The Libraries at St. John’s
Bordering on one of Minnesota's prettiest lakes, and near the lovely
Wataab, surrounded by a picturesque forest, four miles from St. Joseph—
the nearest village—stands St. John's College, an institution favorably
known to the greater and better portion of our citizens for these many
years.

The St. Paul & Pacific Railroad passes through the College lands. A large
and substantial building, 315 ft. from, a valuable library, a flourishing Col-
lege, a thriving community, show that the Benedictine Order, established
A. D. 525, is, as of yore, fulfilling its august mission. As early as 1493, thir-
teen members of this order, under their leader, Dom Bernardo Boil, landed
with Columbus, on Montserrat, one of the West India Islands, to com-
merce in the New World the great things which the order had begun and
nobly done in the Old, the education and civilization of peoples and nations.
Construction Dates for sections of SJU’s Quadrangle building

Dates from http://www.csbsju.edu/sju-archives/sjuhistory/sjubuildings/quadranglebuilding
Library locations at St. John's
1870 - 1921

Source:
Roloff, Ronald W., OSB.
St. John's University
Library: An Historical
Evaluation. Master's
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/u/?SjUArchives.6314
“The first abbey library was on the second floor of the wing adjoining the south tower of the church, in a large room facing east. The library had about 4000 volumes in 1880.”

Saint John’s University, Collegeville, Minnesota: A Sketch of its History, by Alexius Hoffmann, OSB, Chapter V

http://www.csbsju.edu/sjuarchives/sjuhistory/booksaboutstjohns/hoffmannbook/hoffmannchapter5#librarymove
Library locations at St. John's 1870 - 1971

First floor rooms
Second floor rooms

Classrooms
Monastery
Study
Nuns

Abbey Library
1857-1866
(1st floor)

Abbey Church
"The circulating library, which at that time contained about 2,000 bound volumes, among them many valuable reference works, was henceforth daily at the disposal of those students who were ambitious to avail themselves of every opportunity to supplement their course of study by judicious reading. Shortly, magazines and newspapers were added to the equipment."

*Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota: A Sketch of Its History, by Alexius Hoffmann, OSB, Chapter V*
Library locations at St. John's 1870 - 1971

Legend:
- First floor rooms
- Second floor rooms

- Students Library 1870-1871
- Classrooms
- Monastery
- Study Halls
- Abbey Church
- Abbey Library 1896-1901
“Work at excavation for the library building was begun April 12th [1901] and within a month the foundation walls were completed... The contract for erection of the library was let to Mr. J. Heimann of St. Cloud for $13,100.”

Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota: A Sketch of Its History, by Alexius Hoffmann, OSB, Chapter V
“On the ground floor is the abbey library, which now contains about 21,000 volumes; on the second floor is the museum with office and storeroom. On the third floor are the photograph gallery and twelve music rooms, each furnished with either a piano or an organ.”

Rollof, Ronald, OSB,
St. John’s University Library: An Historical Evaluation
“The apparent incongruity of a music department being attached to a library did not present practical difficulties during these years... the library was a walled preserve which students did not enter either to study or browse and which members of the community used only by appointment.”

Worship & Work p. 229
“It was not until the advent of a more developed college program in the late 1920’s that the building was gradually given over to full library uses.”  
Worship & Work p.229
Alcuin Library under construction,
1964-1966
In addition to regular library services, Saint John’s library offers special opportunities for research. The Benedictine tradition of Saint John’s monastic community has inspired the acquisition of many important works in the field of medieval and monastic history, Benedictine spirituality, the liturgy, and Gregorian chant. In the field of liturgy the collection is one of the best in this country.
The mezzanine originally had bookstacks.
John Helgeland (Theology) and Ginny Clendenin
Br. Richard Oliver and Violetta Pintado, “the first staff member engaged jointly by CSB-SJU.” 1968-09 Volume 03 Number 01 Landmarks p.3
http://cdm.csbsju.edu/cdm/ref/collection/CSBArchives/id/6593
Fr. Benjamin Stein, OSB
...the great 1976 Alcuin stacks disaster
(...reopened at Clemens Library in 2013)
The Libraries at St. John’s

Compiled in April 2015 from resources in the SJU Archives by Peggy Landwehr Roske, CSB/SJU Archivist