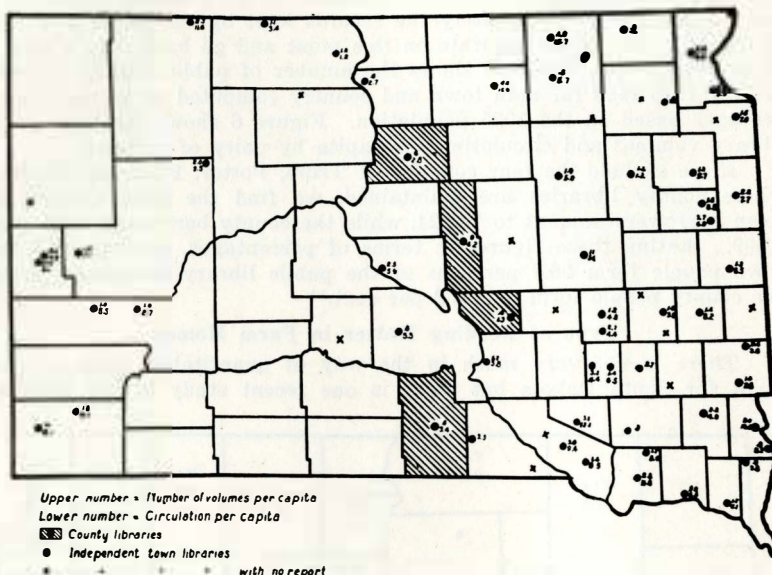


Fig. 6.—Number of library volumes and circulation per capita by units of support.

adult members of the homes above school age had read any books during the year. While many reasons were offered in explanation of this by those interviewed, such as lack of time, high cost of books, etc., the principal reason given was that there were no books available except from the local school libraries.

While it is true that Madison, the county seat of Lake County, has good public library facilities for a town of its size, and does not refuse to loan books to country borrowers, the fact remains that only 160 or 2.5 per cent of the rural people in the county borrowed books there in 1926.¹⁶ The explanation given for this by country people themselves was that they felt that the public library in Madison was supported by and properly belonged to the people within the incorporated boundaries of Madison.

Money Spent for Library Service

Comparing South Dakota with the United States as a whole with reference to the amount of money spent for library service, we find that the state ranks thirtieth in expenditures per capita.¹⁷ (Table V). There is a total of \$136,004.16 spent in connection with the 72 libraries, or an average of 20 cents per capita.

¹⁶ Seventh Biennial Report of the South Dakota Free Library Commission (1926).

If we examine the public library expenditures for the state and apportion them on the basis of amounts spent in town and country, the same disparity exists as was shown in the number of library borrow-

Table IV.—READING MATTER IN 150 FARM HOMES IN LAKE COUNTY,
SOUTH DAKOTA*
(1926)

Type of Reading Matter	Number of Homes Reading	Total Number Taken or Read	Average per Family Subscribing	Per Cent of Total Homes in Area
Dailies -----	127	172	1.3	84.
Farm Journals -----	125	433	3.4	83.0
Weeklies -----	98	113	1.15	65.0
Women's Magazines -----	92	190	2.06	61.
Children's Magazines -----	2	4	2.0	1.3
Books -----	58	---	---	38.0

*Based on data in "What Farmers Think of Rarming," bul. 223. South Dakota Experiment Station, 1927, p. 14.

ers. In Table V the cost of the free state library commission is added. In both this cost and that of the county libraries, the total is apportioned to town and country districts on the basis of the per cent that each group is of the total.

Thus the city, town and village population of 319,461 spent \$120,-807.29 on public library service during 1926 or 37.8 cents per capita. The country population of 361,799 spent \$15,196.87 or 4.2 cents per capita.¹⁸

PUBLIC LIBRARY AGENCIES

The Statutes of South Dakota in force at this time provide for the organization and maintenance of several different kinds of public library service. The type of service rendered and area served naturally determine the political unit of support.

Among the forms of free public library service provided for by law are the State Library Commission, county libraries, city, town and

Table V.—LIBRARY EXPENDITURES IN SOUTH DAKOTA FOR TOWN AND RURAL POPULATION*
(1926)

	Total Expenditures	Urban	Rural
State Library Commission-----	\$11,120.68	\$ 5,226.71	\$75,893.97
County Libraries -----	14,312.14	5,009.24	9,302.90
City and Town Libraries-----	110,571.34	110,571.34	-----
Total-----	\$136,004.16	\$120,807.29	\$15,196.87

*Based on seventh biennial report of South Dakota Free Library Commission, p. 12 (1926).

17 Library Extension Bulletin, American Library Association (1926), p. 121.

18 Seventh Biennial report of the free library commission (1924), p. 12.

township libraries. In addition to these, provision is made for a state reference library¹⁹ in connection with the State department of history, and for public school libraries.²⁰

State Library Commission

This is the library extension agency of the state rendering a state-wide library service. It has very broad but definite duties specified in the laws. Broadly speaking, it is designed to lead the way in a program of library development for the state. It gives general library service directly to communities, groups and to individuals until such time as a

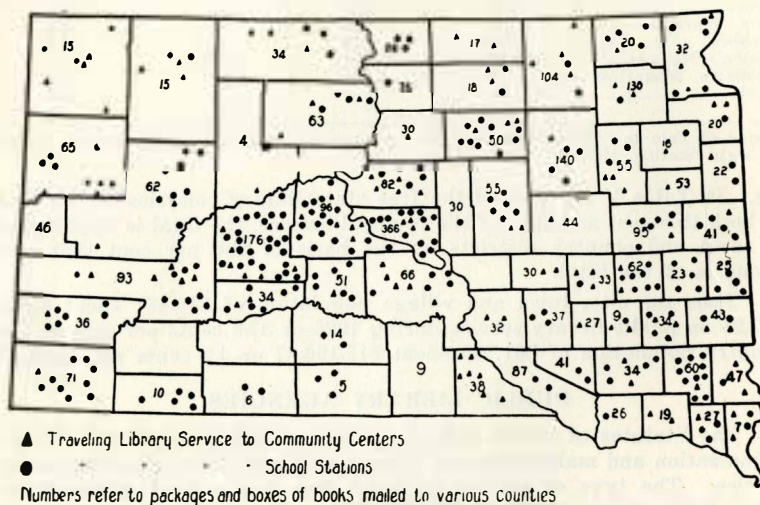


Fig. 7.—Statewide service rendered by the South Dakota free library commission for year ending July 1, 1927.

more complete local service can be established. When that time comes, if desired, it aids and counsels in the establishing of local or county library units. In many cases it supplements the collections of local, county or school libraries already established. Its headquarters are at the state capitol.

