PRODUCTION NOTE

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Library
Early Developments in Storage Library Processing

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FOREWORD

This portion of a longer report was prepared at the request of the Board on Cataloging Policy and Research, of the American Library Association Division of Cataloging and Classification. The Association of Research Libraries originally proposed that such a study be made in order to guide librarians who were interested in problems of organizing and recording materials as they related to an inter-library center. It was urged also that an investigation of costs be included, but it was decided that this could not be done in the present study. It is hoped that such an analysis will be completed in the future.

The Division of Cataloging and Classification, through its Board on Cataloging Policy and Research, is grateful to Miss Osborn for making this study, to Ralph T. Esterquest for his cooperation during its development, and to the librarians who furnished the data upon which the report is based. The complete original draft of the report is available on microfilm from the A.L.A. Division of Cataloging and Classification.

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This report on an aspect of participation in the Midwest Inter-Library Center has been prepared by a former staff member of the Center who, during the first sixteen months of operations, had an opportunity to observe at first hand the inflow of member deposits. During Miss Osborn's period of service at the Center, August, 1951, to December, 1952, 110 truck loads of books, periodicals, and newspapers arrived at the Center's loading dock and were placed upon the shelves. Miss Osborn's duties included the supervision of these arrivals, and she was required to make many decisions regarding their disposition in the bookstacks. She was thus intimately associated at the receiving end with the mechanics of deposit transfers, although her duties did not extend at all into the sphere of negotiating and arranging for these transfers or of communicating with member libraries concerning them.
In many ways, therefore, Miss Osborn was a good choice to prepare this preliminary statement of policies and practices as they relate to the depositing and shipping end in the libraries that participate in the deposits program of the Midwest Inter-Library Center. That the present report is in every way a preliminary statement is evident for a variety of reasons. In the first place, there is general acceptance among the participating librarians of the very real fact that initial deposits were selected in many instances on the basis of critical space needs and for reasons of expediency rather than upon objective criteria of suitability for central cooperative storage. In the second place, the criteria for selection that were developed were based upon subjective interpretation of use experience rather than upon irrefutable data derived from scientifically sound studies of book obsolescence. Thus, if the reader of Miss Osborn's report questions the basis on which the participating librarian chose what to transfer to the Center, he will find a part of his answer in that middle ground of sensible expediency where many of our library operations lie--the solid ground of common sense, realistic interpretation of experience, and wise knowledge that it is better to get a thing done than to delay while taking the uncertainty out of the last five per cent.

The question has been raised as to why the university librarians of the Middle West elected to have an inter-library center before they knew for certain the answers to such questions as: At what point do you define a book as "little used?" The implication of this question is that the librarians may have acted prematurely. Maybe time will tell. But at this point, after four years of experience, the evidence is overwhelming that it was wise to act when the chance to have a center was at hand. The alternative would have been to conduct further studies, and the moment for creating this new kind of agency would have passed. By responding when opportunity knocked, the librarians of the Middle West established a mechanism which wise control and intelligent administration can adapt to changing needs and to changing evidence arising out of further studies of book use, obsolescence, etc.

Meanwhile, participating librarians have selected material for deposit in the Center as best they could and with an intelligent consideration of the factors which experience has made known to them. That the mistakes have so far been few is shown by the fact that no books have had to be returned to depositing libraries because they have been inappropriate for cooperative storage. Thus we have tentative evidence that experience is justifying the choices that were made even though these choices may not have been based upon unassailable scientific criteria. As time goes on, further experience will in itself provide many of the factors that will make the basis for deposit selection increasingly sound.

One further point might be made. The process of choosing books to transfer to the Midwest Center is often confused by the outsider with the process known as weeding. Although the two are similar in many ways, weeding is usually an irrevocable act; depositing in the Center is merely altering the degree of access. It is a little like moving a book from the reference desk to the stacks because it isn't used very much. The depositing library retains a proprietary relationship in respect to the book, its copy of the Center's catalog card tells its existence and availability, and the teletype can bring it home for use by over-night mail.
This has all been given in a Foreword because it is necessary for a proper interpretation of Miss Osborn's findings. The Center looks upon these findings as providing a fragment of the data which will eventually become available to the membership in their individual and joint efforts to arrive at an increasingly objective basis for conducting the cooperative relationship. For this reason, the Osborn study is regarded as a useful one and is commended to the reader as a document that adds some flesh to the skeleton of a cooperative venture which university librarians in the Middle West like to think of as one that is making library history.

It should be pointed out that Miss Osborn undertook her study subsequent to leaving the staff of the Center, and she conducted it, at the request of the Board on Policy and Research of the A.L.A. Division of Cataloging and Classification, without supervision or collaboration on the part of the Center. My own role has been only to read the manuscript prior to publication.

