Government Publications in American Libraries

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A voluminous literature deals with the publications of federal, state, and local governments in the United States. Relatively little, however, appears to have been written on library resources in this area. The purpose of the present study, therefore, is to present a broad survey of the major collections of official publications, from national to local levels, held by U.S. libraries. Because of the scope of the investigation, there is space for little specific detail.

The distribution of U.S. federal government publications was not placed on an orderly basis until passage of the Printing Act of 1895, which created the Office of Superintendent of Documents in the Government Printing Office. The Act continued the legal provision, previously operating in haphazard fashion, for the designation of depositories by members of Congress. State and territorial libraries and the libraries of the executive departments were added to the list of depositories.

Originally, the depository libraries received all the documents which were published for general distribution. The first major change in the depository law occurred in 1922, when the statute was amended to make it permissible for libraries to select in advance the publications they desired to receive. The revised plan was particularly advantageous to small libraries which did not possess the space or staff to cope with the unending flood from Washington, nor did they have highly specialized needs.

The immediate result of the new law was the division of libraries into two groups: the “all” depositories, which elected to receive every available publication; and the “selective” depositories, which chose more limited coverage. In the late nineteen-forties, only 125 of 545 depository libraries were selecting the entire quota—a little more than one-fifth of the total.

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The most recent revision in depository legislation was made by the Depository Library Act of 1962, setting up a system of regional depositories, corresponding in completeness of collections to the previous "all" libraries, and placing all other depository libraries on a selective basis. At the same time, the new law provided for a substantial increase in the number of depositories. The newly designated regional libraries, each of which has agreed to serve as a central resource for its state or area, are named under individual states below.

Retrospectively, the most complete collections of federal publications should be in the "all" depositories. The matter is not as simple as it may appear, however, for it is difficult to discover in many instances when a library became a complete depository. Also, a library may have begun as an "all" depository and later changed to selective status, or vice versa. A Report on Designated Depository Libraries, made for the American Library Association in 1923, by Mary A. Hartwell, Cataloger in the Superintendent of Documents Office, listed forty-seven "all" depositories, distributed among twenty-three states:

Alabama Department of Archives and History
University of Arizona Library
University of California Library, Berkeley
San Francisco Public Library
Eureka (Calif.) Public Library
Colorado State Library
Connecticut State Library
Wilmington (Del.) Institute Free Library
University of Idaho Library
Illinois State Library
University of Illinois Library
Chicago Public Library
John Crerar Library, Chicago
Henderson (Ky.) Public Library
Louisville (Ky.) Free Public Library
Louisiana State University Library
Massachusetts State Library

Boston Public Library
University of Michigan Library
Grand Rapids (Mich.) Public Library
Minnesota State Library
University of Minnesota Library
Montana State College Library
University of Nevada Library
New York State Library
New York Public Library, Astor Branch
New York Public Library, Lenox Branch
Ohio State University Library
Cleveland Public Library
Oberlin College Library, Oberlin, Ohio
Case Institute of Technology Library, Cleveland, Ohio
Pennsylvania State Library
Pennsylvania State College Library
Free Library of Philadelphia
Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

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In 1965, all these libraries, except the Henderson (Ky.) Public Library and the Case Institute Library, were still official depositories, though in many cases they are no longer attempting exhaustive coverage of all U.S. government publications. In any event, the group of forty-five which were depositories continuously for the forty-two year period since 1923 may be presumed to have above-average collections.

Doubtless the most complete of all collections of U.S. publications is held by the Division of Public Documents Library in the Government Printing Office. According to a 1959 report, the Library's holdings then amounted to over 1,500,000 pieces. Its facilities are available, however, only by special authorization of the Superintendent of Documents, and interlibrary loans are not permitted except to government departments and agencies. The Library of Congress also approaches 100 percent completeness, and use of its collections is surrounded by fewer restrictions. Furthermore, the individual departments, bureaus, offices, and other divisions of the Federal Government can be assumed to hold comprehensive collections of their own publications, including many near-print items never distributed by the Superintendent of Documents.

For the remainder of the country, a state by state survey was attempted, with the assistance of the leading depository libraries. So far as Federal Government publications are concerned, the results may be summarized as follows:

**Alabama.** The Alabama State Department of Archives and History Library became a complete depository in 1884; since 1953 its status has been selective. The University of Alabama Library has collected comprehensively since 1860 and its holdings are estimated to be 80 percent complete; it is a regional depository.

**Alaska.** The University of Alaska Library has been a selective depository for many years and has the most complete collection in the
state; except for agriculture, geology, and mining, however, its holdings of older publications are inadequate.