The work of the South Dakota free library commission has made a very substantial growth in statewide service since its inception in

¹⁹ The State library as organized by law is primarily for reference purposes. It consists of the books, papers and documents in the custody of and collected by the South Dakota Historical Society or as it is now called "The State Department of History." Its chief function is not library extension work to the general public but rather to serve as a reference library for the various legislative, judicial and administrative officials of the state, and to any other citizens who may care to make use of its materials. Periodic reports are issued regularly as volumes in a series called the "South Dakota Historical Collections."

²⁰ While properly speaking, the public school libraries would not be included under the classification of free public libraries, they are described in this section owing to their being publicly supported and intimately related to the county library system, where the latter form of library service is established.

1913. For a brief statistical record of two of its principal lines of work covering the past eight years, see Table VI and also Figure 7.

Another important phase of the commission's program has been to work for the establishment of more public libraries in the state, and the betterment of the facilities for service of those already established. Much of the steady growth in units of libraries in the state is unquestionably due to the continuous and efficient help of the field librarian of the commission. (Table VII).

Prior to 1924 most of the books from the library commission were loaned as "Traveling libraries" to school or community stations to be reloaned to individuals.

Table VI.—TWO IMPORTANT PHASES OF STATEWIDE SERVICE RENDERED BY STATE FREE LIBRARY COMMISSION—(1919-1926)*

Year	Traveling Libraries Loaned	Reference Requests Filled
1925-1926 -----	751	14,041
1923-1924 -----	672	13,893
1921-1922 -----	534	13,974
1919-1920 -----	592	8,537

*Biennial reports of State Library Commission 1919-1926.

Table VII.—GROWTH OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SOUTH DAKOTA*

Year	Tax Supported (Municipal)	Tax Supported (County)	Privately Supported	Total
1919-1920 -----	39	1	12	52
1921-1922 -----	39	2	13	54
1923-1924 -----	42	3	17	62
1925-1926 -----	50	4	22	72

*Biennial Reports of State Free Library Commission—1919-1920.

These went out in the form of fixed collections of from 25 to 50 volumes each containing a proportionate amount of fiction and non-fiction for adults and a certain number of children's books. When these collections were returned to headquarters, the books were then checked, and replaced in their respective boxes to be sent on to other stations.

At the present time, the idea of "fixed collections" has been abandoned and requests from either communities or individuals are now filled from the shelves direct. The commission library now includes approximately 10,000 volumes of non-fiction material together with a file of magazines and pamphlets from which loans of material especially needed are made to individuals, to clubs, and to schools.

"Borrowers of this material include the club woman who needs material upon the subject assigned her for a club paper, the student taking an extension course from one of the colleges in the state, the county agent who is interested in reading up on co-operative marketing, the coach of a debating team, the rural teacher who wants to put on a play in her school, and many hundred other people living in all corners of

Table VIII.—COMPARISON OF "EFFICIENCY FACTORS" IN LIBRARIES OF DIFFERENT SIZED TOWNS IN SOUTH DAKOTA*
(1926)

1		2		3		4		5		6	
		Librarians			Budget		Building Open		Borrowers		
Size of Towns	Total No. towns involved	Full time + or -	Special training and experience + or -	Volumes in Library	Receipts	Expenditures	Days	Hours	Town	County	Circulation
2501 or over--	15	+	+	9241.20	7468.80	5148.27	6.4	7.5	3945.54	72.9	36,623.40
250—2500 ----	55	—	—	2035.67	1267.07	920.91	4.1	4.7	543.71	93.8	6,672.58
Below 250 ---	2	—	--	206.5	58.21	47.24	3.5	3.5	29.	5.5	356.5

*Based on data from the Seventh Biennial Report of the South Dakota Free Library Commission.

†The + and — signs in column 1 are meant to indicate "yes" and "no" respectively.

the state and interested in all kinds of pursuits who, because of their isolation from public libraries, must depend upon the state department for books.

During the biennial period (1925-1926) 14,041 books were loaned to individuals in the state in response to 4,424 requests."²¹

City, Town, and Village Libraries

The small town library is by far the most common form of public library unit in South Dakota (figure 5). There are now 68 such town libraries in the state, 15 being located in the 15 towns with a population above 2500, 51 in towns between 250 and 2500, and two in towns below 250 (Table VIII).

It is interesting to note that every town in the state with a population of 1400 or above maintains a public library, and 14 out of the 27 towns between 1,000 and 1,400 also have public libraries.

Out of this total number of 68 town libraries in the state, 46 are supported by taxation, and 22 are privately supported (see table in Appendix B).

Applying the criteria for "an efficient Library unit" as a measuring stick as suggested on Page 4, how effective are the town libraries?

In order to get the facts clearly before us, a long table has been placed in Appendix B in which the library statistics of all the libraries are included. They are grouped and arranged in order of the size of town.²² The columns are numbered in order of the "five efficiency factors" considered.

Librarians.—A glance at the Appendix B reveals the fact that relatively few of the town librarians of the state are employed on a full time basis, or have had special library training for their work. Only 33 librarians out of 68 are employed full time. The rest are employed on a part time basis ranging from a part of one day per week to full time. Only five librarians receive a salary from \$1,600 to \$2,200 a year. All of these have had academic training, plus one or more years of professional training and not less than five years' experience. A second group of eight town librarians have had some academic training and at least a six-weeks' summer school course, plus a reasonable amount of library experience. Their salaries range from \$780 per year to \$1,600.

There are some notable exceptions among the remaining town libraries who are employing particularly capable librarians. Because of long service under good librarians they have acquired more than the equivalent of a six-weeks' summer course in training. These, however, are exceptions and do not change the general principle that a library which cannot employ a full time and properly trained librarian cannot as a usual thing offer the most efficient service to the public.

²¹ Quoted from the seventh biennial report of the South Dakota free library Commission (1926) p. 5.