Ralph T. Esterquest

Early Developments in Storage Library Processing

Early in 1952, only a few months after the Midwest Inter-Library Center was officially opened, the Association of Research Libraries suggested the value of a study on the costs of transferring book collection from one location to another. Acting upon this proposal, the Policy and Research Board of the A.L.A. Division of Cataloging and Classification, at its February 5, 1953, meeting, undertook the sponsorship of this inquiry into the cataloging practices of a storage library, with special reference to the problems arising out of the transfer of large quantities of materials from the various members to the central library.

From its inception MILC proposed a two-point program of cooperation for its library participants:
1. Cooperative housing of little-used material,
2. Coordination of collecting policies.

An early "Member Librarians Meeting," held during the A.L.A. Midwinter Meeting in January, 1950, presaged the vital policy-making Advisory Committee which was shortly established to confer with the director of the Center in all matters pertaining to library organization and processing. Since the MILC collections would exist as directly accessible supplements to each member's local resources, full information concerning Center holdings was considered the prerogative of every librarian and patron on every member campus. To assure individual members of all available bibliographic information, short of actually visiting the MILC stacks, all existing records, whether in card form or otherwise, would be reproduced in sufficient quantity for distribution to each participating library. The chief cataloging responsibilities of the Center would be reproduction of existing cards for already cataloged deposits, plus the making of new cards, or the establishing of other methods of bibliographic control, for uncataloged deposits. All new cataloging would be as brief as possible, and confined to main entries.
An insight into the processing plans of the Center came with the first issue of the mimeographed Manual of Procedures for Participating Libraries in June, 1950. Distributed to all participants, it contained general information on negotiating a contemplated deposit and preparing a deposit for shipment. Part I dealt with general information on policy decisions vital to the best cooperation of the members. Part II outlined routines for negotiating, packing, and transferring deposits, and for using materials once they become available at the Center. The actual process of organization at the Center called for amplification of the original statement, and minor revisions were drafted in November, 1951, and October, 1952.

An early policy decision made the Center responsible for the costs of cataloging all uncataloged deposits. The plan to leave uncataloged certain parts of the collection did not affect this decision in any way, except, as intended, to reduce the organizational costs whenever possible.

As early as March, 1950, the general outlines of cataloging procedure were stated. Cataloged material coming in on deposit should be accompanied by a main entry card from the depositing library. This card, with little or no further editing, would be reproduced in quantity and filed in the various copies of the MILC catalog. Of paramount importance was the development of a satisfactory, inexpensive process of duplication.

Shortly after the Manual of Procedures, two members questioned the decision to omit statement of the category (i.e. the relative permanence) of deposit from MILC cards. They felt that category information might influence their own decisions to purchase, discard, or deposit. Although it might entail later complications if deposit status were changed, the Center agreed to include such information on all cards.

The first cataloging at the Center was done in organizing the deposited newspapers, in July, 1951, and in March, 1952, the first shipment of 2,003 cards went out to members. The Center agreed to send copies of all its cards to the National Union Catalog at the Library of Congress. Beginning in July, 1953, it also undertook the checking of the National Union Catalog's weekly finding lists on a selective basis. Since both LC and MILC would be equipped with teletype, no further machinery was set up for inter-library catalogs at that level.

Parallel development of cataloged and uncataloged collections at the Center made a catalog supplement necessary. Therefore, the Inventory of Holdings was proposed. In December, 1951, MILC was ready to distribute its first inventory sheets for newspaper, dissertation, textbook, and college catalog collections, simultaneously with its first catalog cards for specific newspaper titles. Each collection was described in general terms of bulk, inclusiveness, and emphasis, to give members some good notion of what they might expect to find, without going so far as to itemize separate pieces.
MILC Members Answer a Questionnaire on Processing Procedures.

At its October, 1952, meeting, about fifteen months after the first deposits had been made, the Advisory Committee reviewed deposits practices in member libraries, and found that deposit selection processes varied considerably from one institution to another. The specific details of those variations, and their influence on the growth and organization of the MILC collections form the subject of this paper. To get as accurate a picture as possible of the situation on each contributor campus, a lengthy questionnaire was mailed to all members in September, 1953. Beside's the main libraries of each of the sixteen members, three professional schools on campuses at some distance from their parent institutions had libraries which participated directly and actively in the Center's program. Since these three had sizeable deposits, and exercised a substantial degree of autonomy in their negotiations with the Center, they, too, were asked to give answers to the questionnaire. The total number of replies, then, was nineteen, all of which were made by February, 1954.

Question One was designed to reveal the extensive and intensive labor which had gone into each member's transfer selections. When asked if they had made a comprehensive, coordinated study of their collections to determine exactly what to transfer, six members gave an unequivocal "yes," although none at this point indicated what steps the study had comprised. One of the six said that the primary purpose was to determine general plans for deposit, but the study had also indicated a great many specific titles or classes of material to be transferred. A seventh remarked that such a formal study was really unnecessary, for lack of shelf space had already forced segregation of those materials which they planned to send. Five libraries gave a qualified affirmative, most of them noting that it was a "general" plan which they had followed, not always indicating "exactly" what should be sent. Five libraries said "no" with varying qualifications. The last two gave no direct answer to this question.