Arizona. The Arizona Department of Library and Archives became the Territorial Library in 1864, and has received federal publications on deposit since that date; it is now a regional depository. The University of Arizona Library became a depository in 1907 and is now a regional depository; its collection of federal documents rates from medium to excellent.

Arkansas. The University of Arkansas Library has been a depository since 1907; its status changed from “all” to “selective” in 1950. The Little Rock Public Library collects comprehensively.

California. The California State Library became a complete depository in 1895 and a regional depository shortly after enactment of the Depository Library Act of 1962; for the nineteenth century, the collection is considered the best in the West. The University of California Library at Berkeley was named a complete depository in 1884; its holdings, including technical reports, are virtually complete. The University of California at Los Angeles has collected comprehensively since 1946. Stanford University Library has been a depository since 1895.

Colorado. The University of Colorado Library was designated a depository in 1879, received all publications distributed until 1950, 96 percent of available publications from 1950 to 1963, and has been a regional depository since 1963. Also extensive are the holdings of the Denver Public Library, which was formerly an “all” depository and has continued to collect comprehensively; it is also a regional depository under the new law.

Connecticut. The Connecticut State Library became a depository before 1900 and a regional depository in 1962. Yale University was one of the earliest “complete” depositories, dating from 1859, but is now selective.

Delaware. The University of Delaware Library, named a depository in 1907, is selective, receiving about 60 percent of available publications.

Florida. The University of Florida Library became a regional depository in 1963; previously, it had collected extensively, but not exhaustively. The Florida State Library has been a selective depository since 1931.

Georgia. The University of Georgia Library was one of the first to be named as a complete depository for federal publications; its col-
lecion is rated as excellent. Emory University Library was made a depository in 1893.

**Hawaii.** The University of Hawai’i Library has been a depository since 1907, selective since 1922, and presently receives about 75 percent of materials available. The Library of Hawai’i has had selective status since the nineteen-twenties.

**Idaho.** The University of Idaho Library’s federal holdings are rated 90 percent complete; first designated in 1907, it became a regional depository in 1963.

**Illinois.** There are four principal depositories in Illinois: the University of Illinois Library has been on the distribution list since its founding in 1868, and aims at completeness; the University of Chicago Library became a depository in 1897, and its holdings are excellent, except for strictly technical publications. The Illinois State Library was once an “all” depository and then became selective, though it continued to receive a large proportion of documents available; it has been a regional depository since 1963. The Northwestern University Library was made a depository in 1876.

**Indiana.** Indiana University Library was an “all” depository from 1881 to 1950, since when it has selected about 95 percent of deposit items. Indiana State Library began receiving publications before formal establishment of the depository system, and has aimed toward completeness since then; its holdings of the serial set are complete starting with the 15th Congress; the Library is now a regional depository.

**Iowa.** The State University of Iowa Library’s designation as a depository dates back to 1894 and its holdings are practically complete; it was made a regional library in 1963.

**Kansas.** The Kansas State Historical Society Library became a depository in 1877. The Kansas State Library’s holdings are also extensive. In recent years the University of Kansas has selected between 85 and 95 percent of available publications.

**Kentucky.** The University of Kentucky Library is virtually complete for depository publications.

**Louisiana.** The Tulane University Library became a depository in 1884 and the Louisiana State University Library in 1907. L.S.U. has aimed at completeness, and is now a regional depository. Tulane is selective. A second regional depository in the state is the Louisiana Polytechnic Institute Library.

**Maine.** The University of Maine Library has attempted to build a
complete collection; starting in 1963, it became a regional depository.

Maryland. The Enoch Pratt Free Library of Baltimore was designated a depository in 1887, and it has since developed its holdings comprehensively. The Johns Hopkins University Library became a depository in 1882 and the Peabody Institute Library in 1883; both are selective. The University of Maryland received about 95 percent of depository publications available, before becoming a regional depository.

Massachusetts. The Harvard University Library has been a depository since 1860, and its holdings are excellent. Even earlier, the American Antiquarian Society became a depository by special act shortly after its founding in 1812; since 1922, however, it has selected only publications relating to American history. The Massachusetts State Library’s collection also dates back to the early years of the depository system; since 1962, it has been a regional depository.

Michigan. The oldest depository in Michigan is the Detroit Public Library, first named in 1868; its collections are regarded as practically complete; it also serves as a regional depository. The University of Michigan Library’s depository status dates from 1884, and it too contains an excellent collection. The Michigan State Library became a regional depository beginning in 1964.

Minnesota. The University of Minnesota Library began as a depository in 1907, and became a regional depository in 1963; its holdings are excellent. The Minnesota Historical Society Library dates as a depository since 1867, but has been selective since 1922.

Mississippi. The University of Mississippi Library became a “complete” depository in 1883, and its collection is rated as excellent.