²² Based on data taken from the Seventh Biennial Report of the Free Library Commission, 1926, p. 12.

Buildings and Amount of Time Open to the Public.—On the whole, the town public library building facilities of the state are thought to be somewhat above the level of the other factors considered in an efficient library unit. At least 25 of the libraries have separate library buildings well located, with plenty of space, well lighted and heated rooms. (Figure 8.) The remaining libraries have temporary quarters, some fairly adequate and others quite inadequate.

In point of hours open to the public there are only five who fully meet the 52-hour-per-week standard,²³ but some 27 are open every week day for at least five hours a day.

Library Borrowers.—It is difficult to say just what proportion of the inhabitants served in a library unit should be borrowers in order to have adequate support. Dr. Kolb says that in order to have the needed budget of \$4,000, and not exceed the A. L. A. standard of \$1.00 per year per capita, there should be a supporting area of not less than 4,000 people. As all of the tax supported town libraries in South Dakota have their unit of support as the incorporated town is rather easy to see which towns can qualify. There are only 10 towns with a population of over 4,000, and only 15 towns of over 2,500. It is obvious then that one of two things is happening in all the libraries but 10 in the state. Either a tax charge of more than \$1.00 per capita is levied for library purposes, or else the budget is reduced to where there must be a cut in the efficiency of the service. In 21 tax supported libraries of the state, the cost amounts to more than \$1.00 per capita, although in only five of the cases is the total budget raised ample to maintain an efficient unit on the basis of the standards referred to.²⁴

Attention is again called to the relatively small number of country borrowers, which form but 3.2 per cent of the total number of town library borrowers. It is evident, with certain exceptions, that the town library is not meeting the reading needs of rural people.

Number of Volumes and Circulation.—A good library service should have an active book collection of about 5,000 or 6,000 volumes and a circulation of five books per capita per year. There should be added annually about 500 new volumes distributed well over the departments. In addition to this there should be a reasonable supply of bulletins, magazines and periodicals for the reference and reading rooms based on the needs of the local community.²⁵

Applying this criteria to South Dakota town libraries, we find that there are only 13 towns who have 5,000 volumes or above and only eight who have a circulation of 30,000 volumes per year. (See Table in Appendix B.)

23 Service Institutions for town and country, research bulletin 66, Wisconsin Experiment Station. J. H. Kolb, p. 36.

24 Service Institutions for town and country, research bulletin 66, Wisconsin Experiment Station. J. H. Kolb.

25 Service Institutions for town and country, research bulletin 66, Wisconsin Experiment Station. J. H. Kolb, p. 35.

Budget.—The American Library Association has set up \$1.00 per capita per year, as the minimum standard of support for a library if

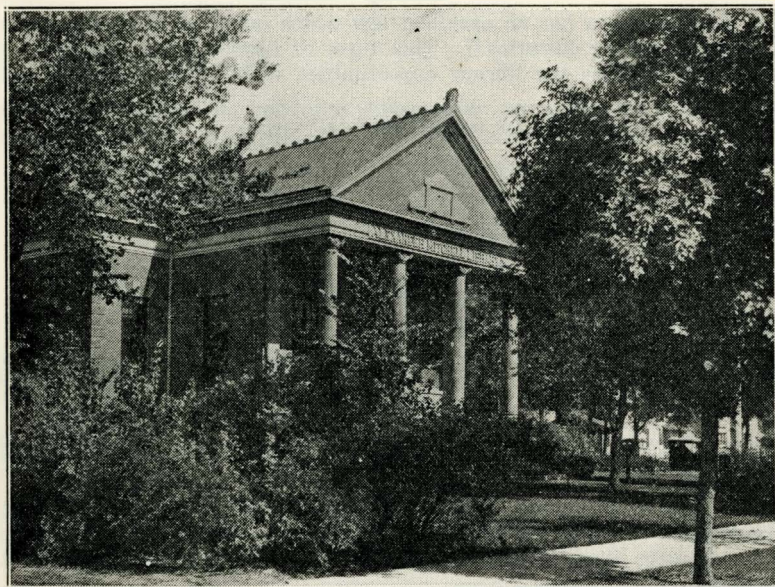


Fig. 8.—Free public library at Aberdeen, S. D., a typical example of the public libraries in the larger towns in South Dakota.

efficient service is desired. Considering all necessary items in the budget it should total about \$4,000, itemized as follows²⁶:

Books:

Books -----	\$ 750.00
Periodicals -----	80.00
Building -----	130.00

Service:

Librarian's Salary -----	1,400.00
Ass't Sal. (half time) -----	600.00
Extra Short Time Help -----	50.00

Operation and Maintenance

Janitor -----	\$ 360.00
Heat and light -----	410.00
Telephone, Supplies, Transportation -----	120.00
Repairs and Incidentals -----	100.00

Applying this as a "budget measuring stick" to South Dakota we find there are only nine town libraries that have annual receipts amounting to \$4,000, four more that have \$3,000-\$4,000, and only six more that have a budget from \$2,000-\$3,000. In other words, even if we should re-

²⁶ *ibid* p. 35.

duce the minimum for an efficient library unit under South Dakota conditions to \$2,000, only 19 out of the 68 could qualify.

County Libraries

South Dakota has an excellent law which makes possible the organization of county libraries.²⁷ This form of library organization is designed to equalize the library opportunities within the county for both

Table IX.—COMPARISON OF "EFFICIENCY FACTORS" IN COUNTY LIBRARIES OF SOUTH DAKOTA.* (1926)

Counties	Popualtion		Librarians		Volumes in Library	Budget		Bld. open		Borrowers		Circulation
	Rural	Town	Full time + or —	Special training and experience + or —		Receipts	Expenditures	Days	Hours	Town	County	
Hyde-----	2,318	1,682	+	+	3,531	4,193.63	3,033.90	6	8	815	830	17,061
Potter-----	3,177	1,875	+	+	3,045	6,979.55	4,233.24	6	7	684	856	14,438
Tripp -----	9,837	3,750	+	+	8,692	7,689.04	6,715.62	6	9	2351 3840	2298 3984	48,591

*Based on data from the seventh biennial report of the South Dakota Free Library Commission, 1926.

urban and rural people. In order to aid in the distribution of books among those who do not live within easy distance of the county headquarters, branch libraries are maintained at different points within the county.