Sixteen of the nineteen libraries agreed that the task of choosing transfer items must remain largely a professional (usually an administrative) one. In most instances the director of the library or his assistant was immediately involved in transfer studies. Four of the smaller libraries reported that the librarian had actually done the selecting. Another four used a special selection committee appointed by the director, or in one case, volunteering to help the assistant director. Six libraries left the major transfer choices to department heads concerned. Two more turned the job over to the circulation librarian. Three gave no answer to the question, or indicated that they had not transferred enough material to make the question meaningful.

The actual mechanics of selection varied widely from member to member, but in essence all plans, no matter how detailed or impromptu, were largely motivated by two factors:

1. The kinds of materials which MILC librarians had generally regarded as appropriate, and

2. Those materials which for one reason or another (lack of space, time, or ability to continue as an organized resource) the member library felt strong compulsion to turn over to MILC in hope of better service.
Eight libraries cited varying degrees of faculty cooperation, most often stating that the faculty only occasionally disagreed with library choices for transfer. One library reported little faculty interest. Two said that key faculty concurred in the original plans for transfer, implying perhaps that little further need to ask faculty opinion was felt. On the whole, the classes of materials selected for initial deposit were not of a kind to be felt indispensable by many faculty members, except perhaps in certain instances of dissertations, government documents, or newspapers. Nor was the faculty often concerned with those materials which the depositing library had not found time or money to organize and service among its own collections.

Three libraries said "no" flatly, when asked if transfer policies had been the subject of staff meetings and discussions. Six said "yes" just as flatly. The others were equivocal. Eight libraries indicated that for the most part the senior staff and department heads participated. Those of course were the larger libraries, where mere size of staff would prevent such a matter from becoming the concern of everyone. The remaining two libraries reported that the subject was mentioned in full meeting, but not opened for discussion.

Directors of larger libraries, with departmental collections at some distance from the central office, tended to rely heavily on their lieutenants in the decentralized units. The three professional school librarians who answered the survey acted with almost complete independence. On the whole, departmental libraries, where they exist, seem to operate with much the same freedom in their transfer policies and decisions that they usually have in their acquisitions policies.

Since the whole activity of participation in a storage center represented a new departure in library practice for all of its members, the keeping of records seemed important to most. Only three said that they kept no records, and one of these explained that "it was assumed that MILC records of receipts would indicate our decisions." Eight libraries reported that they keep their own records, but did not describe them in any way. One cited a typed record of its original plan for transferring materials. Another incorporates general decisions into annual reports, while noting various special decisions on checking cards. Still another keeps selective records on materials such as theses and catalogs. One cited a file listing materials sent to MILC, but no decision file as such. It bespeaks the members' confidence in the Center that they are willing to ship large quantities of materials away with only sketchy records of what is gone. Many of the deposit materials were unprocessed, and these were usually the ones for which the fewest records were kept. Hard-pressed librarians and assistants, often too busy to keep as close a tally of these minor collections as they might wish, often welcomed the opportunity to shift responsibility simply and quickly to the broadening shoulders of the new storage library.
Local specialities or deficiencies, and faculty preferences shaped deposits to a considerable extent for at least half of the members. Nine said that it made no difference. Those which did report restrictions said that they were usually determined by subject rather than type of material.

Nine libraries said that the influence of past processing on transfers made no difference. Two of these pointed out that they had no unprocessed materials. Two gave no specific answer to this question. The other eight agreed that the state of processing did have some influence on certain deposit decisions. Nine libraries mentioned transfers of cataloged periodicals or other serials, while a tenth noted that it did not catalog its periodicals, leaving the obvious implication that its transferred periodicals had received some other form of processing. Seven members sent some cataloged state documents, one of these reporting no other cataloged transfers. At the opposite extreme, one member remarked that it had sent few "collections" as such. From the replies, it seems that only in books, text-books, periodicals, and certain state documents did any sizeable amounts of previously cataloged materials come to MILC.

Materials arranged alphabetically, checked in on serial record cards, or otherwise controlled and available for use though uncataloged, came to MILC in the following areas, according to questionnaire replies: college materials (catalogs, administrative bulletins, alumni and fraternity publications) from eight libraries; foreign dissertations from seven libraries, foreign language or other special newspapers from six libraries; two collections of manufacturers' catalogs; two deposits of state documents; and one each of war crimes documents, trade union papers, text-books, and miscellaneous books and periodicals.

Only four members reported instances where they kept materials in their own libraries, while at the same time depositing similar materials at MILC. The question here was whether members had transferred bulk materials which they had no time to process, though similar items already processed were considered valuable enough to keep.