Missouri. The University of Missouri Library was long an “all” depository and has continued to build its collections comprehensively. Other good collections are in the Missouri State Historical Society, St. Louis Public Library, and Kansas City Public Library.

Montana. The Montana State University Library was named a complete depository in 1908; from 1940 to 1964 it acquired publications selectively, and in 1965 became a regional depository.

Nebraska. The University of Nebraska Library became a depository in 1895 and its collection is comprehensive; about 95 percent of publications available are received. The Nebraska State Library has also been on the depository list since the late nineteenth century, but is more selective.
Nevada. The University of Nevada Library’s holdings are rated good; beginning in 1963, it became a regional depository.

New Hampshire. The Dartmouth College Library (a depository since 1884), the New Hampshire State Library, and the University of New Hampshire Library have a cooperative arrangement whereby they receive and hold about 87 percent of all federal publications.

New Jersey. The New Jersey State Library became a depository in 1895, but has always been selective. Princeton University Library was added to the depository list in 1884, and is also selective. The Newark Public Library is a regional depository.

New Mexico. The University of New Mexico Library became a depository in 1896; since 1922 it has been selective. Beginning in 1962, the New Mexico State Library became a regional depository.

New York. The New York Public Library, a depository library since 1884, has nearly 100 percent of publications distributed; from the colonial period through the nineteenth century, its holdings are exceptionally strong. The Columbia University Library became a depository in 1882, and is almost complete for depository items. The New York State Library became a depository in the nineteenth century, and its holdings are relatively complete; it serves as a regional depository. The Cornell University Library was designated a depository in 1895, or possibly earlier; its holdings are excellent.

North Carolina. The University of North Carolina Library’s depository status dates from 1884; its collection is reasonably complete; in 1963, it became a regional depository. The Duke University Library has been a depository since 1890, and rates its collection as good. The North Carolina State Library’s holdings rank from fair to strong.

North Dakota. The North Dakota University Library has been receiving publications on a depository basis since 1890; its holdings are selective, but good.

Ohio. The Ohio State Library received about 90 percent of depository publications before becoming a regional depository in 1962. The Ohio State University Library began as a depository in 1901 and is almost complete in its present coverage. Another comprehensive collection is in the Cleveland Public Library, which became a depository in 1886.

Oklahoma. The University of Oklahoma Library was named a depository in 1893, and its holdings are regarded as as complete as is practicable. The Oklahoma State Library is a regional depository.

Oregon. The Oregon State Library has been a depository since the
early days of statehood, and possibly when the state was a territory; its collection is quite complete. The University of Oregon Library was made a depository in 1883; at present, it receives about 75 percent of depository items.

Pennsylvania. Except for the period 1953-1962, the Pennsylvania State Library has been a complete depository since the beginning of the system. The University of Pennsylvania Library was designated a depository in 1886; since 1922 its coverage has been selective. Formerly, Pennsylvania State University, the Free Library of Philadelphia (1897), and the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (1895) were listed as “all” depositories.

Rhode Island. The Rhode Island State Library became a depository in 1895, and throughout the period since then has attempted comprehensive coverage.

South Carolina. The University of South Carolina Library was designated a depository in 1884; its holdings are estimated to be about 70 percent of the publications distributed.

South Dakota. The University of South Dakota Library became a depository in 1889; its holdings, on a selective basis, are good.

Tennessee. The Tennessee State Library has been a depository since the beginning of the present system; its collection has been developed selectively. The University of Tennessee Library, also selective, became a depository in 1907.

Texas. The Texas State Library became a depository in 1895, and since 1963 has served as a regional depository; its holdings are rated good. The University of Texas Library was named a depository in 1884; its collection is excellent. Texas Technological College Library is a second regional depository in the state.

Utah. The University of Utah Library has been a depository since 1893, and has the largest collection in its area. The Utah State University Library at Logan is a regional depository.

Vermont. The Vermont State Library has excellent holdings of older material; it is presently selecting about one-half of the depository items. The University of Vermont Library became a depository in 1907, and its holdings are strong.

Virginia. The Virginia State Library has been an “all” depository since the beginning of the system, but in the past decade or so has become somewhat selective. The University of Virginia Library was named a depository in 1932 and has since collected comprehensively.

Washington. The Washington State Library’s holdings are rated as
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strong; since May 1965 it has been a regional depository. The University of Washington Library became a depository in 1890; for overall completeness, its collection is excellent.

West Virginia. The West Virginia University Library's depository status dates from 1907; its collection is good, but has been developed selectively; the Library is now a regional depository.