In the county library system, emphasis is not placed on an expensive library building, but on the library service in distributing books and other material about the county.

There are now three counties in the state which maintain an active county library system (Figure 5). A fourth county, Buffalo, has a modified form with limited funds serving principally the rural schools.

Applying the "efficiency score card"²⁸ to the county libraries of the state we find that they are enabled to meet the test much more successfully for South Dakota conditions than most of the town libraries, located in towns under 4000 inhabitants. While there are serious spatial difficulties to overcome in the county unit, they are more than compensated by the larger number of people served and the more ample support.

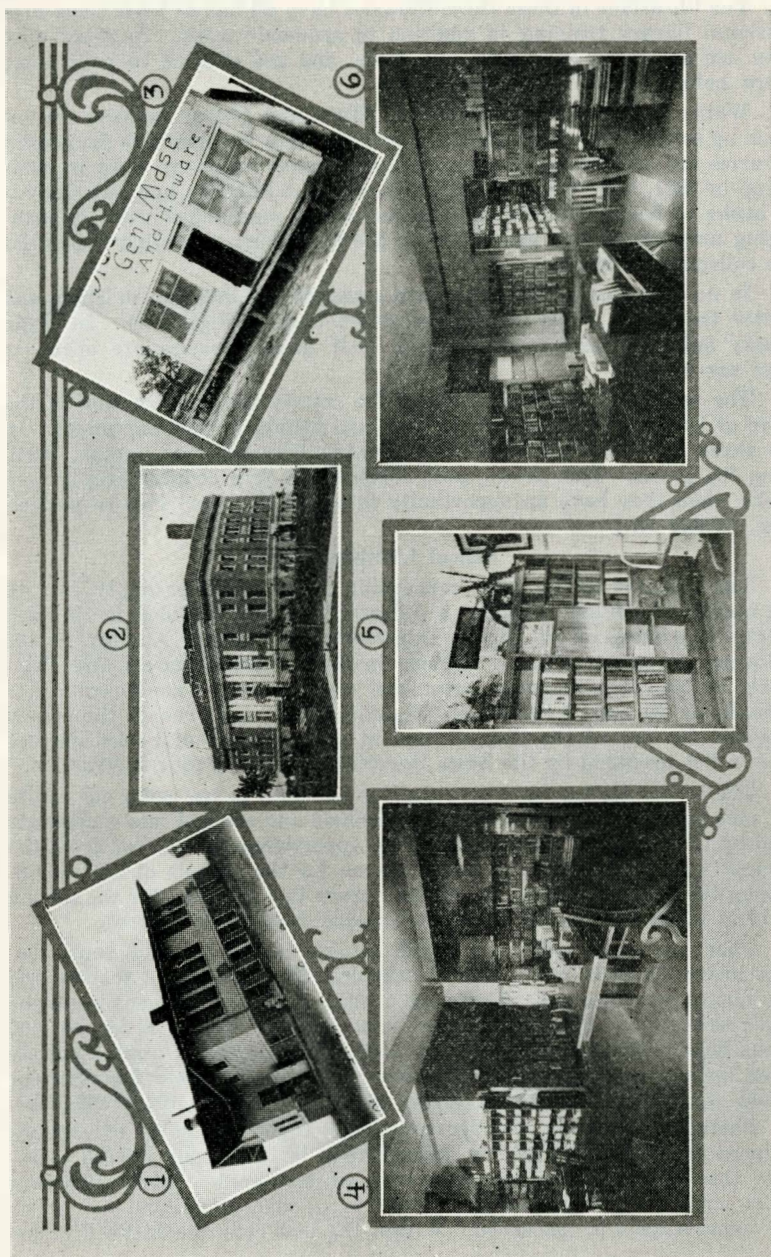
In each of the three main county library areas there are 4000 or more people. Thus in no case is it necessary to tax more than the \$1 per capita, in order to produce a budget of \$4,000 (Table IX).

²⁷ See text of county library law in the Appendix A.

²⁸ J. H. Kolb, research bulletin 66, Wisconsin Experiment Station.

Fig. 9.—Headquarters and typical branch stations of the Tripp county, (S. D.) library system. (1) Pleasant Valley consolidated school, branch library. (2) County court house, library headquarters. (3) Keyapaha branch library. (4) Interior view of adult section, headquarters library. (5) Millboro branch library, interior. (6) Office, juvenile department, headquarters library.

(See opposite page)



The librarians in these three libraries have all had at least some professional library training in addition to academic work. In every case they are employed on a full time basis, and are enabled to have some extra help.

While the number of volumes in Hyde and Potter counties do not come up to the 5,000 mark as yet, it must be kept in mind that the county libraries are still in their infancy. Hyde county began its work in 1920, Tripp in 1921, and Potter in 1925. None of the libraries had any nucleus of books to begin with, so an immense lot of mechanical work of cataloging and preparation has fallen on the librarians, retarding somewhat the collecting of books.

In no case has the county built a separate building, but in Tripp and Potter they have made use of the Court House (Figure 9). In Hyde county suitable quarters are rented. All three libraries are open six days per week.

The most significant feature of the county library situation is the more or less equal distribution of town and county library borrowers. In the three counties there are 3,984 country borrowers as against 3,840 from the towns. This shows quite conclusively that country people read books when they have an opportunity in which they feel free to participate. (Table IX.)

School Libraries

The statutes of the state concerning school libraries apply only to the public elementary schools. A Library Board is provided for in each county, consisting of the County Superintendent, County Auditor, States Attorney, Superintendent of Schools in independent districts and Principals of schools employing more than one teacher. This Board meets annually at the call of the County Superintendent and expends the money provided for out of the library fund in the purchase of books selected from a list prepared by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.²⁹

The school library fund provided for amounts to ten cents per capita for each person of school age. It is withheld and created into a separate fund by the County Treasurer from the apportionment received from the interest and income fund, or other income for the schools of his county. During the year the income under the library law provided for the adding of 19,74 books and 23,953 books were added from other sources.

There are some 5,305 such public schools in the State of South Dakota including 4,681 rural district schools, 125 consolidated schools and 499 independent districts. There are a total of 948,604 volumes in all the public school libraries of the state and a total enrollment of 137,460 pupils below high school age. This makes an average of approximately seven books per pupil enrolled, which is quite inadequate for efficient school use. About the same average has prevailed since 1920 (Table X).