In their responses to a question on transferring unsorted materials to the Center, members did not indicate that they felt guilty of unwarranted "dumping." Eleven were certain that they had never sent materials specified "not acceptable." Six agreed, with reservation, that they may have sent "less desirable materials" occasionally. Six members indicated that they gave MILC permission to discard any non-acceptable deposits. The Center has nevertheless followed the practice of checking with the original member before taking matters into its own hands.

Ten libraries referred to circulation records, or to the experience of the circulation staff in determining whether materials could be withdrawn from the library for MILC deposit without inconveniencing the borrowers. Eight libraries said they had made no use studies, though this answer of course does not preclude their consideration of use during the process of transfer selection,
Ten members said that MILC did give an opportunity to review collecting and discarding criteria. One of the ten reported that one-fourth of a 20,000 volume obsolete and poorly-cataloged collection was discarded (another fourth was eventually sent to MILC). Seven members found that the existence of MILC had affected policies to a "limited" extent. One of these found that it made a difference in discarding; four, that it more closely affected their acquisitions. Another, research library, had only recently worked out its current acquisitions policy in detail, so found that MILC made little difference there. Only one member mentioned a particular area, the non-midwestern state documents, where it relaxed its acquisitions policy considerably.

MILC seems to have had most influence so far on member acquisitions and discards of serial publications (including newspapers). Five libraries speak of specific concessions to the knowledge that MILC had entered the serial subscriptions field. Three slowed down their state documents collecting program. Three others felt less obligation to make foreign language purchase. Two found that they could taper off their college catalog holdings. Two more curtailed their binding policies in serials. Text-books, foreign dissertations, and monographs were each mentioned once by one library.

To the question of whether lack of available time and staff became a problem in selecting transfers, two libraries did not reply. Four others said that they found no difficulty on this score. One of the four had faced the problem realistically, and set aside the needed time. The remaining eleven agreed that lack of necessary facilities constituted a real handicap.

A part of the problem of insufficient time and staff seems to have hinged upon the type of staff used to prepare MILC deposits for shipment. The level at which the greatest drain, if any, had occurred made considerable difference in the feeling of pressure which some members expressed. At this point, the physical labor of pulling and packing collections for shipment, and of adjusting necessary records, is under examination. A discussion of the replies on staff responsibilities for policy and deposit choices can be found earlier in this paper.

One library did not answer the questionnaire on this matter. Three found that they could most effectively use a combination of professional and clerical help. All the others felt quite strongly that it must be handled almost entirely by an administrative, or other professional librarian. This attitude implies a far greater drain on the salary and time invested in the transfer operation that if it were, for example, possible to formulate plans and policies at the professional level, thereafter implementing them with clerical workers.

The question on long range versus spur-of-the-moment selection was designed similarly to explore the ramifications of staff and time difficulties as they affected transfers. On the whole, members expressed less feeling of pressure
than might be expected from the preceding discussions. One did not answer; four felt that the necessary deadlines for meeting scheduled truck visits with deposits, especially in the early months, was a serious added burden. Two agreed that they had felt rushed only on one or two specific occasions, but were able to plan and execute long-term deposit arrangements for the most part satisfactorily. Two others announced that they had taken the necessary time regardless of any internal or external feeling of urgency. One of these felt that it could select and pack only at slack periods such as school vacations and during the summer months. The others reported that little difficulty had been experienced, although one felt that an attempt at a comprehensive program of study and transfer would have added a serious burden to the existing staff.

The general feeling was that nothing new or surprising had evolved in the way of routines or short-cuts for handling transfer choices. One library holds that a title-by-title decision by someone with a knowledge of books and of the subject field is imperative in most subject areas. Another was grateful for the MILC framework, within which the pre-established categories and the definition of "little-used materials" was clear and easy to interpret. Still a third mentioned the fragmentary sets program suggestions sent out by MILC as a help in selection of incomplete serial runs to send.

Two libraries mentioned their adoption of "recommendation for transfer" slips, to eliminate confusion and to facilitate approvals for transfer. Another, in looking back over the two and one-half years of deposits, remarked that "if we were beginning again we might risk asking key faculty members to assist in selection." None of the other members offered any comment.

Only four libraries have ever seriously considered rental storage of materials: one for its rare book collection, present in temporary quarters; another for the overflow of little-used materials in non-MILC classes and for an anthropology duplicate collection which might eventually go to a prospective departmental library; still another for journal back files; and the last for arrearage material in all the major Dewey classes. Three more libraries indicated that they were holding the idea in reserve for possible future consideration. None of these possibilities has ever yet actually materialized. It seems likely that in such a large-scale enterprise, members find enough relief from legitimate transfers to make rental storage unnecessary, at least for the first few years.

