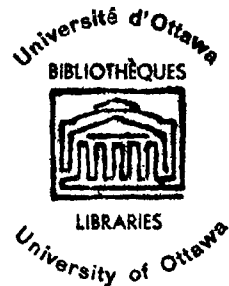


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GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS: ADMINISTRATION

by James N. Nalty

Thesis presented to the Library School
of the University of Ottawa as partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Library Science



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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

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INTRODUCTION

The hypothesis of this thesis is that government publications are a category of records that are distinctly apart from other library resources. If they must be acquired in any considerable quantity they should be separated from the main collection and given procedures of treatment that take account of the marked differences between government and commercial publications.

A number of procedures may be devised for the special handling of government material and these procedures will vary with the size of the collection and the resources available. It is not the purpose of this paper to act as a handbook of operation (although that would be a worthy undertaking) but rather to present the problems, to formulate some principles and to propose lines of approach compatible with the effective handling of such publications.

Reference is frequently made to the situation as it exists and to current methods, as least as far as the Canadian area is concerned. This is a necessary setting to any survey of the matter.

The terms "government documents" or "documents" will often be used in place of the more precise term of "government publications" as this is the general practice

of librarians in this field. The former terms are not strictly correct because they may apply to government papers that are not government publications. However when used in proper context they should not confuse.

CHAPTER I

THE SITUATION

Government publications are, almost without question, the most difficult of library materials. The difficulty arises not on a single point but in nearly every aspect of handling, from ordering to shelving. This is the consensus of most who have written on the subject in any depth and with any considerable background. There is the often quoted remark of Alton P. Tisdel, a former U.S. Superintendent of Documents, to the effect that government publications "have long been the terror of librarians and the despair of almost everyone who has attempted to make use of them."¹ Yet this was written in 1936 and principally about United States publications. What would Tisdel have said today in view of the proliferation of government agencies, the number of new independent countries, the greatly increased number of international bodies and, finally, just the sheer increase in volume of material?

¹ Laurence F. Schmeckebier, Government Publications and Their Use, Washington, The Brookings Institution, 1936 (The Brookings Institution Studies in Administration, No. 33) Foreword by Alton P. Tisdel, p. vii.

1. The Role of Government Publications.

Equally, there is little question about the value of government publications and this value increases as governments move into fields of social and scientific activity that previously were in the private domain. David Estes put the matter well when he wrote some years ago:

Government publications are a most important form of library material. In many subjects they are a rich and fundamental source of information which cannot be neglected, especially by students of history, political science, and sociology. Many publications are transcripts of original records and constitute primary source materials in the history of government administration. Others, such as annual reports, contain accounts of executive officers of the work of their offices. Numerous series published by various agencies and departments provide statistics for measuring social and economic changes.²

Even this does not say everything that could be said. In many areas they are not only the primary source but the only source. Frequently the government monograph, written by experts, well documented and drawing upon material not available to the private individual, covers the subject so thoroughly and authoritatively that no one would attempt to duplicate the work. More and more, key government documents

² David E. Estes, "Government Publications in the Classroom", College and Research Libraries, Vol. 20, No. 1, 1959, p. 78.

tend to express view points and make recommendations so that it is impossible to be well informed or even informed at all without going to the original paper. In many newly formed countries the government publication is almost the only publication of any sort. Cost is also a large factor. There are few individuals, associations or foundations that can undertake a study of any magnitude without outside and usually government assistance. All too often this makes the result a government publication.

The old concept of a government document as a statement of fact and a record of transactions has long since disappeared. These were the debates and sessional papers which were the raw material of administration. Today governments have entered the fields of analysis and studies. The result is to lower the level at which a government publication is essential for research.

2. The Difficulties of Use.

However, Estes continues, "the value of government publications is matched... by the difficulty of using them."³ Here he is looking at only one aspect of the problem for, as has been noted, such publications offer problems at every hand and there is no single area of difficulty.

³ Ibid., p. 78.

Nevertheless, the difficulty of using them is perhaps the keystone of the whole problem. Because they are difficult to use (and this applies to everyone, students, faculty and librarians), they tend to be neglected by all but the dedicated researcher. Because they tend to be neglected there appears less effort to resolve problems in this area. For example, it is common practice now for academic libraries to form a separate documents section for the purpose of improving the government publications situation. The documents in such sections usually cease to be catalogued with the rest of the collection yet frequently no other adequate classification is introduced. The end result is that these documents are not even represented in the main catalogue and access by subject is lost.

There are solutions to the problem, one of which is simply that of classifying the documents in one form or another. The Guelph library system is the most comprehensive approach but even this will only locate those documents which are actually in the library and have been given a coding. The commonest solution is to assemble all possible catalogues and guides that relate to government publications of whatever country. This makes for a formidable composition of miscellany. Science apart, there are not even partially adequate indexes.

Official government catalogues are nearly all based on the assumption that the searcher knows what is required in terms of a specific document. If the hearings of a particular committee are needed, the search may not take long but if the requirements are less well defined then hours of searching will not ensure that some critical item has not been overlooked. Few attempt to create from a start a bibliography of government publications in a particular area but rather turn to the writings of experts whose experience and close association with a subject is the only safe way of ensuring that everything of significance has been located.

There have been two pertinent articles on the teaching of government publications in library school, that of Estes, previously quoted, and another by T.C. Triffitt.⁴ They offer little encouragement. Essentially what they say is that research in government documents is time-consuming and involved even for the professional. Triffitt quotes Ollé who says that, "the only way to remember anything of value about government publications is to examine them."⁵ This is the method of the second-hand

⁴ T.C. Triffitt, "Some Thoughts on Teaching the Use of Government Publications", The Australian Library Journal, Vol. 18, No. 7, 1969, p. 254-255.

⁵ Ibid., p. 254.

book dealer and it is a sad commentary that of the funds being poured into government documents over the world (the cost of publication is small as compared to the cost of the effort of creating them), there is little in the way of indexes. The deficiency lies in the field of social science. As noted, science itself is well covered while the humanities are not a field of significant endeavour for governments.

The difficulty of using government documents is certainly the most apparent of problems for the student, researcher and librarian. It is far from the only one.

3. The Difficulties of Acquisition.

Commercial or trade books are created for profit. It is in the interest of the publisher to closely estimate the demand, to stock a book for as long as there is a reasonable sale, to reprint if the demand warrants or to issue a new edition. Above all it is in his interest to make his wares known and available in as convenient a form as possible. This is far from the case with the government publisher. His purpose is to publish for the use of the legislative and government bodies firstly and only incidentally for the public, domestic or foreign, who might desire

copies. By policy he is frequently forced to sell at a nominal sum or even at a loss. Yet, like most government departments, he is forced to operate within a firm budget. For most items, business outside the government is an expense, a nuisance and a necessary evil imposed by higher authority. If he over-prints an edition, he may have to live with his error for a long time for discarding or sales to reduce stock are not a standard practice to be undertaken lightly. He knows the government requirements almost exactly but other requirements are an unknown quantity. Under these conditions the result is a foregone conclusion. He will be cautious as to the volume of printing, he will not advertise unduly and finally will regard his outside sales department as a secondary operation.

This is not to make particular reference to the so-called under-developed countries but to countries such as Canada and the United States. The only documents that stand much chance of remaining in print for any length of time are those which have the special blessing of a minister or which have a reasonable chance of a steady sale.

This problem carries over into the commercial field. Rarely is the discount given to a commercial book-seller great enough to warrant a profit. His source of supply is uncertain and he has no monopoly. This situation has been

compounded by the introduction of the photo-copy machine. It is generally and rightly held that government publications can be copied with impunity and sometimes for less than the cost of the original all things, such as ordering and mail, considered. Small wonder that there are few commercial dealers in government documents.

There are other side effects from the position of the government printer. A standing order can be placed with a commercial firm and it will be honoured indefinitely for it is in their interest to do so and if payment is neglected they will take the trouble to remind the customer,- more than once if necessary. A government standing order will lapse on the slightest provocation and often because payment has not been made well in advance.

There is the problem of catalogues. The federal or central governments of most advanced countries and a surprising number of governments of newly formed countries issue catalogues which are comprehensive and useable provided they are received before the material becomes out-of-print. Many countries and provincial and state governments do not. Only in 1971 did Ontario issue a catalogue of its publications. There is also the problem that even where the government printer issues a catalogue, it may not cover the publications

of all government departments. There is "the overabundance of printing presses, or more specifically, the lack of bibliographic control upon the out-put of the multitude of governmental presses in operation."⁶

In many cases there is no one central agency for distribution but rather each government department issues its own publications even where there is an official printer. This imposes the necessity of knowing something of the structure of the government and the addresses of the departments.

As for language, reference need only be made to the commercial book-seller. A letter may be written in English or French to a book-seller in almost any country and a reply will be made in the same language for he will go to the trouble of getting a translation done. Many governments are sensitive on the matter of language and expect letters to be addressed to them in their own language or at least will reply in their own language. This is not an unreasonable attitude but it compounds the problems of the documents librarian.

Payment is another matter. Again, the commercial

⁶ James Snelson, "Documents Need not be a Terror", APLA Bulletin, Vol. 33, No. 3, 1969, p. 31.

book-seller will usually trust an institution and forward a book promptly and be content to wait for payment. Pre-payment, unless there is a deposit account, is all too frequently the rule of the government printer with the result that the cost of an item must be first ascertained.

Acquisition is then an area bristling with difficulty. It is necessary to find out what is being printed or in-print. It must be trusted that it is not out-of-print before the order arrives. Language and pre-payment problems must be faced.

4. The Classification Problem.

Once acquisition has been made, some form of classification system is needed. The Library of Congress system will be found to be very expensive for many government documents are slight physically and original cataloguing is often needed. The out-put of a cataloguer for a day is likely to fill a depressingly small part of a shelf. The Guelph coding system or something similar may be adopted. In any event there is an unalterable law to be faced. If the system of classification and indexing is a comprehensive one, then it will be costly,- not perhaps as costly as the Library of Congress, but costly nevertheless. If the system

is simple and inexpensive, it will not accomplish much. This will be discussed later.

5. Internal Handling.

Finally, the document must be identified and shelved. Here the problem is that such a large proportion of government documents are pamphlets and pamphlets of the flimiest form without pretence of a cover. In particular, this refers to the debates of legislative bodies and to the hearings of committees but other examples are legion. Canadian white papers, key documents all, rarely warrant any more dignified physical description than that of a brochure.

The result is distressingly obvious, particularly in an open shelf library. Most documents are easily lost, easily misplaced or pilfered. And once they are gone they are not easily replaced. The average book is a readily identifiable object which, even if temporarily astray, is likely to turn up in its appointed place. This is not the case with documents.