Particular attention is called to the fact that the number of volumes replaced each year through the library fund is just about enough to replace the volumes which are worn out and destroyed. This means that books must be added from other sources or else stand still as far as any improvement is concerned. Within the last year the Little Citizens

²⁹ Library Laws of South Dakota in force July 1, 1924.

League has adopted as one of its projects the improvement and adding to the libraries of their respective schools.

As worthy and commendable as this project is, the method is too haphazard and uncertain for a great educational system involving nearly 80,000 school children in the elementary schools of the state.

Table X.—LIBRARY STATISTICS FOR RURAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN SOUTH DAKOTA.* (1920-1924)

	1924	1923	1922	1921	1920
Number Schools -----	4,681	4,763	4,715	4,693	4,749
Number of Pupils Enrolled					
below high school -----	78,448	78,957	78,750	76,577	77,966
Total Number Volumes -----	604,092	586,614	570,821	561,691	567,684
Avg. Number Volumes per pupil	7+	7+	7+	7+	7+
Number Volumes worn out					
or destroyed -----	26,217	13,133	15,311	15,391	12,217
Number Replaced through					
library fund -----	19,742	17,577	18,042	40,472	25,259
Volumes added through other					
sources -----	23,953	23,577	18,002	16,921	19,047
Total Number added					
during the year -----	43,695	41,154	36,044	57,393	44,306

*Based on data from biennial reports of the South Dakota State Superintendent of Public Instruction. (1920-1924.)

LIBRARY POLICY

As evidenced by the foregoing brief survey of library conditions and agencies in South Dakota, there are four general observations which one would seem to be warranted in making.

1. There is a conspicuous inequality of library opportunity at the present time between town and country districts.
2. In attempting to apply the "efficiency score card" to the 68 town and village libraries of the state, even after making considerable modification to fit into South Dakota conditions,³⁰ the great majority of them could not meet the test, largely on account of being organized with too small an area of support.
3. The public school library as now operated in the state is inadequate both in point of service and support to properly meet modern educational needs.
4. The county library seems to offer the best single solution to all three problems both from a town and rural standpoint in most parts of the state.

With these observations in mind the writer wishes to devote the balance of the bulletin to a brief consideration of certain additional points concerning county libraries that may arise in the mind of the reader, if the county library system is to be gradually extended over the state.

³⁰ See Section, "Library Conditions in South Dakota", pages 7 to 10.

County Library Law

As a matter of information, a copy of the present South Dakota county library law is inserted in the back of the bulletin as Appendix B³¹

After 40 per cent of the legal voters, living in at least 60 per cent of the taxing districts, have indicated by petition that they want a county library, the Board of County Commissioners is authorized and directed to establish such a county library service.

Attention is called to the fact that this county library service may be organized and operated in one of two different ways.

1. If there is no free public library in a county suitable or available for use as a central library of the county system, the County Commissioners appoint a library board who may then proceed to establish, regulate and maintain the library.

2. In counties where there are one or more free public libraries, the Board of County Commissioners may take these over under the control of the county according to such terms as may be agreed upon, or may contract with the one or more existing libraries for a term of five years to supply free service to all residents of the county.

In either case any taxing district in the county already maintaining a free public library through taxation, may if they so desire be excluded from participating in and supporting such a county library system. On this point, however, Miss Harriet Long, a recognized authority on county libraries, has this to say: "Almost without exception the union of local existing libraries with the county library is to be advised for the local library has everything to gain and nothing to lose by this arrangement."³²

The county library law as it now operates seems to be quite satisfactory with certain minor exceptions. It requires almost a majority consent of the voters before action can be taken to establish a county library service. As a matter of interest, in all three counties where county libraries have been organized, more than half of the voters in each county signed the petition for the county library before the project was actually launched.

Cost of Operating County Libraries

The cost of operating the county libraries in Hyde, Tripp and Potter for 1926 was 75, 48 and 83 cents, respectively, per capita. In column 7 the cost is shown in terms of \$1,000 worth of assessable property (Table XI).

In consideration of the increasing part which the printed page is playing in the average person's life at the present time, an interesting comparison can be made by noting the reading value obtainable under such a library system, and what a family would have to pay by buying the same reading material individually.

Service Rendered to Schools

The most important thing about a county library, however, is the service rendered.

One of the outstanding and increasing contributions that the county library is making is to the rural schools and to the rural children of the

³¹ Library laws of South Dakota, published by the South Dakota Free Library Commission (1924).

³² Miss Harriet C. Long, County Library Service, American Library Association, 1925, p. 76.

county. Table XII shows the number of books loaned by county libraries to the rural schools for 1926. Out of 234 rural schools in the three counties, 213, or 91 per cent of the schools borrowed book collections from their respective county library during 1926.

In most cases the county librarians loan collections of books directly to the teachers for the school. As a consequence it is not always possible to obtain accurate records of the total circulation among the pupils. However, the county librarians do know that the total number of books loaned to the 213 schools served in 1926 was 5,790 or an average of 27 books for each school. (Table XII.)

Table XI.—COST OF COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICE IN SOUTH DAKOTA COUNTIES.*
(1926)

Counties	Population (Total)	Year Established	Tax Levy in Mills	County Library Appropriation for year end- ing June 30 1926	Total expend- itures for year ending June 30, 1926	Cost per capita	Cost per \$1000 Assessed Property
Hyde -----	4,000	1920	.25	3979.79	3033.90	.75	.25
Tripp-----	14,032	1921	.19	6376.68	6715.62	.48	.19
Potter-----	5,052	1925	.27	4104.89	4233.24	.83	.27

*Based on seventh biennial report of the South Dakota Free Library Commission, 1926, p. 12.

In some of the older states such as California there seems to be a tendency for the rural school districts in many of the counties to even pool their own local library monies provided by the school library law and put them into the county library funds, because of the greater expertness in buying on the part of the county librarian, and the savings which can be effected when materials are bought in quantity.

In this way all of the supplementary materials and apparatus are furnished by the county libraries, including supplementary readers, dictionaries, encyclopedia, maps, globes, charts, pictures, magazines, stereographs, and even phonograph music records.

