

June 23, 1961

Mr. Lucian W. White  
Associate Director for Public Service Departments

Dear Mr. White:

Within the past two years, the use of the Music Library has very nearly doubled, according to circulation records. Within the past ten years, the collection itself has doubled in size. These factors, considered with the many new programs, procedures, and services introduced this past year, will perhaps give some idea of how extremely busy we have been. The news that we will have an additional half-time clerk beginning next year was greeted with more gratitude than we have had the opportunity to express. With two full-time professional librarians and the equivalent of two full-time clerks, the Music Library can continue to move forward so long as we have enough student assistants to carry on the bulk of the routine work. And the routine work is considerable when the circulation exceeds 75,000 pieces during the year!

To anticipate the report, here is a summary of some of the accomplishments of the past year: a complete revision of the periodical check-in procedure including an inventory of periodicals, a conference with the wind and brass faculty of the School of Music to discuss the classification of wind chamber music, eight meetings of the Music Library Committee have been held, the order and continuations files have been cleaned out, the shelf list has been shifted and expanded, the locked case has been completely re-shelved, the file of publishers' catalogs has been revised, the supply shelves have been cleaned and reorganized, a group of the most used periodicals have been brought from Room 350 to the reading room, a survey has been made of non-current periodical holdings and a desiderata file made, and the first inventory in ten years of the music in the collection has been taken. The following programs have been begun: a comprehensive acquisition program including separate desiderata files of both in-print and out-of-print materials, a survey of the phonorecord collection, continuous shelf-reading, short-title cataloging of six presently uncataloged collections, the regular searching for missing items, remarking, the correction of the large number of cataloging problems which exist, finishing the inventory of the orchestra library, processing uncataloged microfilms, and conferences with individual faculty members and students.

While we feel that this has been a year of real accomplishment, the number of projects and programs waiting to be done is large, and at times very discouraging: publishing an accessions list regularly, transferring materials between the Music Library and the Main Library according to their importance and appropriateness to the location, completion of a good desiderata file of out-of-print books and music, completion of the survey of the book and music collections, a survey of reference materials both for acquisitions purposes and to insure appropriate locations, the institution of a new system for storing and circulating the large choral music collection of multiple copies, the correction of all the problems found in the recent inventory, the surveying of current periodicals being received, and the recataloging of the wind chamber music and the miniature scores.



If the Music Library has made great improvements in the recent past, as I am sure it has, this is not to say that it compares as well among music libraries as the University of Illinois Library compares among university libraries, or as the School of Music compares among schools of music. The University of Illinois Music Library remains incapable of supporting individual research in a number of subject areas and periods of history. A larger acquisitions budget will be needed to correct a number of deficiencies and at the same time keep up with current publications.

A large number of pieces of equipment have been requested. All are important and urgently needed, and no priority has been indicated for them.

The Library Administration's policy of expecting the departmental libraries to hold only working collections (with Main Library stacks storing less used materials) is understandable with long-established and large departmental libraries. But the Music Library has never from its establishment had adequate quarters which were designed for library purposes. It was given a beautiful reception and lounge room, but no areas designed for book shelves, card catalogs, stacks, study carrels, listening facilities, staff work space, or offices. In the present quarters all of these areas are either non-existent or inadequate. Once the Music Library has quarters designed for a music library, with room to unify the collection and allow for reasonable expansion, then it would seem only good library practice to keep the collection weeded and within certain limits of the quarters (so long as storage facilities are available). New departmental libraries every 20 years is an obvious impossibility. However, we continue to look forward to the day when the Music Library will have its own new location.

Respectfully submitted,

Thor E. Wood  
Music Librarian