Eight libraries seem well satisfied with MILC acquisition policies as they are now defined. Six (including two of those which have considered rental storage) would like to see them expanded, although none gave suggestions on how, or in what area. Four believed that they should be limited "until development of present plans are under way" as one phrased it. Another of the four made a tentative distinction between acquisitions activities in the deposits area, where it believed them entirely justified, and in the purchasing areas, where it held itself not yet ready to answer. A third felt that some matters might be clarified by a closer definition of "areas."
During the early months of planning and organizing, the libraries participating in MILC discussed various possible areas of deposit. Out of the discussions developed a preliminary list of classes (state documents, doctoral dissertations, obsolete textbooks, foreign parliamentary proceedings, minor serials, and similar little-used collections) which seemed most appropriate for deposit emphasis during the initial period. These selections were made partly on the basis of past experience in member libraries of bulky, constantly increasing materials which were consulted just often enough to prevent the thought of discarding. Other factors which led to their selection were:

1. a felt need for some general statement of deposit policy, to guide and assist individual libraries in actual selections, though it did not represent any attempt to impose arbitrary limitations on those selections;
2. the organization and orderly progress of assimilation processes at the Center, so that insofar as possible all deposits of one class (i.e., state documents or dissertations) could be accumulated, sorted, and arranged as a unit within a given period of time; and
3. the adequate processing of at least a few classes of materials for early use, to make the Center available as a functioning unit in each member's library service pattern at the first possible opportunity.

When deposits began in the summer of 1951, the theoretical choices by class of material which were already agreed upon proved to be reasonably satisfactory, since most of the members did have materials in the suggested classes, and few found any occasion to withhold them from deposit at MILC. Some members found it desirable to go beyond the suggested classes. In so doing they deposited "miscellaneous," or "non-preferred" materials which were more often than not fully acceptable, since by definition anything not obviously current, heavily used, and universally held, or, on the other hand, considered of no research value, was an acceptable deposit. Such additional deposits were not only considered acceptable, but desirable, since one basic function of the storage library was to relieve its members of their housing and collection maintenance burdens. These smaller, more diversified groups of materials at times presented special processing problems for the Center staff, which was for the most part geared to the handling of large quantities of materials in the "preferred" classes. The difficulty, however, was considered secondary to and attendant upon MILC's state purpose of assisting and supplementing each member with its individual problems of bulk storage and infrequent use.

By and large, MILC members have deposited the rather obvious things, because these were the ones which were already known to give the most trouble. Member libraries have been busy enough during the past three years, getting these materials and their records properly transferred. They have not found it necessary to question too deeply the matter of deposit selection criteria. Few, for example, have yet reached the point of an item-by-item review of their general book stacks, although such a review for purposes of MILC deposit may quite conceivably come in the next decade.
Methods of transferring records and materials. -- Usually, after making preliminary decisions on what to send, each library still faced the physical labors of removing books and records from the shelves, packing and shipping to the deposit center. Twelve of the libraries did not enumerate specific routines which they had developed for implementing their transfers. Four, on the other hand, indicated that they had detailed deposit routines worked out on paper. Of these, one large library utilized its two-page mimeographed "Procedure for Disposal of Duplicates and Discards." MILC deposits apparently followed routines adapted to this general outline and its supplements until a more specific and detailed eight-page "Transfer of Material to the Midwest Inter-Library Center" procedure was issued in September, 1954. Transfer procedures were outlined for "cataloged monographs or sets," "serials," and for "un-cataloged material or blocks of cataloged material." Provision was made for review of original transfer decision which had later been questioned. Each step of physical preparation of books and records for transfer was carefully enumerated.

Another library outlined a briefer procedure covering deposited separates and deposited serials. A third organized its procedural outline according to categories showing the degree of ownership transferred. The fourth, special library within a larger university organization, operating with a relative degree of autonomy and praised by MILC for its well-prepared deposits, described in detail its routines for "classified monographs" and "serials."

Perhaps such explicit routines were necessary only for the larger libraries, depositing many kinds of material from various departmental locations, and in various stages of organization. Or for a library such as the last quoted, which became involved in large-scale transfers, regardless of its size, the careful enumerating of routine steps seems to have proved helpful. Other, more compact libraries could apparently operate with less formality.

The part that withdrawal processes played in preparation for deposit often depended on whether or not the material was in Category A (permanent transfer of ownership). As previously noted, two large libraries found in the course of developing their transfer program that "recommendation for transfer" slips made useful records and eliminated confusion in getting transfers approved.

Nine libraries said that de-processing procedures substantially reversed processing routines. Apparently no two libraries followed the same plan, although in practically every case the catalog departments worked more or less directly on the job. Nine libraries reported that the catalog department carried the major part of the responsibility. In all but two of the cases where specially trained personnel had worked at the task, the workers were carefully identified with the clerical or professional staff of the catalog department. Seven libraries reported that the de-processing was done by departmental, serial, or other librarians concerned. Five said that they had no specially-trained worker to do the de-processing, although it is apparent that differences in interpretation of the term "specially-trained" makes these replies somewhat ambiguous.
Eleven libraries affirmed that their records were all completed before the materials were ever taken out of their own buildings. Four indicated that such was usually, though not always, the case. One went on to explain "except in cases of initial shipments." The questions on kinds of catalog records kept in member libraries were subdivided to elicit information on various possible ways of handling. In reporting their replies, it seems most illuminating to combine all parts of each library's answers as follows:

"Catalog cards and shelf list left in files marked 'MILC.' Not sent to MILC. Cards used for checking and marking records are kept and filed. No decisions recorded."

