

Libraries

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KNOW YOUR LIBRARY PATTERN

Introduction

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As any survey must of necessity be based on values, we introduce KNOW YOUR LIBRARY PATTERN¹ with the following characteristics:

North Carolina, one of the states in the Southeastern Region, fits into the pattern which Odum² uses in characterizing that region: rural, farm tenancy, many children, tobacco, cotton, textile mills, poverty, and potential plenty. Although the state ranks "42nd" in the desirable features of the United States, it is in the upper ranking of the Southeastern Region.

The sound political organization of the state has all the essential powers of government to be exercised through the peoples' representation. The 100 counties, which serve as political units of representation and administration for many fields including health, public welfare, library service and education easily fit into state-wide planning. Actually the county is little more than an agency of the state and its commissioners administer functions which the state imposes upon it.

The 52,712 square mile area of the state extending 503 miles from the coast to the mountains is geographically divided into four distinct areas which must be noted in any consideration of state planning.

The vast swampy *Tidewater Region*, extending from 30 to 80 miles inland, is very sparsely settled and almost entirely rural. Transportation is poor and peoples are excessively individualistic.

The *Coastal Plain*, comprising one-fourth of the area of the state, has a dense agricultural population and produces one-half of the tobacco and cotton crop wealth. A large ratio of Negroes results in a high farm tenancy.

The *Piedmont Region*, comprising 45 per cent of the land area, is producing four-fifths of the state's textile, (continued on page three)

¹ Editorial, p. 4.

² Odum, H. W. *American Regionalism*, 1938.

(continued from page one)

tobacco, and furniture manufacturing output.

The beautiful mountainous *Carolina Highlands*, comprising 17 counties is definitely rural and individualistic, partially dependent on tourist trade for income.

The state is predominantly rural with more than a fourth Negro population. The many young people obviously place a great burden on public facilities and the adult tax paying population.

Local facilities are being equalized through State Aid and State-wide Planning. State-aid moneys expended for trained public librarians is gradually increasing the public library scope and unifying college, school, and public library facilities. Research resources, described in Dr. Louis R. Wilson's¹ *GEOGRAPHY OF READING*, are rapidly being made more accessible to any corner of the state through co-operation between large institutions and small public libraries.

This survey, it is hoped, will throw light on unifying forces as well as state-wide plans for the near and post-war future.

¹ Wilson, Louis R. *Geography of Reading*, p. 117-155.