The County Superintendents and rural teachers operating under this system seem to be very enthusiastic about the results.³³

Organization Problems

The plan of a county library system is designed to bring to all of the people of a county regardless of where they live the same free and

Table XII.—BOOKS LOANED BY COUNTY LIBRARIES TO RURAL SCHOOLS.*
(1926)

Counties	Number of Schools and Pupils in County		Number of Schools Loaned to	Number of Books Loaned
	Schools	Pupils		
Hyde-----	50	543	50	1086
Tripp-----	135	2654	116	3254
Potter-----	49	662	47	1450
Total-----	234	3859	213	5790

*Based on data obtained from 1926 annual reports from county librarians.

33 California County Free Library Service to Schools, by Milton J. Ferguson, State Librarian 1924, pp. 18-38.

easy access to books which the residents of the larger towns have long enjoyed.³⁴

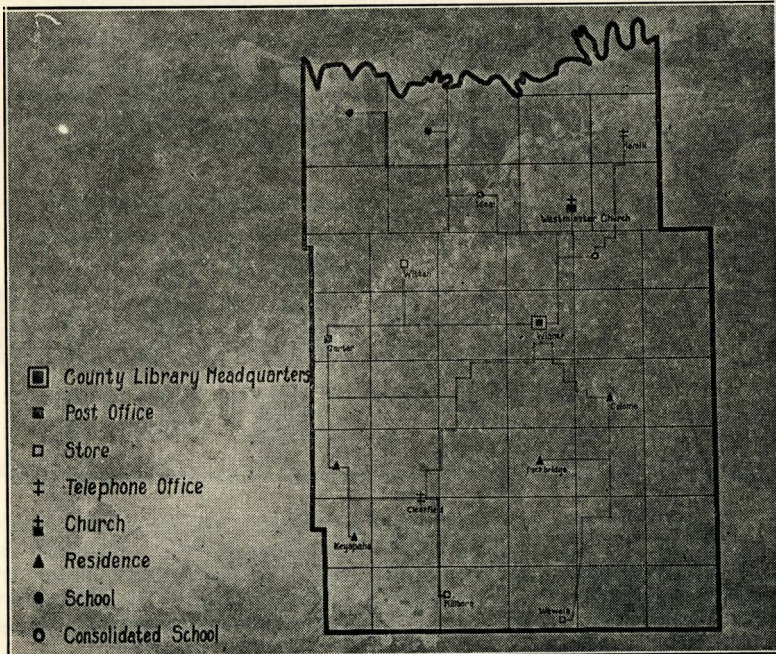


Fig. 10.—Tripp county library system, showing location of headquarters at Winner and 14 branch stations.

In order to do this, the emphasis is shifted from the usual town library procedure. Instead of the people going to the library headquarters, the library goes out to the people.

In a county library system, the headquarters are usually at some central point in the county, oftentimes at the county court house at the county seat (Figures 9 and 11). Under this plan, the headquarters serve as a book loaning station and reading room to those within easy reach, but mainly as a distributing center to those who do not live at the county seat. The latter can usually be served more conveniently to have books sent out to branches located at strategic points about the county. The branch station may be located in a creamery, store, post office, telephone office, church, school, or even a private residence (Figure 10). The main essentials are to have a room centrally located with reference to the local borrowers, and a branch librarian, who will give the necessary time and attention to looking after the loaning of the library materials and to keeping the necessary records. The branch librarian is usually paid on the basis of the number of books loaned.³⁵

³⁴ Miss Harriet C. Long, field librarian, Wisconsin State Free Library Commission, from an unpublished circular, 1927.

The location of the branch stations is determined upon by the county library board, who in turn is appointed by the county commissioners to represent the different sections of the county. The size, shape, topog-

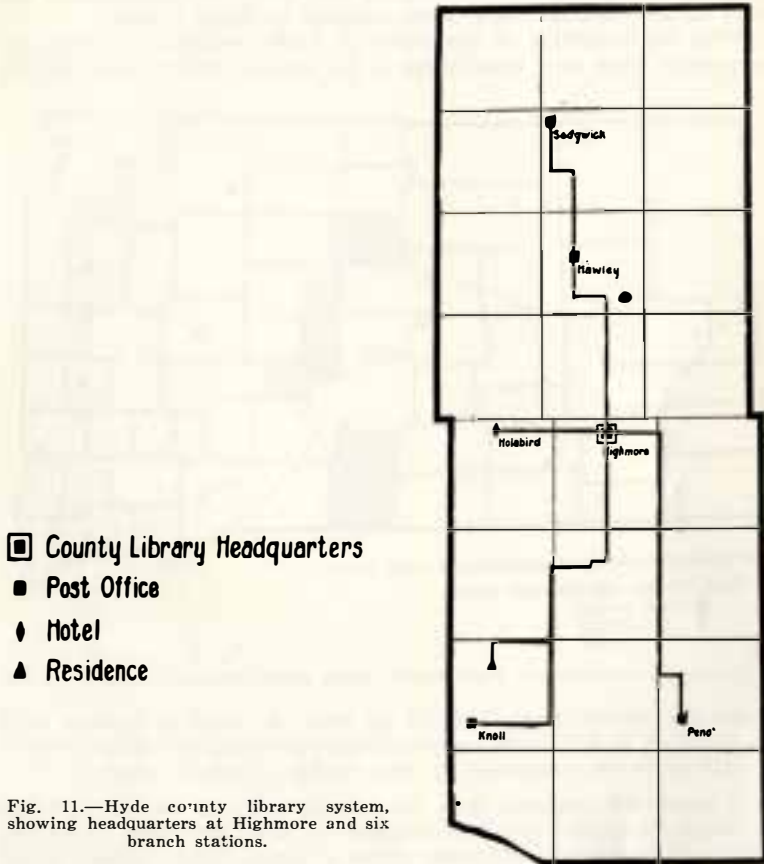


Fig. 11.—Hyde county library system, showing headquarters at Highmore and six branch stations.

raphy, and distribution of the population about the county naturally influence the location of the branches.

The number and kind of book collections sent to the various branch stations will naturally be governed by local demand. Individual requests for special books or materials that the branch does not have on hand are supplied promptly by mail service from the central library at headquarters.