"Cards other than official catalog cards were sent to MILC. Card in official catalog was stamped 'MILC' and category. We have tried to avoid depositing duplicates."

"Public shelf card stamped 'MILC' and filed in Union Card Catalog when no copies remain in library. Transfer noted on official shelf card when one or more copies remain. Category is noted in both instances."

"A card record is kept in files marked 'MILC', including category and transfer decisions. Some cards are sent to MILC."

"Copies of our promises of deposits at the beginning of the program were kept on typed sheets - fairly detailed. Fully processed material was stamped 'MILC' in the public catalog and the shelf list. Decisions on categories and times of transfer were not marked in our card files. Duplicate copies were not deposited save in a few cases in the college catalog category."

"Catalog and shelf list cards marked 'MILC;' one card sent with volumes to MILC; another card filed in a separate file of titles transferred to MILC."

"No record kept of books (monographs) sent to MILC. Serials: Main card remains in catalog marked 'MILC.' Shelf card kept in special file with library's 'recommendation for transfer to MILC' form. Latter shows category of deposit, date of transfer and basis for decision, etc. Cards other than main and shelf accompany material. Main card in catalog; shelf card in special file. Duplicate copies sent would be merely crossed out on shelf card."

"Decisions concerning category of deposit were made for large types of material, and the record of such decisions is in the listing sent annually to MILC for contemplated deposits. Shelf cards are marked 'MILC' and retained in the shelf list for books in category B. Records for items in category A have been withdrawn and will probably be discarded. (Category A: permanent transfer of title to MILC; Category B: permanent transfer of material, title retained by member.)
When duplicate copies were transferred to MILC the shelf list card carries the indication of which copy was sent. This was complete before the shipment was made."

"We will probably simply stamp our catalog records 'Midwest Library' and retain them in our card catalog."

"Shelf-list in separate file shows category of deposit and volumes deposited. For Category A deposits only shelf-list record was kept. For Category B and C (title retained by member; material subject to recall) deposits all catalog cards remained in file. An initial decision to mark cards left in catalogs has been deferred until enough time has elapsed to determine whether calls for such materials justify the cost of marking. One copy of each card was sent to the Center only for titles which were to be individually listed in its catalog. A ledger record includes type of material, volume count and date of deposit. There are no duplicates in our library's collections."

"Withdrawal record is a card record, or file of shelf cards for books withdrawn. Includes time of transfer."

"Catalog and shelf list cards are not sent to MILC but kept in a withdrawal file marked 'MILC,' including decisions on transfers."

"No cards are left in the files marked 'MILC.' Added entry card goes to MILC; main and shelf list cards are kept for serials. Card record kept of transfers to MILC, including transfer decisions."

"No cards are left in the files marked 'MILC.' Added entry card goes to MILC; main and shelf list cards are kept for serials. Card record kept of transfers to MILC, including transfer decisions."

"No cards left in files. One card sent to MILC. Others kept in separate file in library. No decisions recorded. Catalog and shelf cards were marked when duplicates only were sent."

"Catalog but not shelf cards sent to MILC. Interfiled in separately maintained file of catalog cards received from MILC. When one or more copies of a title were kept in the library, location of copies sent to MILC was noted on shelf list cards we kept. No decisions recorded."

"Catalog cards kept in separate file in library. Shelf list left in library files marked 'MILC.' Cards not sent to MILC. No decisions recorded."

"I think we have transferred only serials and dissertations. Records consist of Kardex cards for serial and correspondence for all transfers."

"No cards left in files marked 'MILC.' Author cards only sent to MILC. One card marked 'Withdrawn MILC' is added to withdrawn file."
From these answers, and from known experience at the Center, it can be inferred that only a few of the larger libraries have transferred cataloged separates in any significant quantity. Most of the cataloged materials which have come were serials of one sort or another: newspapers, journals, hospital reports, government documents, college bulletins, or titles proposed by the Center through the fragmentary sets program. Among the members, the tendency seems to be to remove records of transfers from catalog and shelf list in the local library, keeping only a separate record of transfers, usually in the regular "withdrawn" file. As will be seen later, most of the members depend upon their copies of the distributed MILC catalog and upon the Inventory of Holdings for information about what is available at the Center. Marking and leaving cards for their own transfers in their own catalog seems to have been considered needless duplication of information to many of them. They of course try to keep careful records in most instances of whatever materials they may have sent in Categories B and C, and the few libraries which have deposited heavily in these categories have kept the most elaborate records. It has been found that Category B and C deposits make far more record work necessary both at the sending and the receiving end of the transfer operations.

