

small collection will work economically and efficiently. Indeed, the curator of silver at the Smithsonian was enthusiastic over the possibilities of the system, providing her with a useful means of categorizing her materials. In short, for certain types of collections, this system may be one answer for the mechanical means of information retrieval.—*Marcus A. McCorison, American Antiquarian Society.*

**Interlibrary Request and Loan Transactions Among Medical Libraries of the Greater New York Area.** By Lee Ash and Vernon R. Bruette. New York: The Survey of Medical Library Resources of Greater New York, 1966. 199p. \$5. (66-26014).

Interlibrary loans are big business. This survey provides badly needed facts and suggests trends. While some of the findings are hardly unexpected, there are a few surprises.

The survey was set up in 1963 by funds from the Health Research Council of the City of New York. Gertrude Annan served as principal investigator with Jacqueline Felter and Erich Meyerhoff as co-investigators. The Medical Library Center of New York supplied office space and equipment. The original broad charge to the surveyors was soon narrowed to concentrate on interlibrary loans.

The surveyors pragmatically decided to use all of New York state and the area from Groton, Connecticut, through northern New Jersey for loans and requests. In addition, loans made to the survey libraries from the College of Physicians of Philadelphia and the National Library of Medicine were included. Questionnaires were sent to 441 libraries, 278 returned completed reports, and 224 agreed to take part in the survey. Of the 217 libraries which remained in the program for the full year, seventy-nine provided the bulk of the material.

The data used, which included requests for original materials and for photoreproductions, amounted to 99,452 transactions (27,825 requests by the survey libraries, and 71,627 requests to the survey libraries).

Of the serial requests made by the survey libraries 42.1 per cent were made by nineteen commercial concerns. The requests received by the survey libraries showed that

50.1 per cent came from the commercial concerns (mostly pharmaceutical houses). The National Library of Medicine received 14.5 per cent of all serial requests by the survey libraries. Some 9.6 per cent of the total requests went unfilled.

One of the biggest surprises for the surveyors was that almost 18 per cent of the requests by the survey libraries were made outside the survey area. This has some important implications for regional planning.

Tables break down the transactions by borrower, lender, and type, date, language, and subject of publication. The source records have been kept at the Center and are available for further study. The surveyors hope to publish elsewhere more detailed tables showing rank orders and numbers of requests and loans for the frequently-used journals.

In addition to drawing attention to the need for detailed cost studies (to include both direct and indirect elements), the surveyors conclude by emphasizing that the burden on the larger libraries must be relieved, that these libraries should "supplement" not "supply." They also stress the importance of on-the-spot service in the small libraries.

This is a census of a region and not a sample that could validly be extended over the country. It is a valuable report that should have a profound effect in the New York region and could have an effect nationally if other groups pick up the challenge and make comparable studies.—*William K. Beatty, Northwestern University.*

**Books in America's Past. Essays Honoring Rudolph H. Gjelsness.** Ed. by David Kaser. (Published for the Bibliographical Society of the University of Virginia.) Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, c.1966. x 279p. \$8.75.

When Rudolph H. Gjelsness retired in 1965, he had served the profession of librarianship for more than forty-five years, the last twenty-five years as chairman of the department of library science at the University of Michigan. This tastefully designed volume was published as a token of respect for Gjelsness' long, distinguished, and fruitful career as librarian, library educator, and scholar.

The volume contains thirteen contribu-