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The Notre Dame Law Department was established in 1869. The first published mention of a law school library was not until 20 years later when the Columbia Law Times described the small collection of 2,500 volumes as “spacious, well-lighted,” and “well-ventilated.”

In these early years development of the law library’s collection and staff was slow. The Law School did not appoint the first law librarian, John Whitman, until 1925. His selection coincided with the Law School’s accreditation by the American Association of Law Schools. By 1930, after more than 60 years of existence, the library had only grown to 10,000 volumes. This modest collection did not require a large staff. In fact, in 1942, a single librarian, Lora Lashbrook, oversaw the entire operation, while serving concurrently as teacher of research methodology, law school registrar, and secretary to both the dean and the faculty. Marie Lawrence succeeded to the post of librarian in 1945. She guided the collection for almost 25 years. At her retirement the library stood at 69,000 volumes—still quite small by American Bar Association standards.

The enlargement of the library’s physical space in 1973 came under the leadership of the next librarian, Kathleen C. Farmann. Expansion and increased funding of the library, made possible in part by a gift from the Kresge Foundation, were welcomed but were nevertheless insufficient for the library’s continued growth. In 1985 the University committed itself to building a library that would support scholarship of the highest order, and it needed a librarian to spearhead that campaign. Roger F. Jacobs, then the librarian of the U.S. Supreme Court, became the fifth Notre Dame law librarian.

The fruits of the University’s investment in the library are apparent. In the past 20 years library staff, seating, and shelf space have more than doubled. The total physical area of the library has increased by a third, and the number of computer workstations has grown from 2 to 49. The law library collection has grown significantly and now comprises more than 634,000 volumes. Conversion to the Library of Congress classification system is complete, and the collection is totally searchable through a Web-based catalog.

The progress of the past will proceed in the future as the library strives toward building a leading national research facility.
MAIN FLOOR
Circulation/Reserve Desk
Computing Room
Microform Room and Annex
Photocopyers
Research Librarians
Rest Rooms

MEZZANINE
Center for Civil and Human Rights
Instructional Lab
Quiet Reading Area
Study Rooms

STACKS 1 and 2
Call numbers: KF 1 through KF 4499
STACK LEVEL ONE
Call numbers: HB - Q
STACK LEVEL TWO
Call numbers: KF 4500 through KF 9999, A - HA
SMALL COMPACT STORAGE
Regional Reporters
LARGE COMPACT STORAGE
Call numbers: R - Z
Legal Periodicals

D I R E C T O R Y  ( a r e a  c o d e  5 7 4 )

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