Records on uncataloged deposits. -- Ten libraries reported that they kept whatever records they might have of unprocessed materials in their own possession instead of sending them with the material to MILC. Four sent all such records along with the transfers, and two others provided records both for themselves and for MILC. Of course, for all types of deposits, whether processed or unprocessed, the Center itself provided deposit receipts, which seem to have been accepted by many members as adequate records of their transfers. Incoming deposits could not always be unboxed and sorted immediately, to provide accurate information for receipts, but sincere effort was made by Center personnel to receipt incoming deposits as accurately as possible, and very little complaint on this score has come from the members.

Where it was felt that more detailed information might be needed, as for college catalogs, newspapers, or other unprocessed serials which had gone, the depositor often kept lists or card records, knowing that much of this material would not be cataloged at the Center, but simply arranged in order on the shelves. These records which the member kept might save the necessity of a teletype correspondence with MILC to learn of a particular item in an uncataloged collection. For the most part, the influence of the Center has been toward a minimum of record keeping, and the various members have not reported any serious inconvenience therefrom.

Only one of the larger libraries reports serious difficulties with record-lag. It could not find time to complete all changes in its records at the same time that large shipments (e.g., textbooks, dissertations, etc.) were made. Eleven members were able to complete all changes in their records before the materials left their premises. Four were able to do so most of the time. Two could not, because they sent to MILC for reproduction those cards which carried their own permanent records of Category B and C deposits. The original cards had to come back from the Center before their records would be complete.
Packing, loading, and interim servicing of materials. -- Most of the members feel that packing and truck loading is a problem of mutual concern with the Center. In preparing for truck transfers, the Center purchased 500 wooden packing boxes, each of a size to hold the equivalent of a three-foot shelf of books, and equipped to interlock when stacked. A shipment of 150 boxes was considered a full truck-load. The boxes facilitated operations in many cases, but they could not forestall all the hazards of transfer. When most needed they were all too often tied up, full of books at the Center, or unavailable in member libraries. Besides these difficulties, many materials such as bound and unbound newspapers would not fit the boxes and had to be stacked directly on the bed of the truck. Materials in pamphlet containers arrived now and again, in various states of repair, with or without the benefit of the wooden boxes. Bundles of state documents, unbound magazines, or even books sometimes arrived tied with string. One library furnished its own cardboard cartons which it requested the Center to knock down and store flat for further shipments. Another library sent most of its material nailed into very large wooden boxes (twenty-five to thirty made a full truck-load). They, too, were to be returned for further shipment. Two libraries used small cartons in which sets or similar materials were packed together. Eight members used box labels (inked adhesive tape, or marked cards fixed with Scotch tape) although two indicated that the device did not solve all problems of transfer from shelf-to-truck-to-shelf in perfect order. One unavoidable difficulty lay in having to unload the truck in reverse of the way it was loaded. For certain materials, a second step was introduced at the Center. The shipment was unloaded onto the floor of the receiving room, whence it could be taken to the stacks and unpacked in the same order it had been packed. Other shipments went first to a temporary location in an empty shelf section before they were sorted and permanently shelved. Needless to say, those materials which were processed and carefully packed before coming to MILC were the easiest to handle.

There seems to have been little inconvenience from having materials temporarily incommunicado during packing and transit. Much of what was transferred was boxed, unprocessed, or to all extents unavailable even before it was sent. Two libraries report calls for material which was in transit, but these calls were either referred to another source or postponed for a few days. Estimates of the time involved between packing and pick-up range from two weeks to four months, averaging about two months.

Nine libraries say they have never transferred subscriptions along with back files of serials. The other ten libraries have made some subscription transfer arrangements, in varying quantities. Five mention transferring gift or exchange subscriptions of one kind or another.
Four libraries keep no current files of any kind which are eventually slated for MILC deposit. Five members do keep certain newspapers (usually foreign) for a year or more before transferring. Eight follow the same practice with various kinds of periodicals: three keep trade and/or agricultural journals for temporary local use; one large library estimates that ten per cent of its periodicals eventually find their way to MILC; another deposits publications of state historical societies after a period of time. A large special library divides its periodicals into three value levels: those of high research value are not transferred at all; those of medium research value and scholarly content have been deposited for the years prior to 1900; those of news content rather than research value have been broken at about 1920. A medical library keeps hospital and other annual reports for later transfer. Four members keep government (usually state) documents for a time before sending them to MILC. Two do the same with children's textbooks. Two report that they treat very few materials in this way.

No libraries specify having as yet deposited any micro-technique materials, nor do they say that they intend to in the near future. Such materials give them no serious space problems, and probably would not have been bought or converted to that form in the first place had the member anticipated deposit. To date, practically all such acquisitions come to the Center through direct purchase of either the micro-technique edition or the printed edition for later reduction.