On almost every count the government publication is different. In the past there have been two general ways of dealing with the problem. One is to ignore it and treat

the document as a book. The other solution, when the first becomes utterly untenable, is to segregate documents into a little ghetto of their own. All too often the latter solution is nothing more than transferring problems from A to B.

CHAPTER II

THE DEFINITION

If government publications are considered as an entity, then it is clear that a very firm definition of the term is needed. Of course, the matter of positive definition is of little importance if they are integrated into the main collection and treated as other publications in all respects. However, if there is a requirement for different treatment, and this requirement becomes more pressing as their volume increases, the first step is certainly a decision as to what the field embraces.

1. General Definitions.

There are many general definitions but nearly all suffer from being too elementary or too parochial. The simple definition quickly breaks down once an attempt is made to apply it to those large grey areas where the question of provenance is in doubt and it is exactly in those areas that positive rules are needed. The parochial definition, that applying to a particular country, is frequently inadequate in its own jurisdiction and is quite lost once outside of it.

It is worthwhile to examine some of these. The American Library Association definition is that a "government publication" is "any printed or processed paper, book, periodical, pamphlet, or map, originated in, or printed... by authority of, any office of a legally organized government."¹ This is a basic definition and it is frequently paraphrased into such forms as, "a government publication is any book, pamphlet, serial or other material issued by a government agency",² or else, "the term 'Government Documents' is used to refer to the publications of federal, provincial and municipal governments as well as to the international organizations in which the governments of various countries are participating...".³

On a more official level, there is the statement by Rae Elizabeth Rips in respect to United States material:

The Depository Law of 1962 states in its first paragraph, "the term government publications as used in this act...means informational matter which is published at government expense, or as required

1 American Library Association, A.L.A. Glossary of Library Terms, Chicago, Ill., American Library Association, 1943, p. 65.

2 Government Publications: a Guide, University of Toronto, Reference Department, Government Publications Section, n.d., p. 2 (brochure)

3 W. Hyrak, Guide to Government Documents, The Library, University of Alberta, n.d., p. (1) (brochure)

by law." This still leaves plenty of room for argument...but will serve our purposes very well.⁴

Or the statement of P.A. Nott, Controller,
Australian Government Publishing Services:

The term "publications" has been defined for normal working purposes as: "all documents emanating from departments established under the Public Service Act which are intended for use other than within the department issuing the document excluding forms, the national map series and documents having a security restriction placed upon them. It includes reports, booklets, and pamphlets printed or reprinted by letterpress, lithography, duplicating or any other process. It also includes publications prepared for distribution overseas and/or printed overseas."⁵

One of the foremost British authorities on the subject of government publications, James G. Ollé, does not tell us what government publications are but he tells us what they are not. They do not include "documents which are printed for private circulation among government officials", nor, "reports and accounts of nationalized industries", nor, "publications of the Arts Council of Great Britain".⁶

⁴ Rae Elizabeth Rips, "The Reference Use of Government Publications", Drexel Library Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1965, p. 4.

⁵ P.A. Nott, "The Australian Government Publishing Service", The Australian Library Journal, Vol. 19, No. 2, 1970, p. 58.

⁶ James G. Ollé, An Introduction to British Government Publications, London, Association of Assistant Librarians, 1965, p. 18-19.

There would be little point in criticizing these definitions individually and their lack of mutual consistency is sufficient illustration that they will serve only in cases where the authority is indisputable. The problem of definition lies, of course, in those areas where there is doubt as to whether the publication is, de facto, a government publication.

2. A Comprehensive Definition.

By far the best and most unassailable definition is that of Laurence F. Schmeckebier, quoted by Thomas Shuler Shaw:

"A government publication is a publication: (1) bearing the imprint of the Government Printing Office or printed at the Government Printing Office for the use of a government agency; (2) or a publication bearing the name, imprint or seal of a government agency and recognized and used by such an agency in its operations or distributed officially in the course of government business; the afore-mentioned criteria shall apply regardless of whether it was printed at the Government Printing Office or whether the cost of the printing was charged to government or private funds; (3) or a publication which is issued by a commercial establishment, organization, journal, or individual and of which an edition or reprint is obtained by a government unit, provided the reprint or official edition bears the printed name, imprint, or seal of the agency concerned; it shall not include reprints which are purchased by the government, but which do not contain the printed name, imprint, or seal of the agency distributing it; the fact that a government officer or employee is the author of the article shall not operate to

make the article a government publication."⁷

However, even this definition requires elaboration. What is needed is not only the basic definition but rules of interpretation.

As a basis, a government publication may be defined as a formal record authorized by a constituted government at whatever level or a department or agency thereof or by an international organization represented by appointees of such governments. Included are facsimiles of government publications.

The following principles will apply in order of priority; i.e. in case of conflict the preceding condition will govern.

(a) The imprint of the government printer, provided this entity is not in question, will be accepted invariably as sufficient evidence as a government publication. Reason: the government imprint, like the stamp on coinage, must be accepted at face value and must outweigh other considerations.

(b) Failing a positive government imprint, a legislative body or government department as corporate author, or inclusion in an official

⁷ Thomas Shuler Shaw, "Introduction", Library Trends, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1966, p. 3.

catalogue of government publications as a government publication, will normally be sufficient identification. Reason: while these identifiers are not in the same category as an unimpeachable government imprint, they are rarely in question.

(c) A private printer can be accepted as a government printer if the evidence is that he was commissioned to act as a government printer but a private publisher renders the paper a non-government publication.

Reason: the practice of using a private printer is a common one even in advanced countries. Usually it is quite clear from the title page, the given corporate author, that the authority is governmental. However, it is frequently the case that a government funded study has not only a private printer but a private body as publisher. In this case, the paper is not a government publication.

(d) The funding must be government both in respect to the funds creating the publication and also those supporting the agency which published it. Private funds, in part or whole, such as fees of private members of an organization, gifts, or a private profit motive negate the validity of a paper as a

government document except where conditions (a), (b) or (c) over-rule. Reason: once private funds enter the case, the question of validity becomes an uncertain one unless there is a government imprint or a government body as full corporate author. This refers particularly to studies undertaken by private bodies with some form of government support or sanction.

(e) If there is a private author or private corporate author, then these authors must have been specifically commissioned by the government for that particular purpose. Reason: this refers particularly to submissions to government commissions which become an integral part of the work of the commission.

3. The Rules.

The above criteria can be expanded by a set of rules.

Government documents include:

- (a) Papers of legislative bodies; debates, journals, sessional papers, reports of ministers or ministries, reports of committees of legislative bodies. These are the most indisputable of government documents.
- (b) Papers of groups commissioned by legislative

bodies to investigate certain areas; royal commissions, councils and task forces, including hearings, reports and documents, as well as submissions and briefs to such appointed bodies.

Although the mandate is less than in (a), there is a clear and direct government authority.

(c) Papers of departments of the government, federal, state or equivalent, and municipal. The authority here is a direct government one.

(d) Papers of agencies or corporations of the government. An agency or corporation of the government is one whose resources are entirely owned by the government and whose officers are entirely appointed by the government.

(e) Papers of international organizations whose representatives are entirely appointed by the governments concerned and whose operating funds are entirely from government sources.

We can take the reverse of the coin and decide upon some things which are not government documents although there may be a tenuous association. Government documents do not include:

(a) Papers, reports and proceedings of learned bodies,

academies, universities and institutes which are independent of direct government control. Here the measure of control, even where government funds are wholly involved, is normally so indirect that a government responsibility cannot be assigned. The exception is the research centre or other institute that is, in fact, a department of government and publishes under a government imprint.

(b) Papers of colleges, vocational schools and schools.

(c) Law material which does not bear a government imprint.

(d) Papers of political organizations acting in their private capacity. There must be a clear distinction between government and non-government activities of a political party. Although some of these papers, such as caucus reports and newsletters, may emanate from government legislative buildings, they are not on this account government documents.

(e) Papers of private associations of government officials. Associations, such as an association of police chiefs or mayors, tend to reflect private views rather than official ones. However, a council of resource ministers is another matter. The criterion is whether a private person can join.

There is one area in need of further clarification. It has been generally accepted that a government publication should be a record that is published, that is, made available to the public in printed form. This left a large area of unpublished records which, while not generally available to the public through normal channels, were not withheld in the sense that they were confidential. Such records did not fit easily into definitions of government publications and yet, with the proliferation of the photo-copy machine, they assumed more importance and began to appear in academic and public libraries. This area has finally been resolved by A. Paul Pross and Catherine A. Pross who state:

We suggest that a government publication is created when a document prepared by or for an agency of government is reproduced and circulated to individuals and groups other than those advising or negotiating with the government concerning the subject matter of the document.⁸

The criteria given above, definition, principles and rules, will not cover all cases. The activities of modern governments in supporting foundations, associations and learned bodies and in commissioning projects are so manifold that there will always be exceptions. However the guides given will provide a firm basis for practical operations.

⁸ A. Paul Pross and Catherine A. Pross, Government Publishing in the Canadian Provinces, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1972, p. 17.

CHAPTER III

AN INTEGRATED OR SEPARATE COLLECTION?

The problem of whether to integrate government documents in the main library collection or to separate them is an old one although originally it concerned only the larger or depository libraries whereas today it concerns nearly every academic library and not a few public ones. Ruth Erlandson, writing in 1938, has summarized most of the aspects.¹ Times have changed in two respects; one being that the volume of material and the content relevant to academic studies has increased greatly; the second is that automation offers some completely satisfactory solutions, although at a cost.

Certainly much early reaction was against a separate collection. As Ruth Erlandson states:

Those who object to a separate collection for government publications think that from the patron's point of view, which is of primary importance, it is far more desirable to shelve together all books on a subject, wherever they may have been published. Especially in the research library, where many students work directly with the shelves and expect to find most of their material in one place, this method seems most useful.²

¹ Ruth M. Erlandson, "The Organization of Federal Government Publications in Depository Libraries", in Anne Morris Boyd, United States Government Publications, 3d ed., New York, Wilson, 1949, Appendix B, p. 569-579.

² Ibid., p. 570.

By 1961, however, a questionnaire by George Caldwell in respect to some, principally major, libraries revealed the following:

Favor state and local documents in
separate collection: Yes, 12, No, 4.
Favor foreign documents in
separate collection: Yes, 12, No, 4.
Favor United Nations documents in
separate collection: Yes, 15, No, 1.³

It is evident, although there is no positive figures, that between these two dates there was a considerable change of opinion. There is much justification for the first stand, that for an integrated library, because separating any part of the collection and treating it differently certainly violates an important principle of consistency. However, the nature of government documents was clearly forcing more empirical minds to cast about for solutions even though unorthodox ones. It is not really the volume of government material in cubic capacity, although this is not small, but rather the number of items. To the uninitiated this can be deceptive. Twenty or thirty bays of government material can offer more cataloguing and other problems than several times that volume of books. Many are physically small but still too important to go unrecorded into a vertical file. There is frequently a complex hierarchy of corporate authors.