35 Mr. Milton J. Ferguson, State Librarian of California says of their situation, "In California, in communities large enough to warrant it, a reading room is maintained in charge of a custodian who keeps the room open for whatever hours they are needed. Oftentimes these reading rooms are welcomed as a strong influence for good in small communities. They are supplied with newspapers and magazines and books, making a most acceptable social center."

Conclusions

After studying impartially the library conditions and agencies of the state, the writer is convinced of the entire practicability of the county library idea for most of the counties in South Dakota.

With the exception of the towns of 4,000 population or over, the incorporated town as a usual thing is too small a unit to satisfactorily

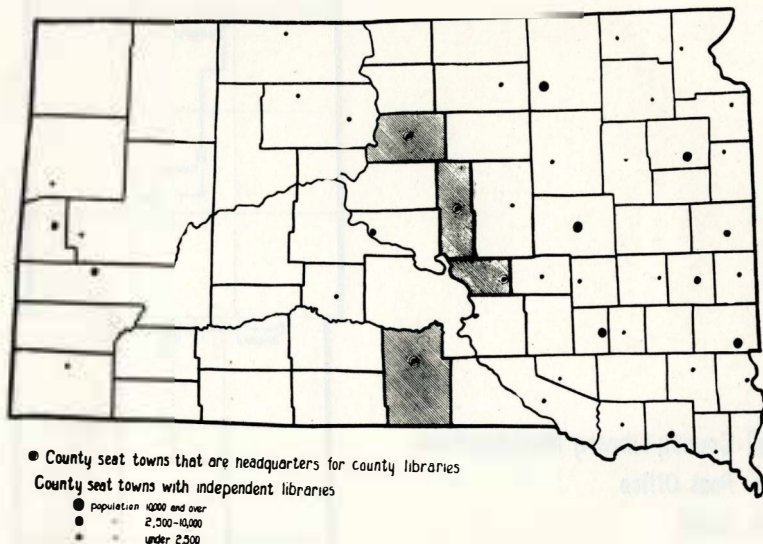


Fig. 12.—County seat towns in South Dakota having public libraries already established.

support a separate library unit of its own. In order to operate as a going concern, it will either cost too much per capita or else the service will have to be cut somewhere to keep within a limited budget.

If organized properly, with due consideration as to which of the two alternative plans are best adapted to local conditions, there are probably 40 counties in the state where a county library system would serve both town and country better than either are now being served.

Figure 12 shows the county seat towns already having public libraries. As yet very few of the counties have more than this one tax supported county seat public library within their boundaries. (Figure 5.) From the standpoint, therefore, of getting concerted support from all parts of a county this would seem to be a strategic period for county library action.

While both town and country can doubtless gain by adopting the county as a unit of service and support, it is the rural community and small town under 4,000 that have most to gain. The county library will bring to them at a reasonable cost the benefits of a large library which they could not obtain if operating independently.

APPENDIX A
County Libraries
1921 Session Laws

Section 1. When a petition is filed with the county auditor of any county in this state signed by at least forty per cent of the legal voters of such county, as shown by the vote cast for the governor at the last general election therein, which petition shall be signed in at least sixty per cent of the taxing districts of such county affected thereby, providing that the board of county commissioners establish a free library for such county, the said board of county commisisoners is authorized and is directed to establish such library, and in that event and for that purpose the provisions of this Act shall become effective and applicable, and in case a library is so established the county commissioners shall levy a suitable tax to maintain the same.

Section 2. If there is no free public library in such county, suitable or available for use as a central library of the county system, the board of county commissioners upon the filing of a petition provided for in Section 1 of this Act, shall appoint a board of county public library trustees for each county, consisting of five competent citizens, two of whom shall be women, and not more than one of whom shall be a member of the appointing board. One of said trustees shall be appointed for one year, two for two years, and two for three years, and annually thereafter, or whenever a vacancy may occur, for a term of three years, respectively, or until their successors are appointed and qualified. The said board of county public library trustees shall exercise such powers in establishing, regulating and maintaining a free public library as are given to them by this chapter. Such county public library trustees shall receive no compensation for their services as the trustees. The county librarian shall be the secretary of such board of county library trustees.

Section 3. Such county library trustees shall qualify within ten days after their appointment by taking, subscribing and filing with the county auditor of such county, an oath that they will support the Constitution of the United States and of this State, and that he or she will faithfully and impartially to the best of her knowledge and ability perform all the duties of county public library trustee.

Section 4. It shall be the duty of the county public library trustees to provide suitable accommodations for the free public library and for the accommodations of the public using the same. They shall select books, papers and periodicals for such county free public library, and they may exclude from such library any reading matter they may deem harmful; they may accept gifts of books, money or property for the use and benefit of such public library. They shall appoint a librarian and other persons necessary for the care of such library and fix their compensation. Any librarian so appointed shall have the qualifications and training as shall be approved by the State Library Commission. The county public library trustees shall make all necessary rules and regulations pertaining to the use and selection of the books and periodicals of said library and shall determine what books may be circulated and what shall be retained in the library for reference purposes only, and

they may provide for the circulation of the books in the rural communities of such county, and said public library trustees shall have the power to place certain books upon a pay shelf, for which a reasonable charge may be made for the use thereof.

Section 5. On or before the first day of August of each year, the county public library trustees shall make careful estimate of the necessary expenses for the maintenance and extension of the county free public library for the ensuing year and shall certify the same to the board of county commissioners of the county in which the library is located; the said board of county commissioners shall levy tax upon the taxable property of the county sufficient therefor, but not to exceed in any one year a rate of one-half of one mill upon the taxable property of such county, which taxes shall be extended and collected as are other taxes, which tax when collected shall constitute the county free library fund of such county and shall be credited to the county library fund and the cost of maintenance and extension of such county free library shall be paid therefrom, which fund shall be paid out upon warrants drawn by the county auditor of the county based upon vouchers filed by the board of county public library trustees. Provided, that in making the levy of taxes for the support of county free library by the board of county commissioners of any county of the state, it shall omit from such levy any taxing district that may at the time of making such levy be maintaining a free public library by revenue derived from taxes in such taxing district and residents of any taxing district so omitted shall be entitled to the benefits of such county library only by complying with such rules and regulations as may be made by the public library trustees and by payment of such fees and charges as may be required by such rules.

