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# Mrs. Sprague, 'We Hate To See You Go'

By GRACE ARCHER

ALLEDALE — Mrs. Hilda Sprague, checking out of Memorial Library this week after 14 years as town librarian, had some reassuring words for parents of youthful television fans.

The "one-eyed monster" in the living room definitely isn't extinguishing the appeal of good books or relegating reading "for fun" into the ash-pit of lost arts. On the contrary, she feels that in some ways TV has sparked reading.

Frequently, children have seen something on television and then can't wait to come into the library to get the book, she said. For example: a dramatization of "Rabbit Hill," a children's story by Robert Lawson, was aired and "well done, too." Since that time, Mrs. Sprague said, the book has been in great demand and has

scarcely ever remained in the library.

### Was Volunteer

Mrs. Sprague's experience in observing and catering to the literary appetites of Borough residents of all ages pre-dates 1953 when the town took the library over and she became a paid librarian. She had earlier served as a volunteer when the facility was operated by a library association.

And still earlier, in 1942 when she first came to Allendale, her genuine love of books and reading lead her straight to the library which she has since seen — along with the borough itself — "growed like Topsy."

The 1942 vintage library was almost primitive," Mrs. Sprague recalled with very few children's books. The budget then was very limited and since the public school

had a library, the emphasis was on adult reading matter.

Mrs. Sprague's predecessor was Mrs. William Lee, librarian for many years and who, with her husband, contributed immeasurably

to the local library. (To the present building erected on Franklin Turnpike in 1926, the Mary K. Lee room was added in the 1930s, almost doubling the shelf and floor space of the library.)

### Raft of Changes

A great many changes have taken place at the library since the town took it over 14 years ago, Mrs. Sprague said. The building had previously had a coal-burning furnace, grey cement floors and no lavatory facilities, all of which came in for immediate attention. Although there was not too great a budget under which to operate at first, this was gradually increased and with it, the children's section was built up. Other areas were expanded as well.

The borough's phenomenal growth — current population is more than 6,000, almost triple that of 1942 — has once again caused the library to bulge a little at the seams, Mrs. Sprague said, relating that this year a consultant has been hired both to make a study of present facilities and advise what is needed based on present population.

Planning for expanded facilities has been "in the works" for the past several years and added her suggestions and advice, based on her experience, during that time.

The coming expansion program and the interest and excitement of watching it develop only adds to Mrs. Sprague's reluctance to leave Allendale. However, since her husband, Austin, retired on March 1 after 25 years as an auditor with the Susquehanna Railroad, future plans are for moving into their now-winterized summer home in Buehill, Pa.

How does she plan to fill her time after such busy days for the past many busy years?

### Reading, Of Course

Helping out in the church library of the small Pennsylvania community, for one thing, and then reading, of course, she said. After many years of having to devote so much of her own reading time to

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HAPPY ANTICIPATION of retirement is not without a tinge of sadness for Mrs. Hilda Sprague as she empties her desk at Allendale Memorial Library. The town's librarian for 14 years, she has watched both Allendale and its number of readers grow by leaps and bounds.

In the years since, Archer's 14 different ministers have performed 856 additional baptisms, officiated at over 4,500 Sunday morning worship services and 396 marriage ceremonies—including last Saturday's, when Doris Atkins of Wyc-off became the bride of John Stenner of Allendale.

The legitimate aim of criticism is to direct attention to excellent.—Christian N. B.

improving the church's parking facilities. According to the Rev. Franklin W. Thurston, the church's pastor, early records show that the first sacrament performed in 1876 was the baptism of Augusta Connor Smith, a three-year-old girl who had been born in Hong Kong. At that time, the sanctuary was still uncompleted and the ceremony took place "on a floor of wood shavings beside a font placed on a carpenter's bench."