³ George Caldwell, "University Libraries and Government Publications: a Survey", College and Research Libraries, Vol. 22, No. 1, 1961, p. 32.

The proportion calling for original cataloguing is certainly larger than in the case of trade material. Many are in monographic series but this only compounds the problem as another dimension must be taken into account. Finally, physical slightness makes for easy loss or misplacement.

The matter is rarely a clear cut one of complete integration versus complete separation. Rather, as Margaret Beckman has said:

The problem of handling government publications in a university library is one, therefore, of choosing between two traditional schemes of organization, of combining the two, or of developing a new scheme to meet the needs of the individual situation in a particular university.⁴

Needless to say, what applies to a university library can apply to any library. Perhaps the best way of resolving the situation is to examine the advantages and disadvantages of the three basic arrangements, integration, complete separation or partial separation. To some extent this will be bringing up to date Miss Erlandson, whose early paper is certainly a basic statement in the field. However, there have been some significant changes since that time.

The importance of a definition as a primary step has been emphasized in the previous chapter. The definition

⁴ Margaret Beckman, Documentation System for the Organization of Government Publications within a University Library, Guelph, Ontario, University of Guelph Library, 1969, p. 14.

proposed in that chapter is not necessarily an acceptable one for every situation. But whatever the definition, it must be one that can be applied in practice.

1. An Integrated Collection.

The integrated system gives one shelf arrangement and one catalogue. It also gives one system of acquisition normally and one system of classification. It has the advantage of simplicity for the library and consistency for the user. In particular, there is a danger that if documents are withdrawn from the main collection they will be overlooked by the inexperienced student. This is more so because documents separated are likely to be arranged by country and issuing agency rather than subject. It is the arrangement by subject that is of paramount advantage in the integrated collection. To this is added subject access in the card catalogue.

The great disadvantage is cost and this is a disadvantage that tends to overwhelm other considerations. Mary Keefer writes about the realities.

The Oregon State Library has always taken pride in the fact that its Documents Collection... was fully catalogued. The day has long since passed when there was time or money to be used for such an expensive service. A constantly increasing backlog of materials

made it necessary to take drastic steps to reduce the accumulation of years and to cope with the current influx of public documents. Too often publications of value at time of printing outgrew their usefulness stagnating in storage.⁵

The cost of cataloguing is compounded by the fact that documents usually require more added entries and analytics than trade publications. Many require a series entry. It is the cost factor more than any other consideration that has led to the formation of a separate documents collection in most cases.

There are other considerations. Acquisition is certainly second in importance. Government documents are hard to acquire because the issuing agencies usually have no direct responsibility to the private user. Continual surveillance is required to ensure that standing orders do not lapse and that all relevant material is obtained. Items are soon out of print and unavailable. Unless special attention is given to this area the collection will inevitably suffer. In an integrated collection, the procedures for accomplishing this are likely to be geared to trade material and, however satisfactory they may be for that area, they are unlikely to be sufficient for the documents field.

The commonest failing is that of only acquiring

⁵ Mary Keefer, "Simplified Cataloguing of Federal and State Documents", Library Resources and Technical Services, Vol. 6, No. 3, 1962, p. 262.

a few items of a series which have an immediate significance. The time may come when there is a need for other parts of the series or for the whole series but often by that time they are no longer available. This situation is well covered by Ellen P. Jackson.

Whatever the theory and stated policy of the institution may be in regard to the responsibility for the acquisition of library books, in practice the documents librarian (using the term to indicate the official directly in charge of the collection) must assume that responsibility in respect to the documents collection. If he does not, he will have odd volumes of various series of reports representing the passing interests of special patrons such as faculty members, and a broken and unbalanced assemblage of documents of little permanent value. The price of the adequate collection is eternal vigilance.⁶

In an integrated collection, there is rarely anyone with complete responsibility for documents and hence they tend to be neglected.

Finally, many documents are small with frail covers or no covers at all. If they are handled with the main collection, they will suffer a high loss rate. There is also the need for documents to be given special care in respect to binding but this need may well be overlooked in an integrated collection.

⁶ Ellen P. Jackson, The Administration of the Government Documents Collection, (Chicago) Association of College and Reference Libraries, 1953, p. 2 (ACRL Monographs No. 5)

2. The Separate Collection.

The completely separate collection infers the removal of everything that is defined as a document from the main collection. It also infers a completely separate acquisition and processing staff although this is not necessarily the case.

The advantages are obvious. The whole process of acquisition and maintenance can be adjusted to the special problems that documents create. Ruth Erlandson makes three points.

1. The separate collection, in charge of a librarian who has specialized in the subject, can give better reference service. Because the one in charge not only services the publications, but checks them and enters them in whatever shelf list or index is provided, he is more familiar with the arrangement and content than a librarian who works with government publications in a more casual way.

2. The time element is an important one. The separate collection, with its own classification, makes possible use of government publications almost immediately after their receipt. If the collection is classified by issuing bureau, the publications need not be sent to any other department in the library, but can be put directly on the shelves.

3. The separate collection may be less expensive because it does not require cataloguing.⁷

These points were valid thirty-five years ago and they are just as valid today.

⁷ Ruth M. Erlandson, Op. cit., p. 570.

The disadvantages are no less obvious. If the concept of a separate collection is taken literally, it would mean removing, from law and science particularly, but also from other areas, material which is essential for immediate reference. From the start a compromise is forced. Most important, subject access has been lost. A separate collection can be arranged by subject but in this event so many of the advantages of the separate collection have been lost that it is not worth creating it. There is a loose subject arrangement if arrangement is by departments because there is a close relationship as a rule between an agency and its publications. This is not invariable and often important documents will be found in the most improbable places.

3. A Partially Separate Collection.

If any separation of government publications is to be done, it is usually only practical to make a partial separation. However, this need not compromise the benefits to be obtained and may serve to lessen some of the disadvantages. The compromise should come only in respect to the location of a document. The control of documents, that is acquisition, processing and recording should be within one unit. However, if it is felt that a document or duplicate

copy thereof should be physically located elsewhere, then it must be catalogued and for this purpose it can take the route allotted to trade books but the fact should be recorded in the documents section.

There are only a few situations to be considered.

(a) The documents section may be established in some arbitrary fashion. For example, it is reported that "80 percent of all material published by the United States government is serial in nature",⁸ and indeed it is among the most troublesome because of the need to ensure, as much as possible, that series are complete and are bound when necessary. Hence a division could be made on that basis, leaving monographs with the main collection. Or a section could be created of legislative papers only or of federal publications only. But it is hard to imagine the benefits of any such arbitrary division outweighing the ill effects of the confusion that would ensue. Temporary expedients such as separating all United Nations and other documents of international agencies are workable but are hardly to be considered as a permanent arrangement.

⁸ Frank A. Lundy and Eugene M. Johnson, "Documents in the Divisional Library", College and Research Libraries, Vol. 19, No. 6, 1958, p. 465.

(b) The documents section may exclude certain disciplines or areas of disciplines such as science, law or art. This is very workable because, unless the exceptions are too numerous, they can be easily explained and understood.

(c) Material that is required elsewhere might be duplicated. Government publications are usually inexpensive and may be subject to substantial discount in respect to educational institutions or, indeed, may be free. It would seem that such duplication would be relatively low in cost. However, duplication can easily get out of hand as the main library or divisional libraries come to expect that they will have their own coverage of documents.

If a partial separation is forced by local conditions, as it usually is, then the solution is (3) with some careful consideration being given to keeping duplication at a minimum level.

The separate documents collection, in one form or another, appears as an inevitable development. It is not an unmitigated blessing. Unless there is a good subject access a collection may well be achieved that is above reproach as far as content goes but which is rarely used

and contributes little to the educational process of the institution.

CHAPTER IV

ACQUISITION

No area of government publications is more bewildering or less amenable to systematic organization than the matter of acquiring them. Rae Elizabeth Rips has the following to say:

The distinguishing feature -- the thing that sets government publications apart -- is the source of supply. They are not published by the regular book and magazine trade; they are not listed in the regular trade bibliographies and tools like Publishers Weekly or Library Journal; they are not acquired from the commercial book jobbers or bookstores or other regular book trade channels.¹

These problems may be summarized as follows:

- (a) There is usually no one source of supply within a country. There may be three levels of publication, federal, state and municipal but within these levels the source is frequently departmental rather than a central publishing agency.
- (b) There is frequently no catalogue or if a catalogue it may be incomplete.
- (c) Outside orders have, at best, a second priority.
- (d) There is little incentive for a government to

¹ Rae Elizabeth Rips, "The Reference Use of Government Publications", Drexel Library Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1965, p. 11.

remain in print once immediate government needs have been satisfied.

(e) Pre-payment or a deposit account is the usual rule.

(f) Language can be a problem although in practice English and French will cover most situations.

(g) Commercial dealers are almost non-existent because there is little or no profit in dealing with this type of material.

These points represent the reasons for having a separate government publications acquisition unit, however small. The acquisition of such publications is a far more involved matter than that of trade books. Procedures will vary with every country and ordering must often be hand-tailored to fit the local situation. If documents are forced into the over-all ordering pattern not only will the documents ordering suffer but the general acquisitions department will be burdened with an area that refuses to respond to conventional treatment.

It is true that the bulk of government publications needed by Canadian libraries comes from five major sources, Canada, United Kingdom, United States, France and the international organizations where, on the whole, the difficulties are not too great although they far surpass the commercial

market. Once outside this area each instance becomes an individual one of communication. In this regard, a letter will achieve far more than any form devised. If the requirements are clearly stated and a series of pertinent questions asked, a reply will usually be forthcoming that contains much useful information. For this reason the letter file assumes much more importance than it does in dealing with the bookseller.

It is also far more important to physically match the document with the order than in the case of a book. In most cases, a book can be readily identified by author and title and is an individual item that has, in an ordering sense, rarely any bearing on the rest of the library. A document is less readily identified and is frequently part of a series. It must be examined in the context of what is already on hand and what might be required in future. The documents acquisition section should therefore be in the immediate vicinity of the documents section itself.

Quite apart from the purely mechanical aspects of acquiring documents, there is another factor to be considered. Books have, at least in a number of fields, what might be called a high rate of substitution. although this statement may be open to dispute. But in many courses the reading list might run to a dozen pages and sixty are not unknown. The

student is not expected to read everything on the list and, indeed, the library is often in difficulties to obtain everything. Frequently the student's access to a particular work is not a vital matter; if one is not available another will do. There are, of course, in the Humanities and Social Sciences, key works that are essential but these are usually in print and in good supply. Documents have a low substitution rate. If a legislative paper, a government report or a body of statistics have a bearing on a course, they are usually unique. Nothing else will do. This creates an added pressure in respect to documents acquisition.