Section 6. In counties where there are one or more free libraries, the board of county commissioners are authorized and empowered to take over the care and control of the same upon such terms and conditions as may be agreed upon by and between such board of county commissioners and the then existing board of library trustees of such libraries. The board of county commissioners may contract with the library board of such county for free service to all residents of the county upon such terms as may be agreed upon between such commissioners and the library board for a term of five years to be thereafter renewed, if terms can be agreed upon, for terms not less than five nor more than ten years. Provided, also, that if there is more than one such free library in the county, the board of county commissioners may contract with each of such library boards for such free service if in its judgment advisable. Provided further, that in case the board of county commissioners and said library board of such city, town or township are not able to agree upon terms satisfactory to both, that in that event the board of county commissioners shall proceed to appoint a board of county public library trustees as hereinbefore provided. It is also provided herein that in case twenty per cent or more of the cost of maintaining any such library thus contracted with shall be borne by the county, then there shall be two members added to such board of library trustees to be appointed by the county commissioners of the county to act upon county affairs in connection therewith.

Section 7. It shall be the duty of the county public library trustees, or the public library trustees contracted with as hereinbefore provided, on or before the first day of August in each year to make a report, in duplicate, filing one with the board of county commissioners, and the other with the Free Library Commission, upon blanks provided by the Free Library Commission for such purpose, which report shall be for the fiscal year ending June 30 next preceding such report; providing, however, that in counties where the county commissioners contract with the library board, then and in that event, such report shall be made in triplicate, the additional copy to be filed with the body appointing such board.

Section 8. All Acts and parts of Acts in conflict with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed.

Approved March 12, 1921.

APPENDIX B
Library Service in Towns and Villages in South Dakota*
(Arranged according to size of towns)
Towns over 2501

Towns	Population	Librarian		Volumes in Library	Budget		Building Open		Borrowers		Circulation
		Full† time + or —	Special† training and experience + or —		Receipts	Expenditures	Days	Hours	Town	Country	
Sioux Falls	30,127	+	+	26,802	28,916	16,646	6	6¾	16,772	8	87,215
Aberdeen	15,035	+	+	13,599	8,347	7,999	7	11	4,835		60,239
Watertown	10,319	+	+	10,501	10,118	8,635	7	11	5,705		57,994
Huron	10,204	+	+	9,163	9,902	6,602	7	8½	5,290	46	47,107
Mitchell	10,119	+	+	12,387	11,830	6,494	6	12	4,396	36	57,203
Rapid City	7,465	+	+	5,908	8,536	4,832	7	9	4,843		33,747
Lead§	6,810	+	+	15,531			6	8	350	50	45,486
Yankton	5,507	+	+	9,167	6,500	4,191	7	5			23,947
Brookings	4,613	+	+	5,617	4,147	3,412	6	7½	2,293	272	24,061
Madison	4,386	+	+	5,254	5,550	4,825	6	5	1,914	171	26,254
Pierre	3,560	+	+	8,476		4,286	6	6½	1,534	11	17,586
Vermillion	3,410	+	—	5,192	2,903	2,564	7	5			16,675
Mobridge	2,822	+	—	1,285	1,663	1,306	6	5	877	1	5,790
Redfield	2,751	+	+	5,163	3,517	3,053	6	7½	1,050	50	13,855
Canton	2,562	+	—	4,573	2,559	2,370	6	5	1,435	84	32,392
Towns from 250—2500											
Hot Springs	2,447	+	—	4,059	1,913	2142.	6	5½	961	32	14,073
Milbank	2,444	+	—	4,083	2,742	2152.	6	7	1,978	105	18,238
Deadwood	2,432	+	+	6,050	3,693	2477.	6	8	1,970		14,484
Flandreau	1,850	—	—	4,122	927	905.	3	6	705	210	5,580
Webster	1,687	—	—								
Dell Rapids	1,582	—	—	3,597	2,332	1891.	4	6	685	5	6,792
Miller	1,528	—	—	3,247	1,452	1275.	6	5	519	23	12,597
Chamberlain	1,521	—	—	2,072	2,392	1183.	6	2	756	40	4,604
Beresford	1,507	—	—	883	883	587.	2	5	697		5,755
Sisseton	1,468	—	—	4,306	2,85.17	1842.51	6	5	766	328	8,975
Sturgis	1,448	—	—	2,404	391.20	386.20	5	3	503		7,400
Tyndall	1,370	+	—	3,427	3615.67	2732.94	6	6	627	256	17,176
Wagner	1,444	—	—	1,966	797.12	792.12	4	4	490	20	7,868
Wess'ton Spgs.	1,414	—	—	1,768	2111.61	1119.77	3	5	884	198	7,596
Parker	1,309	—	—	2,396	274.80	208.83	2	5	241		6,039
Clark	1,279	—	—	1,545	346.43	344.50	2	4½	82	15	1,565
Belle Fourche§	1,244	—	—								

Digest

Next to the church and the school the public library is becoming our most useful community institution. Page 3.

South Dakota has a total of 72 free public libraries, most of them being located in and supported by cities, towns and villages. Page 8.

The majority of rural people in the state are without local public library service. In 62 out of 66 counties the only public libraries are those supported independently by the towns and villages. In these same 62 counties 96.8 per cent of the borrowers are town people, while 3.2 per cent are farmers. The former spend 37.8 cents per capita for library service, and the latter 4.2 cents Pages 7 to 11.

An entirely different situation prevails in the four counties with county libraries. Here the unit of both service and support is the county. Both town and county people share alike in the expense, management, and the service. Under these conditions the farm people respond quickly to library opportunity, there being actually in the four counties a larger number of country borrowers than among those living in towns. Pages 18 to 30.

Although there are 72 independent town and village libraries in the state most of them are too small to be efficient library units. The unit of their support, in all but 26 cases, is less than 1500 people. When the supporting area is so small either the cost per capita has to be excessive, or else the quality of service suffers. Pages 15 to 18.

The solution of the problem for both town and country under South Dakota conditions seems to be the county library. It can meet the test for an efficient library unit, as agreed on by library authorities, and yet the costs per capita are not high.

Pages 21 to 23

There are probably 40 counties in the state where a county library system would serve both the town and country districts better than they are now being served and at not to exceed an average cost of from 50 cents to \$1.00 per capita per year.

Page 26.