Member librarians look at the catalog. -- Most of the member libraries originally requested but one copy of the MILC catalog. Today, twenty-one full sets are being mailed, including two sets each to four members and one set to the Library of Congress Union Catalog. In addition, eight sets of only medical cards go out to appropriate libraries. A use survey made by the Center in the fall of 1952 was answered by fourteen of the members. Two libraries said they filed one set in their own public catalog, after stamping each card with MILC identification. A third contemplated such action, but did not yet have the space in its catalog. Ten members filed sets separate from, but adjacent to, their public catalogs. Three others followed that practice with their second sets. No MILC identification was needed for each card so long as the entire file was properly labeled. One member interfiled its set into its Union Catalog. Another expected to use a second set in that way.

Some degree of dissatisfaction with the MILC cards has been expressed from time to time. Members recognize the financial savings of the simplified cataloging which is used. On the other hand, some feel that disregard of various A.L.A. and L.C. rules, and the centering irregularities which occasionally result from the multilithing and cutting, present serious problems for the user. Lack of available staff for filing, plus reluctance to have borrowers asking casually for MILC materials, are, nevertheless, the chief reasons advanced for not interfileing into the public catalog. Besides these difficulties, one member remarks wistfully that it would be helpful to have the cards alphabetized and stamped "MILC." This wish recalls a formal request from the Advisory Committee to have the MILC designation placed in call number position if at all feasible. Unfortunately the multilith press bed size limitation makes it necessary to leave left-hand margins blank on all cards, preventing the use of the MILC symbol there.
Answers to this author's 1953 questionnaire give a similar picture. Eleven said that they filed MILC cards in a separate catalog near their public catalog. Three filed them directly into their public catalog, two of these three also maintaining a second separate set as an MILC catalog. Two put the cards into a larger Union Catalog. One claimed insufficient experience to comment. Two special libraries did not receive them.

One member remarked that the MILC cards were generally good, although the headings were too low, and the format should be standard (a criticism resulting from the direct copying wherever possible of cataloging already done in various member libraries). Another termed it excellent, and still another said that on the whole it was satisfactory. One wished that card shipments could be speeded up, perhaps by sending in smaller quantities. A particularly disgruntled member wrote: "We have already commented separately that the MILC catalog cards are poorly cut, punched, and centered, with the result that we have serious doubts about their fitting into our public catalog, where they belong." With practice these defects seem now to have been entirely cleared up.

Ten members report that the Inventory is for them an adequate supplement of the MILC catalog (three add the cautious note "so far"). Two flatly disagree. Six find it helpful, or fairly adequate for a general statement of policy. A special library finds it of "only nominal value; most of the collections described are not of interest to our patrons." A large urban university says: "A somewhat more extensive Inventory of Holdings might be desirable to describe uncataloged materials in MILC. However, the description--or even the listing--of many such collections might be extremely difficult to do in any meaningful terms."

Another comments: "Fairly adequate. More details would of course be desirable. It's a matter of cost versus use." One thinks that "In some areas, specific listing is essential, e.g. newspapers." Another wails: "The Inventory of Holdings is an excellent index to the MILC holdings. The MILC catalog is a relatively poor supplement to this Inventory.

Most of the suggestions which various members offered, or the rare criticism which they expressed involved minor details of the processing routines. Seven libraries said that they had nothing to suggest. Seven more did not bother to answer the question at all. It cannot be inferred from this apparent indifference that the member libraries have no concern for the techniques and problems of their storage center. More likely, their immediate concern has been with the disposal procedures on their own home base. Only with the passage of time can the relative advantages and disadvantages of the MILC processing experiments be accurately evaluated.

One thing already appears for observation. The individual differences in size, organization, interest, and personnel which are apparent from member to member seem to have more effect upon their deposit, de-processing, and exploitation of Center resources than any other factor. A certain degree of standardization has been imposed by the Center, through its various boards and committees, its Manual of Procedures, and similar activities. Yet the
various members showed marked individuality in operating within that framework, and in cooperating with the Center. Any serious differences of opinion or criticisms of procedures are as a rule satisfactorily arbitrated in Advisory Committee meetings, but the original decisions on ways and means of processing at the Center have never been altered. Their validity must now remain a question of time and experience.

FOOTNOTES


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Numbers in this series are issued irregularly and no more often than monthly. Single copies of any issue are available free upon request; appropriate institutions wishing to receive a copy of all issues should so indicate in writing. The Occasional Papers will deal with some phase of librarianship, and will consist of manuscripts which are too long or too detailed for publication in a library periodical, or are of specialized or temporary interest. The submission of manuscripts for inclusion in this series is invited. Material from these papers may be reprinted or digested without prior consent, but it is requested that a copy of the reprint or digest be sent the editor. All communications should be addressed to Editor, Occasional Papers, University of Illinois Library School, Urbana, Illinois.

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