1. Policy

An over-all policy in respect to acquisition is basic to any collection of government publications. For most situations the policy must be highly selective because the volume of material makes any comprehensive program quite outside the reach of most libraries. One librarian has commented:

Although many documents are relatively inexpensive, anything a library acquires costs money. Therefore, if they are acquired without discrimination, even if free, they are expensive. As libraries become increasingly cost conscious, this affects their selection.²

² Jeanne H. Mahler, "Selection and Reference Use in the Public Library", Library Trends, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1966, p. 99.

A selection policy has been suggested by Eugenia Eaton.

(1) For every country, collect all available constitutions, censuses, economic surveys, statistical yearbooks and plans for economic and social development, as well as all significant government monographs and series in such fields as anthropology, economics, education, geography, history, linguistics, political science, and sociology.

(2) For all major countries, collect in addition all official gazettes, legislative debates, and parliamentary papers, important statistical publications, official yearbooks, budgets, estimates and accounts, foreign policy publications, and studies of internal and external trade.

(3) For countries relating to area studies program, collect still more intensively, ideally including every government document of value, down to the provincial level.³

For all except the very large library, this would have to be drastically modified. For the average academic library in Canada, it is practical to collect all or nearly all the publications of the Canadian federal government and of the province in which the library is located. For those in eastern Canada particularly, the publications of the provinces of Ontario and Quebec are pertinent. For other provinces it is rarely practical to collect more than the legislative papers and reports of commissions.

Only the most significant publications of the central government can be chosen in regard to the United Kingdom,

³ Eugenia Eaton, "A Collecting Policy for Foreign Documents", RQ, Vol. 10, No. 1, 1970, p. 59.

France and the United States. For the United Nations and its member agencies, it is most convenient to place standing orders for all publications although this might result in some unneeded paper, contrary to Jeanne Mahler's admonition. Thereafter, acquisition will have to be made on the basis of the university's requirements.

These requirements will vary widely. They will, of course, be set by the faculty but the responsibility of the documents librarian is greater here than in the case of other material. It is important to maintain the integrity of the collection and not let it become a heterogeneous assortment of unrelated papers. Wherever there is a requirement, it must be examined in the context of related material of the same country.

Finally, there is such a thing as a depository library but this is not usually a matter of practical concern. Such libraries have already been selected and there is much doubt as to whether the advantages of being a depository library outweigh the responsibilities.

2. Procedures.

The standard ordering procedure of the library involves a set of forms in four to eight copies. One or two copies are sent to the dealer while others are retained

for record purposes. The principal files kept are a numerical file, which is, of course, in chronological order, and an alphabetical file. The procedures are well described in a manual of the American Association of Law Libraries.⁴ Other copies of the form reflect acquisition and accounting procedures of the library and may include temporary catalogue and shelf list slips, claiming slips and L.C. card orders.

These forms were devised for the book trade. They are not necessarily the best for the acquisition of documents. At the beginning of this chapter, the differences that set off the government supplier from the commercial bookseller were summarized. From the library standpoint these differences give rise to the following.

(a) As noted, letters play a far more important role in ordering documents.

(b) Some countries issue checklists or order forms and these should be used because they are the most expeditious means of ensuring a return. Nor should they be accompanied by order forms which will only cause confusion.

(c) What ever system of forms is used as a library record, there is a need to link the form with any

⁴ Viola Bird, Stanley Pearce and Ruth Ault, Order Procedures: a Manual, South Hackensack, N.J., Published for the American Association of Law Libraries by F.B. Rothman, 1960, 66 p.

letter or checklist sent.

(d) There is a need for a positive follow-up system.

The diligence of the bookseller may be trusted to produce results on an order if at all possible; usually our source is clearly identified. Document sources are subject to many vagaries.

(e) Pre-payment of orders and standing orders or a deposit account is the standard pattern.

(f) Normal acquisition files are by number, by author or by title, usually the first two. If documents orders are integrated into such files they tend to become lost. In the numerical file they are scattered; in the author file they are often misplaced.

It is not easy to suggest a simple order form that will account for all these factors. There must be a separate numerical identifier for each order. A record of the corporate author, the title, the government supplier and the amount of pre-payment should be made. This parallels the commercial situation except that it is rather more complex.

For a start, it may be better to break down the file by country and then by numerical sequence. With documents the important entity is the country. A simple two letter designator has been developed for coding purposes that

identifies countries,- thus Canada becomes CA, France, FR, etc. This can be extended to provinces by a further two letter designator and hence Ontario becomes CAON. If to this we add the numerical sequence of the order to a particular country, we have an alphanumeric designator that is both geographical and chronological. This can be the basic file. The mechanics of maintenance need not be too cumbersome. A looseleaf book with a page for each country can be a sufficient record of what numbers have been used and what should be used for the next order.

There is still a need for a corporate author file to be formed from a copy of the order form. Whatever rules are adopted for corporate author, they will be involved. It can only be said that if the file is a documents file, maintained by documents personnel, there will be some consistency.

Each document ordered should have an equivalent order number. Yet many documents are ordered by letter or by checklist or there may be a special government form for ordering, as has been noted. It is far better to use these methods. Such checklists and forms are instantly recognized by the clerks and there is usually machinery set up for dealing with them. The standard 3" by 5" form, comprehensible to the

commercial agent, will not receive such good treatment. It is too easily mislaid or it may not be understood. It should only be used where it has a successful record.

There is a need to link the checklist, government order form or letter with the numerical file in the simplest manner. This can be done by assigning to the checklist, form or letter, the number of the first item ordered, e.g. CA125 and placing this number on the order form of the individual orders in brackets; (CA125). It is now possible to determine that order number CA137(CA125) was actually ordered on a checklist that is in a cabinet file in sequence under CA125.

If there is a separate documents acquisition section, which even in a comparatively large documents library may consist of no more than one person, there are several time-consuming steps that can be eliminated. In the normal ordering process, it is common practice to create a preliminary ordering form from which the typist in the acquisitions section prepares the final order form for the supplier and for records. This preliminary form may require many steps such as a check of the card catalogue, on-order file, bibliographic search, agent and so forth. It is a necessary form because a number of persons are usually involved and

each must record what he has done. But time is lost because each must approach the order new to the situation and the knowledge that one has gained is not necessarily carried on to the next because the form, however elaborate, cannot convey all information.

If there is an acquisition unit within the documents section, it can be assumed that ordering from certain countries will be the responsibility of particular librarians or technicians. A, for example, may be responsible for the United States, B for international organizations. Under these conditions much routine clerical work can be eliminated with little danger that orders will be duplicated or insufficiently investigated. Librarian A should have an intimate knowledge of his sources, their various peculiarities, and their particular addresses. He has a knowledge of what has been ordered and what needs to be ordered. Orders are meaningful and not a series of anonymous numbers, corporate authors and addresses. He has, or should have, immediate access to the order files to verify what has been ordered and to the shelves or card catalogue to see what has been received or is on hand. The preliminary order form with all the clerical processes it involves can be eliminated. Orders can be prepared in whatever form is most appropriate directly

and the only communication necessary is that between the librarian and the ordering clerk who prepares the order and the 3" by 5" record.

The procedures outlined here may be varied. The important elements are that the acquisitions process be entirely within the documents section so that the need for liaison is at a minimum and the responsibility for areas be delegated so that they come within the range of personal knowledge.

3. Some Examples.

There is therefore no consistent pattern in the acquisition of documents and each country, and each level of government within a country, represents a different procedure. Moreover procedures are subject to change. Comprehensive instructions would be voluminous and in need of continual amendment. It is possible to cite some main examples in the Canadian context and these will cover the major part of the acquisition problem.

Some general rules can be made. Standing orders for a series or subscription orders for all publications in certain instances is the key to reducing the work of ordering to a minimum. The cost of such blanket type orders

is low as a rule and they give better assurance that they will be filled than if a number of individual orders are filed. It is better and more economical in the long run to accept some unneeded material rather than attempt to be too discriminating and become involved in partial coverage.

The deposit account, where this will be accepted, is certainly easier than pre-payment where the price must be known beforehand and an individual payment made.

Addresses can be a problem, not in respect to the major nations or organizations which usually have clearly defined sources of supply, but with smaller countries. The Yearbook of International Organizations⁵ covers these bodies very well and provides not only addresses but enables a distinction to be made between private organizations and those which can be considered governmental. In other cases, the Europa Year Book⁶ or other books of this type, such as the Statesman's Year-Book,⁷ will provide useful guidance. However, the best method is an approach to the embassy and here a Washington and an Ottawa telephone book will be an

⁵ Yearbook of International Organizations, Annuaire des Organisations Internationales, Brussels, Union of International Associations, 1948-, Annual, 1948-50, Biennial beginning with 1951-52.

⁶ Europa Year Book, London, Europa Publications, 1959-, Annual.

⁷ Statesman's Year-Book, London, Macmillan, 1864-, Annual.

an important tool. A letter to an embassy will usually receive a prompt reply.

4. Canada.

For major educational institutions, Information Canada will issue a pink checklist daily listing most of the Federal government publications. One copy of any publication listed will be given free if the form is marked and returned. The form must be returned within thirty days but even this does not always ensure receipt as there is a limit to the number of free items and receipt is made on a first come first served basis. In this event, it is either necessary to make a purchase or apply to the particular department publishing the report. The department will usually make a free issue. From time to time a green checklist is issued listing publications too expensive to given free. For these payment must be made.

Standing orders may be placed for series such as debates of the House of Commons or the reports of the standing committees. These standing orders are likewise free and continue indefinitely. A free standing order for all publications of Statistics Canada may also be placed with that body. There is, of course, the monthly Canadian catalogue of publications but if adequate standing orders have

been placed and if checklists are actioned promptly, there should be few further problems.

There are some thirty crown corporations whose publications do not usually appear in Information Canada checklists or catalogues. The prime publications of these bodies consist of their annual reports and for these a free standing order may be placed by letter. There is some danger that other publications of these bodies may be missed and an examination of Canadiana is the only recourse. In many cases, however, important publications of the crown corporations are turned over to Information Canada for distribution.

The provinces are difficult. However, much of the uncertainty surrounding this area has been removed by an excellent study undertaken by A. Paul and Catherine A. Pross.⁸ While the study still leaves the area a troublesome one, it has carefully defined all the problems related to individual provinces and provides an exhaustive bibliography of aids for acquisition. Since 1971, both Ontario and Quebec have commenced issuing checklists of provincial publications which renders their acquisition no more difficult than that of federal documents.

⁸ A. Paul Pross and Catherine A. Pross, Government Publishing in the Canadian Provinces, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1972, 178 p.

5. United Nations, certain International Agencies
and the United Kingdom.

The Canadian documents librarian is fortunate in that Information Canada has progressively assumed responsibility for publications of many international bodies and in 1971 for the publications of the United Kingdom. The complications of dealing with those bodies individually can be avoided. In brief, Information Canada will handle orders, standing orders and global subscriptions for the agencies given below. The difference between a standing order and a global subscription is that a standing order may be placed for a specified series or all series of publications of an agency whereas a global subscription embraces all publications.

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Available as:</u>
United Nations (UN)	standing order
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	standing order
International Court of Justice	standing order
International Trade Organization - General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)	standing order
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)	standing order
World Meteorological Organization (WMO)	standing order

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Available as:</u>
Council of Europe	standing order
Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)	global subscription
International Labour Organization (ILO)	global subscription
World Health Organization (WHO)	global subscription
Organization of American States (OAS)	global subscription
Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)	global subscription

Among the major inter-governmental agencies this still leaves the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (WORLD BANK/IBRD); International Development Association (IDA); International Monetary Fund (IMF); International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); Universal Postal Union (IPU); International Telecommunications Union (ITU); Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO). Addresses for these will be supplied by Information Canada on request.

In addition, Information Canada issues a periodic Newsletter containing a listing of publications recently released by international organizations which may be ordered individually if no standing orders or subscriptions have been placed. All orders may be placed through Information Canada and paid for by the single deposit account made with them.

Most organizations issue catalogues, if not on a regular basis, then at appropriate intervals. When available these catalogues may be obtained from Information Canada. The principal catalogues are those of the Council of Europe, FAO, GATT, IAEA, ILO, OAS, OECD, UN, UNESCO, WHO and WMO. The UN also issues a monthly Official Index and various guides, the main ones being the Standing Order Service⁹ and a checklist, Books in Print.¹⁰

The only practical means of making a good coverage of past publications of international agencies is through the microforms of commercial dealers where these are available. Certainly the great volume of United Nations material makes microform for its past publications almost obligatory.

The literature on the subject of international organizations is not extensive but adequate, although it suffers from becoming dated. William Tung gives a good description of the United Nations and its various organizations and includes an explanation of the UN documents symbols.¹¹ There are a number of worthwhile articles. Harry M. Winton presented an outline of United Nations publications in the

⁹ Standing Order Service: a Guide for Librarians and Booksellers, New York, United Nations, n.d., 16 p.

¹⁰ Check List 1945-1971: Books in Print, New York, United Nations, n.d., (32) p.

¹¹ William L. Tung, International Organization under the United Nations System, New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1969, 415 p.

Drexel Library Quarterly of October, 1965,¹² while Mildred Kapilow has given a listing of inter-governmental periodicals.¹³ An inventory of lists, indexes and catalogues of inter-governmental organizations was published in the UNESCO Bulletin of Libraries in 1967.¹⁴

In 1971, Information Canada assumed responsibility for ordering for Canadian recipients the publications of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Such publications are listed monthly in the United Kingdom Government Publications catalogue. The British Government also issues catalogues of selected publications and some 70 sectional or departmental catalogues. The two excellent and basic guides to British government publications are those of J.G. Ollé¹⁵ and John Pemberton.¹⁶

6. United States.

Much has been written about United States government publications and it remains a complex area. The main tool is the Monthly Catalogue of United States Government Publications. It does not list, as the name implies, all United States

¹² Harry N.M. Winton, "United Nations Documents", Drexel Library Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1965, p. 32-41.

¹³ Mildred Kapilow, "FAO to WMO", RQ, Vol. 9, No. 4, 1970, p. 306-309.

¹⁴ "Inventory of Lists, Indexes and Catalogues of Publications and Documents of Intergovernmental Organizations other than United Nations", Unesco Bulletin of Libraries, Vol. XXI, No. 5, 1967, p. 263-270.

¹⁵ James G. Ollé, An Introduction to British Government Publications, London, Association of Assistant Librarians, 1965, 128 p.

¹⁶ John E. Pemberton, British Official Publications, Oxford, Pergamon Press, 1971, 315 p.

government publications of the federal government and many it does list are not available from the Superintendent of Documents but from issuing agencies.

Other government aids to selection are the Selected United States Government Publications, the Business Service Checklist, Price Lists, innumerable flyers and various agency lists such as the U.S. Bureau of the Budget Statistical Reporter and the U.S. Department of State Bulletin. The non-government aids, outside of the field of science and technology, are principally the Public Affairs Information Service and the Vertical File. There is also a Documents Expediting Service, sponsored by certain U.S. associations, whose services are the procurement of non-government printed publications and out-of-print documents. With all these aids available and with standing orders the main problem is to ensure that duplication is avoided.

Payment is by cheque, money order, special coupons or by deposit account. As usual, the deposit account for \$25 or more is the most satisfactory method.

Science and technical material is of particular importance. Here the prime source is the Clearinghouse for Federal Scientific and Technical Information (CFSTI). This office, set up in 1965, distributes unclassified federal

government scientific reports. The main agencies responsible for these reports are the Defence Documentation Centre, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the United States Atomic Energy Commission and the Office of Education. The main selection tools are the index to U.S. Government Research and Development Reports (USGRDR), and the Clearinghouse Announcements in Science and Technology. All services of the Clearinghouse and procedures for ordering are contained in a brochure.¹⁷ The brochure does not describe the many intricacies in this area but this has been well done in a report by J.P. Chillag.¹⁸ There are a number of other reports and articles on this subject but a particularly comprehensive one is that by H. Holzbauer.¹⁹

State publications are covered by a Library of Congress publication, Monthly Checklist of State Publications, which is a record of state documents received by the Library of Congress. It is not complete and the problems connected with state documents are similar to those concerning the Canadian

¹⁷ Clearinghouse for Federal Scientific and Technical Information, Springfield, Va., U.S. Department of Commerce, 1969, 16 p.

¹⁸ J.P. Chillag, "Problems with Reports, Particularly Microfiche Reports", ASLIB Proceedings, Vol. 22, No. 5, 1970, p. 201-216.

¹⁹ Herbert Holzbauer, "Bibliographic Organization in the Federal Government", Wilson Library Bulletin, Vol. 40, No. 8, 1966, p. 719-732.

provinces.²⁰

There are commercial indexes and services for the acquisition of United States documents. No librarian can hope to keep up with the many changes occurring within the U.S. government and the consequent changes in publications. Also standing orders cannot be placed for series or monographs and standing orders for periodicals must be renewed or they will lapse. On the other hand, standing orders that are indefinite can be placed with commercial agencies. This is not the only advantage of such services. They are usually able to procure publications before they become out-of-print and they are aware of a variety of special situations, such as that an apparent series may be broken down into several parts and that certain cumulations must be ordered separately. For a collection of any size, the commercial service is essential.

The Congressional Quarterly and the Congressional Quarterly Information Service, both trade publications, are important tools in dealing with United States material. There are also several standard works relating to such

²⁰ Elizabeth G. Ellis, "State Publications: Problems in Effective Use", Drexel Library Quarterly, Vol. 1, No. 4, 1965, p. 42-46.

publications, the principal ones being those of Boyd,²¹ Leidy²² and Schmeckebier and Eastin.²³

7. France.

The acquisition of publications of the government of France is described in issue No. 81, May, 1970, of *Actualités-Service*, a weekly bulletin of the Secrétariat Général du Comité Interministeriel pour l'Information. The controlling organization for French documents is *La Documentation Française*, which publishes each week, usually on Tuesday, in the *Journal Officiel*²⁴ a list of periodicals and all works placed on sale the preceding week. This is accompanied each month by a *Table Mensuelle*, a monthly cumulation by author and subject. In Canada, it is unnecessary to deal directly with *La Documentation Française* and services may be obtained through *l'Editeur Officiel du Québec*.

The governments and organizations outlined above represent by far the major part of official publications

21 Anne Morris Boyd, United States Government Publications, 3d ed. revised by Rae Elizabeth Rips, New York, The H.W. Wilson Company, 1949, 627 p.

22 Philip W. Leidy, A Popular Guide to Government Publications, 3d ed., New York, Columbia University Press, 1968, 365 p.

23 Laurence F. Schmeckebier and Roy B. Eastin, Government Publications and their Use, rev. ed., Washington, The Brookings Institution, 1961, 476 p.

24 Journal Officiel de la République Française, Paris, *Journaux Officiels*, 1870-, Daily.

material required by a Canadian library. In some respects, such acquisition is the easiest because the administrative channels are usually well defined although the volume presents other problems. Acquisition from other areas is a matter of separate investigation in respect to each country.

CHAPTER V

CLASSIFICATION

The removal of government publications from the main collection usually means that they cease to be catalogued by Library of Congress system or whatever system is in use in the library. This has the immediate effect of lightening the burden on the cataloguing department but any gain in that respect is an illusion. The real situation is that the benefits of cataloguing,- identification, shelf arrangement, access by author, title or subject, is lost or else another system must be adopted. Other systems can be cheaper or better and where this is the case there is a valid reason for removal. But no system that equals or betters the Library of Congress system is without very significant cost.

The computer does provide a means of reducing cost in the long run. The fact that few libraries today are even partially automated is evidence of the problems in this area. The experience of the chief librarian of the University of Sydney is typical. He says:

... I went to America at the end of 1965 to find the answers to a couple of fairly precise questions relating to automation. I did find these answers. I came back convinced that increased economy (hopefully) and improved efficiency (certainly) would flow from the employment of computer technology in two fields

of our operations; serials check-in and monograph acquisition. After twelve months of effort and a great deal of discussion the closest we got to achieving these particular applications was to design one Intermediate Serials Record form.¹

Automation is certainly one answer but it should not be considered an answer that can be obtained without effort. There are, of course, a variety of ways, other than automation, in which a mass of uncatalogued documents or documents whose cataloguing is no longer significant can be handled.

1. Elementary Systems.

The simplest system is to arrange documents alphabetically by country and within a country by the hierarchy of government beginning with papers of the legislative bodies in some arbitrary arrangement and following this with the publications of the federal departments by alphabetical arrangement of departments. Within a department arrangement can be alphabetical. Publications of state or provincial governments can be treated in similar fashion.

This has the advantage of wiping out in one sweep all cataloguing and processing with the exception of an

¹ Harrison Bryan, "Some Problems of Size", The Australian Library Journal, Vol. 18, No. 8, 1969, p. 265.

accession number and a library identification mark. From that standpoint nothing easier could be devised. The disadvantages are all too obvious. Shelving becomes a formidable problem because each document must be examined to determine its country, department and title. If the library is an open shelf one, any misplacement by patrons becomes difficult to detect as shelf-reading requires several times the effort it normally does with a classified collection.

Nor, because of widely different formats and complex corporate authors, is it easy to determine where a particular document should be shelved. Frequent changes in government departments and in their names makes for many problems. The rule of shelving a document according to the department on the title page, regardless of whether the department has moved under another organization or has changed its name later or has become defunct, breaks down in respect to series and series are common. It is important to keep series together and yet this transgresses the rule of shelving by title.

There is, of course, no record of what documents are actually possessed except the physical presence of the document on the shelf and there is no author, title or subject access except that provided by marking the shelves with the names

of countries and departments of government.

Although this is an almost unreal situation from the standpoint of library procedures, it can work. It depends upon the memory of the staff and such help as they can get from government catalogues and the few indexes of government publications that do exist such as the Public Affairs Information Service. In particular, it will work much better if the documents section is a closed one. Here the value of the section as an educational tool is much reduced.

There are several variants to the above which might improve things but only marginally. As an aid to shelving, key words or letters may be marked, e.g. Canada, Department of Agriculture, Flowers of Northern Canada. Where a government or international body, such as Canada, United States or the United Nations has its own coding or ordering numbers, these can be adopted. This has merit although it results in a variety of systems.

2. Main Entry Card Catalogue.

A card catalogue by main entry only can be created. It is not necessary to restrict the card catalogue to main entry and in theory it can parallel the usual Library of Congress or other form of catalogue with appropriate added

entries. In practice, a card catalogue of this type calls for a major effort and, if created at all, must be limited to the simplest form. The basic defect of such a catalogue is that as long as there is no classification or code number, then the document must still be located on the shelf by inspection. In many situations, reference to the card catalogue is a superfluous step. If the information necessary to enter the card catalogue is available, as it must be, then this is all the information needed to proceed to the shelf. At least one writer has commented upon this. In speaking of arrangements that would permit direct shelf access, Anne Markley states:

It is the latter plan that is recommended here, for it affords direct access to the shelves without intermediary use of the alphabetical card file which is obligatory for a classified collection.²

Nevertheless, she does not deny the need for a card catalogue for a depository library and presumably for any major library. The situation where the only record of document holdings is the physical presence of the documents on the shelf is hardly a tenable one. If the only purpose of the card catalogue was to maintain a neat bookkeeping record of what was contained in the collection, its expense

² Anne Ethelyn Markley, Library Records for Government Publications, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1951, p. 11.

could be questioned. In fact, its main function is to act as a control to the entire collection in a manner that could never be achieved by any form of shelving alone.

A good example of a main entry card catalogue without call number is to be found at the Foreign Publications Section of the National Library of Canada. This is more elaborate than is needed for most libraries but the principles on which it is based are generally applicable.

The problems in creating a documents catalogue are essentially those encountered in simple shelving. The first is that of degrees of hierarchy. The basic format must be country, level of government, department and then alphabetical arrangement. But most government departments are sub-divided into major agencies and these may be sub-divided again into bodies of significant importance. Under these conditions, to attempt a full description of the corporate author becomes impossibly complex. It is necessary and usually sufficient to terminate the entry at the main department level and only rarely add a sub-division. The second problem is that of changes in hierarchy, not infrequently a change of name or the transferring of a function or agency from one department to another. Here the only solution is guide cards.

This is not the only use for guide cards. Indeed a profusion of guide cards appears as the essential element of a successful main entry catalogue and they remedy many of its inherent defects. They can be used in a variety of ways,- as personal author cards, as case history cards, as physical geography indicators and to locate documents held elsewhere. It is the control exercised by the guide cards that is the main justification for the documents catalogue.

3. Computer Coding.

The situation such as described represents documents handling at the most elementary level. At the opposite end of the spectrum is the Beckman system employed by the University of Guelph and developed there.³ This system has been well described by Margaret Beckman in her report of 1969.⁴ Since that time the system has undergone some modifications and improvements but it is essentially as described therein.

Here an attempt will be made to cover the main features only. The system may be said to consist of three principal elements. There is a code which identifies each

³ Margaret Beckman, "A Documentation Centre at the University of Guelph Library", Ontario Library Review, Vol. 50, No. 4, 1966, p. 226-229.

⁴ Margaret Beckman, Documentation System for the Organization of Government Publications within a University Library, Guelph, Ont., University of Guelph Library, 1969, 59 p.

document and enables it to be shelved in an orderly sequence. There is a set of bibliographic information about each document so that it can be approached in a number of ways. There is a computer print-out, virtually a book catalogue that equates to the author/title/subject card catalogues, which enables the approach to be made.

The code, which is the equivalent of an L.C. call number, consists of fifteen units as follows:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Country	Part	State or Prov- ince	Major Organ- ization	Sub- Division	Year of Public- ation	Title	Extra							

The first two units are the country code which consists of two letters that are usually the first two letters of the country name, or where there is conflict, the first letter and another key letter. Thus Canada becomes CA, Ceylon, CE, and so forth. There is then a mnemonic device which also results in countries being shelved alphabetically.

The third unit is a number which represents levels of government. In the column marked 3 above, the number 1 would indicate federal government, the number 2, provincial or state, the number 3, county, etc. The fourth and fifth units are the province or state code with Ontario being

represented by ON, Alberta by AL. Thus publications of these bodies are kept together. Units 6 and 7 are major organization indicators with, say, a department of agriculture being represented by AG. Units 8 and 9 are numerical, representing sub-divisions of major organizations. Units 10 and 11 are the year of publication. For years prior to 1900, an ancillary code is used that fits the two spaces. Finally, units 12, 13, and 14 are a Cutter code to avoid conflict in code numbers. Unit 15 is free.

In nearly all cases, all the information required to compile a code is in the document itself. It is however necessary to study the structure of a government initially and assign letters and numbers to its various components. These must be recorded for future use.

While not part of the call number or code number, as it might be called, other codes were devised to identify the type of material, the physical location (in the event the document was shelved in another part of the library), source, language and a subject link code. The latter is the first two letters of the Library of Congress classification and permits a broad subject identification.

Following the coding it is necessary to determine the various bibliographic elements involved. These are

principally the corporate author, title, personal author, additional corporate authors and series. They may be further broken down to divide, say, corporate authors into official governments, government agencies or a research organization. To each of these elements is allotted what is called a functional code of two numbers. The purpose of this code is to direct the computer so that a print-out can be made in terms of the particular element.

The steps in the process are first those of coding the document. This is done manually by inspection of the document and by use of the instruction manual. All the codes and bibliographic information is set forth on a form. This information in turn is key-punched into a computer. The next step is editing. Some editing can be done by computer but editing is in part a manual process. Finally a series of print-outs is obtained which constitutes the government documents catalogue.

A representation of a coding form is given on the following page. This does not represent the form as Guelph might use it. The Guelph manual of operations is in the process of being re-written for publication and will appear at a later date. It might be noted also that the Guelph definition of documents is a much broader one than given here in an earlier

chapter and includes the works of societies, commercial firms and universities.

A coding form might appear as follows:

		Function code
Code	CA1 MT0557G34	00
Other codes	MGCEQEBK	01
Corporate author	CANADA. DEPARTMENT OF MINES AND TECHNICAL SURVEYS. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.	11
Title	GEOLOGY AND ECONOMIC MINERALS OF CANADA.	21
Personal author	STOCKWELL, C.H.	31

The meaning of the first code is: CA, Canada; 1, Federal government; two blanks for province or state, not applicable; MT, Mines and Technical Surveys; 05, Geological Survey; 57, year of publication; G34, cutter number based on the title to uniquely identify the particular document.

The meaning of the other codes: M, type of material, monograph; G, location, Geology Library; C, source, checklist; E, language, English; QE, subject link, first two letters of L.C. classification; BK, physical description, book. The function code is for computer use.

The print-out is by (1) corporate author, (2) series, (3) title, (4) personal author, (5) shelf list arrangement, and finally, (6) a KWOC index based on title or expanded

title. We have therefore a set of book instead of card catalogues. This print-out must be up-dated or supplemented as frequently as is economical or else new documents go unrecorded. Guelph has estimated that about the point of 75,000 documents the print-out will become too cumbersome to be practical. At this point it is proposed to place the catalogue of the basic collection on microfilm and use print-out only for new material.

The system represents the ultimate in documents handling. It is flexible, perhaps too flexible, for anyone adopting it is free to add his own variations and hence, as its use expands, there is a danger of ending up with a number of individual systems instead of a standard system where co-operative coding would be possible. It is needless to add that any co-operation between systems must be based on identical coding.

The system is less expensive than Library of Congress cataloguing. A trained cataloguer may handle 15 titles per day⁵ of original cataloguing whereas the output of the non-professional coder may be three or more times that amount as indicated from Guelph reports.⁶ Nevertheless, the system is

⁵ Ibid., p. 32.

⁶ Thomas R. Drynan, A Brief Report on the Documents Meeting held at the University of Guelph on April 26, 1971 (attachment to a letter, McMaster University, Mills Memorial Library, May 5, 1971)

not without cost, especially in its development stages, and is not to be embarked upon lightly. The system does require the use of a computer and, certainly in the initial stages, the services of a full-time systems analyst even though the basic work has been done by Guelph University and the findings are available from them.

4. Alternatives.

Between the simple shelf arrangement described at the beginning of this chapter and the very comprehensive system of Guelph there is a considerable gap. Many, who cannot embark upon computer coding, wish there was a half-way point which would offer some of the advantages of the automated system for a modest expenditure of effort. A few can be suggested although they all suffer from making a dubious return for the work involved. The Beckman system has also created a dilemma. If the documents section is of any size, then even the simplest type of coding or cataloguing, such as a main entry catalogue with no call number, is expensive and if a more complicated system is devised, it will be more expensive. Starting from the beginning it might take several years to complete and until it is complete or nearly complete it is of little value. By that time, the resources

might be available for computer coding and the intervening effort has been lost.

Some possible expedients can be examined. The simple main entry catalogue has been discussed and it is certainly the first step in introducing order into a completely unrecorded collection. The next major step is clearly a call number. Without a call number, shelving is a difficult and time consuming task and it is impossible to go from the card catalogue to a positive location.

A rudimentary type of call number could take the form of a letter group of from five to seven letters. The first two letters would be the first two letters of the country, the second two, the first two letters of the department, the final letter being the first letter of the title. Some ambiguities would have to be resolved and an additional two letters used in some cases. If this does not seem to accomplish much, it must be remembered that the worst problem in shelving or identifying an unmarked document is opening it to the title page and translating what is there to a location. All that is involved here are two identical typed labels, one for the document and one for the catalogue card. It would mean that titles beginning with the same letter would be shelved indiscriminately but this is not a large problem.

If it is worthwhile putting a call number on a document at all it may as well be an adequate one. It is possible to adopt the Guelph coding system as far as call numbers are concerned. Guelph print-outs are available at cost price. It must not be thought that this procedure would be simply a matter of using these lists as a source of all code numbers. Documents collections vary greatly. The work of identifying a particular document where it existed on the Guelph list, while not great, might be more time consuming than merely coding on the Guelph system without attempting to duplicate their number exactly. Documents which did not exist on the Guelph list would have to be coded separately and, as has been noted, this calls for individual decisions.

The Guelph coding form can be used as a catalogue in itself if the volume of documents is not large. The coding form is a sheet of 8" by 11" paper with a format as given on page 68. A glance at this format will show that it is really that of a catalogue card in its essentials. Once the form has been filled out, it is only necessary to photocopy it three times to have the basis of four book catalogues, - shelf list, corporate author, title and personal author. This would break down if there was any volume of documents and the catalogues would become quite unmanageable.

In these cases, the situation is coming close to doing the work required for computer coding without reaping any of the benefits of the computer. This is the dilemma mentioned previously. Is it worthwhile undertaking a program, which at its easiest level would be expensive, only to emerge with a product that was obsolete before the process started? It is perhaps better to tolerate an elementary arrangement until such time as a full automated coding program can be undertaken.

The above does not exhaust the possibilities. There are machines coming onto the market that are especially designed for information retrieval as opposed to the computer which is a general purpose machine that must be programmed for a particular task. The computer's prime function is that of computing; its information retrieval and print-out functions are secondary. The problem of information retrieval in respect to documents and library material is not unique but exists throughout the commercial world and in other fields. To date the only automated answer has been the computer. But computers are expensive and they require highly trained staff to operate them. It is claimed for this new generation of machines that they are faster and cheaper in their particular task and can be operated by staff with little training.

They do not require to be programmed.⁷ Almost certainly, development along these lines can be anticipated although it will not, of course, affect the basic principles of an automated system.

There have been other proposals for cataloguing systems for documents but none of them approach the versatility and range of the Beckman system. An article in Library Resources and Technical Services, Fall, 1969, illustrates how easy it is to devise a new notational system that creates more difficulties than it solves.⁸ Similarly, an article on "cutting" the corporate entry admits "the method may appear complicated".⁹ On the other hand, those who wish to embark upon a KWIC index without any other automation are referred to an account by Margaret Norden.¹⁰

⁷ GESCAN Rapid Search Machine: a New Dimension in Information Retrieval, Daytona Beach, Florida, General Electric, 1970 (8) p.

⁸ Doris Cruger Dale, "The Development of Classification Systems for Government Publications", Library Resources and Technical Services, Vol. 13, No. 4, 1969, p. 471-483.

⁹ Grace Levy, "'Cutting' the Corporate Entry", Special Libraries, Vol. 60, No. 10, 1969, p. 657-658.

¹⁰ Margaret Norden, "KWIC Index to Government Publications", Journal of Library Automation, Vol. 2, No. 3, 1969, p. 139-147.

CHAPTER VI

MARKING, SHELVING AND BINDING

If there is practically no literature on the subjects of marking, shelving and binding of documents, it is doubtless because these fields are considered to be covered with general library material. Yet with documents such topics are more important than in the case of books. The point has been made that a book is usually a readily recognizable item, comparatively large, and not easily misplaced or improperly removed, intentionally or unintentionally. A large proportion of documents are slender works physically and need some special provision in regard to marking if they are to receive adequate protection. Shelving assumes more than normal importance, not only because the pamphlet form is more difficult to shelve, but because the shelving arrangement may be the sole classification system. Library binding of the main collection is principally concerned with serials as the covers of most books will last their useful life. The proportion of documents material that needs binding attention soon after it enters the library is far higher than is the case with the commercial product.

1. Marking.

Even a book requires a minimum of five identification marks, an accession number, a date, three edge identifications and, of course, a call number label. This represents a good deal of hand labour and it reflects something of the general neglect of the area that there is no machine on the market that will even partially reduce the manual effort required. The document is often too thin for edge stamping but it should be stamped front and back. There remains the problem of edge identification. The simplest method is a colour marking of at least an inch in length on at least three sides and preferably the fourth. Such a mark can be painted on in red or some other colour of ink with a brush. It is possible however to build a frame or jig as it would be called in a factory and spray paint the edges of a large number of documents in a fraction of the time required by individual marking.

Any stamping should be done in colour because the cover page of a document is frequently the title page and any identification mark in black becomes lost among the rest of the print. Plastic coated covers, which are commonly used by government printers, will not accept a rubber stamp and

frequently will not accept gummed labels, especially gummed labels on the sides where they are subject to wear from shelving. It is necessary to have a variety of equipment, a tacking iron, an embossing machine, different types of labels, label shields, tapes and plastic covers to provide for every contingency. The work entailed should be done in the section if incoming documents are to be shelved quickly.

Many will object that to spend much effort in identifying a document that may have cost as little as a few cents is hardly to be justified. It is not the cost of the document that is in question. It is the cost of replacing it if it goes missing; it is the cost of re-ordering from the source or obtaining a copy through inter-library loan. It is the cost of having expensive time given to searching for it. It is the cost of reducing the library's efficiency as far as the patron is concerned. The best marking will not avoid these things but to the extent that it reduces them, it has made an ample return.

2. Shelving.

If there is no classification number the document cannot be shelved efficiently by the average shelver and, indeed, cannot be shelved efficiently by anyone. This is

why, if no proper classification system appears to be forthcoming, then the most elementary system, however inadequate, is better than none and should be considered.

Opening the document and examining the title page should be avoided, both in respect to shelving and locating. This is only workable if the library is virtually a static depository and is entered only by staff. For any active situation, the location identifier must be on the outside of the cover. Otherwise much of the available effort will be spent on these very routine tasks. A simple classification system has been suggested in a previous chapter. Elementary as it is, it may repay the time spent on it.

There is much pamphlet material that was never designed to be accommodated on a shelf with larger items. A vertical file is not the answer because material should not be placed in a vertical file on the basis that it is not over a certain number of pages. Government white papers, key department reports and much other significant material comes out in pamphlet form and to relinquish it to the vertical file is to ask for difficulties. Many series, such as debates and journals of the legislatures, are ill suited to a vertical file because they should stand with the main volumes.

The solution, or one solution, to this is wholesale

use of the pamphlet box. Everything except bound volumes should go into pamphlet boxes. This necessitates some decisions. There are four general types of material, monographs, monographic series, year books and government periodicals. Clearly, three groups, monographs, year books and periodicals should be separated, that is, within a department and perhaps in that order. The monographic series may be filed with the monographs under individual title or together under their series title. The least objectionable system is probably that of filing as a series among the monographs. The year books and periodicals will offer no problems because they will be bound except for the current issues of periodicals which can be in a pamphlet box. The monographs and monographic series should be in pamphlet boxes clearly marked with the department and the alphabetic range of titles. Thus there might be the Department of Agriculture, first box A-F, second box G-K, and so forth.

On occasion the publications of a department or an organization will have such a clear classification of their own that it becomes worthwhile to break away from the general pattern and adopt it. Any attempt to impose a separate classification system on the publications of Statistics Canada or of the United Nations, unless there is computer

coding, is usually a waste of time.

Another useful device is the hard cover pressboard binder, particularly the type that has a positive slide grip as opposed to a clamp. There is much series material, such as material of Statistics Canada, speeches and newsletters, which might be of one page. If left to itself, even in a pamphlet box, it will easily become misplaced. The pressboard covers of the binder will keep this material in order and will provide some security until it is permanently bound. Other material, such as briefs submitted to Royal Commissions, is of such assorted shapes and sizes that the only solution is a corrugated box.

Some thought has been given to plastic containers for shelving and there is no place where they would be more useful than in a documents section. However, they are still a concept that awaits development.¹

The vertical file cannot be eliminated. The content of this file should be based not upon some arbitrary figure of page numbers or size but upon subject. There is much ephemeral material in the form of brochures and newsletters which is of dubious value but which cannot be assigned to the

¹ Robert Jordan and Catherine Blumenfeld, "The Jordan Plastic Book Box: a New Concept in Library Storage and Circulation", Library Resources and Technical Services, Vol. 12, No. 4, 1968, p. 435-441.

waste basket without risking the loss of an item that might prove useful. Rather than losing much time in decisions or time in processing or shelving, it is better to have a vertical file by country, and where necessary by department, to which such material can be consigned.

3. Binding.

Continuous binding is one of the most important functions in the physical handling of documents. It raises the security level and greatly lightens the load of shelving and location of material. It is visible evidence that series are complete. It should be undertaken not sporadically but continuously. If material that could be bound sits on the shelves unbound, the chances are very good that part of it will disappear and the time consuming process of replacement will have to be undertaken. Also binding in the off-term season means binding when the commercial binder is slowest. It is better to accept the fact that some current material will be gone from the shelves when needed. The temporary loss will have to be made up by inter-library loan.

Some binding can be done on the premises and small pin-binding machines are available which will certainly pay for themselves in terms of convenience and the fact that

material will be gone for a minimum period (and is available if urgently needed). Otherwise the commercial bookbinder is the alternative.

Most series and serials will be marked in Kardex and from this record it will be obvious when a year is complete. At that time, the entry should be flagged and it will be the business of the shelper to collect the previous numbers and return them for binding. It is here that the temporary binder will prove its value and pay for some of the time spent in inserting material because with this type of maintenance it will usually be found that the material is together and in order.

Some thought may be given to ordering cheaper or more important material in duplicate standing order, one copy to go to the open shelves and one kept in a store room until it is ready to bind. While this might seem an extravagance, it may be, in fact, an economy measure. One number lost from a series may cost more to replace, in terms of staff time, than the whole series is worth. It is not practical to bind many physically small series until two or more years have been collected by which time losses will almost certainly have occurred from the open shelf. Duplication is not a measure to be undertaken lightly but in certain circumstances it may

be justified.

The procedures outlined here may seem routine but they can make the difference, especially if there is no classification system, of operating successfully and operating in a state of confusion.

CHAPTER VII

ORGANIZATION

There are four elements in the organization of a documents section; it should have a central physical location; it should have a clear definition of its role; it should be self-contained; it should be centralized in respect to its operations. These needs are almost self-evident. It must serve a number of disciplines and hence if it can have a central location the fewer will be the problems of its patrons and the less the need to disperse its resources. The area it controls must be defined or there will be continual conflict with other library fields. Its operations should be self-contained if it is to deal with documents in a way which is best suited to this type of material and under this condition the only efficient operation is a centralized one where documents and documents processing are within the same area.

1. Formation.

Few documents sections are formed at the same time as the main library, doubtless because it takes a period for the documents problem to become recognized. The usual situation then is to form a documents section by removing documents

from the main collection. This can be done in two ways. One is to remove all relevant documents from the main collection as rapidly as possible; the other is to proceed by degrees, either by removing certain categories of documents or by removing documents of specified countries or organizations in order. There are advantages and disadvantages to both.

The rapid method risks confusion and has the added disadvantage of not being as rapid as first may appear unless a rather massive effort can be launched. For every document removed some action must be taken with the catalogue card set. These cards may be removed or else they may be stamped with a documents symbol. The latter is doubtless the best solution because patrons are not confused by finding that whole blocks of familiar matter have vanished from the catalogue whereas the stamp is readily understood. At the same time as documents are removed there is a need to set up a separate documents classification system, simple or elaborate. All these things cannot be done quickly or easily.

It might be possible to devise a careful plan covering the summer term and by utilizing all available resources and with extra help accomplish this objective. In practice there are usually other demands which rule this course out.

There is a danger that the effort required for any wholesale removal of documents will be underestimated and that the process will break down and if this happens a situation arises that will take a long time to rectify.

Removal by stages is much safer. Removal can be made by type, legislative papers, monographs and monographic series and, finally, periodicals. But this makes for a situation which, in the minds of patrons at least, is a confused one. The alternative is to remove by countries and organizations. This means tolerating, perhaps for a long time, a situation where the documents of certain countries and organizations are in the documents collection while others remain in the main collection. While untidy it may be the lesser of two evils. Certainly the documents of the United Nations and those of international bodies can be removed without creating confusion among patrons who can readily understand or can be taught by signs and guidecards that such material has a separate place. Next in order could be Canadian documents which, if no other classification system is being introduced, have their own catalogue numbers. Thereafter the material of the United Kingdom and the United States could be removed. Finally, it would be necessary to proceed with countries in alphabetical order.

The process has the advantage of not being required to meet a deadline and also of enabling the newly formed documents section to progressively solve problems rather than being faced with them en masse. It is wasteful because those publications which remain in the main library must still be catalogued although the use of such cataloguing may be short lived.

Any decision will be based on local conditions. But it is well to remember that the volume of documents is doubtless much greater than anticipated. Many small monographs will be found on the shelves that are just as troublesome to handle as if they were massive volumes. Another unexpected complication is likely to be the discovery that many series are incomplete. Brought together for the first time this deficiency will be obvious and will probably need rectification.

2. Circulation.

There is good reason not to circulate documents because such a large proportion fall into the category of being reference material that is unique. Nevertheless there are a substantial number of monographs that require extensive study and it would be unreasonable to insist that they do not leave the library. If the integrity of the collection as a reference tool is to be maintained, then circulating copies should be additional

copies or duplicates. These additional copies may be catalogued and maintained in the main collection but the move suffers from the fact that time must be spent in cataloguing and a record maintained of what additional copies are available elsewhere. If there is a demand for a particular monograph to circulate, time is lost not only in obtaining it but in getting it catalogued. Control of circulating copies, placing them on types of reserve or returning them to the documents collection, becomes most burdensome.

On the other hand, if circulating copies are not catalogued in accordance with the main library system they will have either no call number or a call number that is not compatible with the main system. They will not adapt to circulation records.

The only solution is a separate documents circulation system designed for whatever call number or lack of call number that is in use. The number of documents that need to circulate is relatively small and maintaining a separate circulation system for them in the documents section will not be a large task. It is certainly less than the task of cataloguing additional copies and maintaining a record of their location. It is flexible because the demand for circulating copies can readily be recognized and acted upon directly.

3. Physical Arrangement.

It is important for the physical control of documents that they do not leave the section unless, indeed, they are in the circulating category. If they leave the section for other parts of the library, they will return slowly or not at all. For this reason the documents section should be a closed area with perhaps a turnstile. This goes against the principle of making documents accessible but it is a necessary measure if losses and misplacement are to be kept to a minimum.

Under these circumstances a study area is needed as is a photo-copy machine. As a photo-copy machine is a necessary tool for the work area, the function of photo-copy for patrons and for the section can be combined. It will mean that clerical help will have to be provided to photo-copy for the patron but the demand is not likely to be large.

4. Reference Service.

A reference service must be maintained at all times that the documents section is open, not only for control but because assistance is more needed in documents than in any other part of the library. The Beckman system, with its

computer produced book catalogues and its KWOC index, reduces the need for reference service to a minimum but even here the system must be explained to the uninitiated and there is always an aspect of documents that cannot be covered by even the most comprehensive of records.

For most situations a reference librarian, and a competent one, is a necessity. The reference collection relating to documents should be as comprehensive as possible and should contain every reference work respecting documents that is mentioned in Winchell¹ and Walford² that can be obtained. Many of these, of course, will not be documents in themselves. It should contain all relevant government catalogues and indexes as well as a set of the Public Affairs Information Service index. Such tools are indispensable no matter what the classification system.

The professional staff should be given areas of particular responsibility, both in regard to reference and for ordering and general maintenance. While the reference librarians must be competent in all areas there is a need for specialization if the section is to provide information in depth when it is required.

¹ Constance M. Winchell, Guide to Reference Books, 8th ed., Chicago, American Library Association, 1967, p. 155-163.
² A.J. Walford, Guide to Reference Material, 2d ed., London, The Library Association, 1970, Vol. 3, p. 156-164.

5. Work Area.

The heart of the work area is the acquisition section which must form an integrated unit. Ideally, the technician who prepares the order forms and letters and who maintains the order files should be the same person who processes the mail received. Unless the documents section is very large, one technician with some clerical assistance should be able to manage both ordering and receipt. This is important because a competent and experienced person, having a knowledge of the complete transaction, will be able to readily match the incoming material with the order and close the account or record against the deposit account. Discrepancies can be resolved with the librarian specialist in the area. The principle is one of unity of function which would not be possible in a larger operation but as it is possible here it should be used to advantage.

The next step is recording which is a separate operation. Series and serials are separated from the monographs and recorded in Kardex. Some, especially science material, may be destined for other divisions of the library. If so, they will have a series call number appropriate to the division and can be identified with labels and forwarded.

The treatment of other material will depend on the

cataloguing or classification system in use. If there is no classification number, they are simply accessioned, dated and given a library identification marking with a rubber stamp or colour coding as has been suggested. Any classification or coding system will require a separate process and a separate team. Considering that a thousand or more new items may arrive each month and there may be a backlog of thousands, a system similar to the Guelph system could hardly operate on less than four coders together with whatever aid from systems analysts that may be required. Whatever the system, it is certainly an area for specialization and special supervision. Even a simple main entry catalogue, without call number, cannot be managed without a manual of instruction and Anglo-American rules, if adopted, require careful interpretation. For example, a lengthy study was undertaken by the Department of Librarianship, Western Michigan University, to determine a list, not exhaustive, of headings for United States government agencies.³

An important element of the work area is the workshop where documents can be reproduced, bound or re-bound, given special labeling treatment where necessary, or inserted

³ A List of Headings for United States Government Bodies Determined According to the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, Kalamazoo, Mich., Western Michigan University, 1968, 8 p.

in binders without the need to send them elsewhere except when professional binding is required. The main tools are a pin-binding machine and a photo-copy machine as well as a variety of punches, staplers and labeling aids. The store room should contain an ample stock of pamphlet boxes, storage boxes, binders and labels adapted to any type of surface. It is particularly useful to be able to make additional copies of documents that have suddenly come into demand or to make copies of documents which may be out-of-print and have to be borrowed on inter-library loan. The laws of copyright are vague in this respect but it is clear that the reproduction of government documents is an area that permits far more latitude than that of commercial material.

The efficiency of the documents process from receipt to shelving is a function of the planning of processes and the lay-out of the work area. The process is analogous to an assembly line where material moves past stations where particular operations are performed. Some library systems have even installed conveyers along which books move from one process to another in orderly fashion from delivery entrance to shelving.⁴ This is only applicable to a situation where

⁴ What's the Big Idea? Wayne, Mich., Wayne County Federated Library System, 1969 (16) p.

the volume is large but the concept is a good one and can be applied in principle. The methods are not to be found to any extent in books about libraries, although there are a few,⁵ but rather in works respecting general office and factory procedures. Those by Terry⁶ and Barnes⁷ are good examples.

Organization is not a matter of planning the ideal situation as a rule but rather making the best of what resources are available. Frequently the space available is inadequate or the location leaves much to be desired. Staff is always a problem, not so much if the operation is at a minimum level, but if any attempt is made at coding, particularly where a large backlog exists, staffing becomes a major decision for the library.

⁵ Work Simplification in Danish Public Libraries, Chicago, American Library Association, 1969, 256 p.

⁶ George R. Terry, Office Management and Control, 3d ed., Homewood, Ill., Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1958, 739 p.

⁷ Ralph M. Barnes, Motion and Time Study: Design and Measurement of Work, 5th ed., New York, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1963, 769 p.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The literature on government publications is a reflection of the general situation in this area. It is relatively slight compared to the whole volume of library literature. Moreover studies in the area, with few exceptions, lack integration. Problems are dealt with piecemeal. The most important works consist of listing the various categories of publications produced by one or more governments. There is little attention given to the practical matters of acquisition, classification or handling as related to all aspects of the problem.

Yet what literature does exist is well illustrative of the complexities. Works such as those of Pemberton and Schmeckeber are essentially descriptions of the types of material produced by government bodies in the United Kingdom and United States respectively. Even in this limited field, they represent studies requiring considerable depth of treatment. Nothing equivalent is needed in the commercial sphere. On the other hand, literature, for the most part in the form of periodical articles, which does attempt to deal with more specific problems is usually confined to the examination of a single element.

The method of dealing with official publications has been by adapting existing procedures and by improvising. But procedures which are based upon circumstances far different than those prevailing in the documents sector can never be adapted satisfactorily. The result is that a source of vital and unique material is only partially developed and used. In spite of the excellent work done in many areas, some of which presages what the future could hold, there appears a lack of any coordinated or sufficiently comprehensive effort to resolve the matter.

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ABSTRACT OF

Government Publications: Administration¹

Government publications form a type of library material that differs in nearly all respects from commercial publications. This gives rise to a number of problems in the area and creates the need for some form of special treatment.

A basic definition is proposed and the merits of a separate or partially separate collection reviewed. Thereafter, the library processes of acquisition, classification and physical handling of government publications are examined in the light of conventional practices, recent developments and possible alternatives. Acquisition of government publications or documents is shown to be far more complex than is the case with trade books. Procedures are suggested, especially adapted to government material, which would reduce staff effort and records to a minimum. Examples of the acquisition of publications from major countries and organizations are given. Classification of documents is covered both from the standpoint of very elementary systems and that of the latest development of computer coding.

Lastly, principles and precepts for the effective organization of a government publications section are set forth.

¹ James N. Nalty, master's thesis presented to the Library School, University of Ottawa, Ontario, March 1973, vii-108 p.