Wisconsin. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library became a depository in 1870, and its holdings are good in the areas in which it has specialized; it serves as a regional depository. In recent years, the Society and the University of Wisconsin, another depository, have developed their collections cooperatively. A second regional depository in the state is the Milwaukee Public Library.

Wyoming. The Wyoming State Library possibly became a depository when the territorial library was established in 1871, and certainly when it acquired state library status in 1890; its selective holdings are good. The University of Wyoming Library was designated as a depository in 1922, and has since worked toward a complete collection.

Non-Depository Publications

One of the most frustrating and troublesome aspects of Federal Government publications from a library point of view is that a high proportion are not included in the Superintendent of Documents' depository system. Only publications produced by the Government Printing Office are offered to depositories. A recent study by Clifton Brock reports that "there are now over 340 printing plants outside the GPO," some in Washington, others in various states, and a few in foreign countries. Brock estimates, on the basis of data available, that from 60 to 65 percent of government printing is non-GPO. Thus nearly two-thirds of federal publications are outside the depository program, and as Brock states, "are available to libraries, the general public, and the educational and research community—if at all—only through a chaotic variety of time-consuming, expensive, and problematical acquisition methods."

Because of this highly unsatisfactory situation, in 1946 the Association of Research Libraries, in cooperation with several other library associations, established the Documents Expediting Service in the Library of Congress. The purpose of the organization is to acquire non-depository U.S. government publications unavailable from the Government Printing Office or from the issuing agency. At the end
of 1964, there were ninety-seven subscribing libraries, each paying an annual fee averaging some $300. The Library of Congress reported that 130,000 items were sent to subscribers in 1964. Even so, Brock comments, "Despite its initiative and favorable location, the Project has been able to locate and provide only a small proportion of non-GPO publications."  

Another major attempt to solve the problem dates from 1953, when the Readex Microprint Corporation began publication of a microprint edition of both depository and non-depository documents issued by the U.S. government. As of 1965, there were fifty-five libraries subscribing to the Readex Non-Depository Edition of Government Publications at an annual cost of $1,800 each. Libraries which have subscribed to the project from the beginning are the following:

- Brown University
- California State Library
- Center for Research Libraries
  (Chicago)
- City College of New York
- University of Colorado
- Columbia University
- Cornell University
- Fort Worth Public Library
- University of Georgia
- Harvard University
- Johns Hopkins University
- Library of Congress
- Michigan State Library
- Milwaukee Public Library
- New York Public Library
- New York State Library
- University of North Carolina
- North Carolina State College
- Ohio State University
- Oklahoma State University
- Free Library of Philadelphia
- Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
- University of Pittsburgh
- Princeton University
- University of Rochester
- Rutgers University
- Southern Illinois University
- University of Southern California
- University of South Carolina
- University of Texas
- Washington State University
- University of Washington
- Wisconsin State Historical Society
- Yale University

State Publications

As might be anticipated, the strongest collections of state publications are to be found in the states where they originate. The most complete holdings, state by state, are reported to be owned by the following institutions:

Alabama. Alabama State Department of Archives and History and University of Alabama.
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Alaska. Alaska State Library and the Alaska State Historical Library.
Arizona. Arizona Department of Library and Archives.
Arkansas. University of Arkansas.
California. California State Library and the University of California at Berkeley.
Delaware. Delaware State Archives.
Florida. Florida State Library and the University of Florida.
Georgia. Georgia State Library.
Hawaii. University of Hawaii.
Illinois. Illinois State Library and the University of Illinois.
Indiana. Indiana State Library and Indiana University.
Iowa. State University of Iowa and the State Historical Society of Iowa.
Kansas. Kansas Historical Society Library and the Kansas State Library.
Kentucky. University of Kentucky.
Louisiana. Louisiana State University and Tulane University.
Maine. University of Maine and Maine State Library.
Maryland. Enoch Pratt Free Library and the Maryland Hall of Records.
Massachusetts. Massachusetts State Library.
Minnesota. Minnesota Historical Society Library.
Mississippi. Mississippi Department of Archives and History.
Missouri. Missouri State Historical Society Library.
Nebraska. Nebraska State Library, Nebraska State Historical Society Library, and the University of Nebraska.
Nevada. Nevada State Library.
New Jersey. New Jersey State Library and Rutgers University.
New Mexico. University of New Mexico.
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North Dakota. State Historical Society of North Dakota, University of North Dakota, and North Dakota State University.
Ohio. Ohio State Library and Cleveland Public Library.
Oklahoma. Oklahoma State University and Oklahoma State Library.
Oregon. Oregon State Library.
Rhode Island. Rhode Island State Library.
South Carolina. South Carolina Archives Commission and the University of South Carolina.
South Dakota. University of South Dakota and South Dakota State University.
Tennessee. Tennessee State Library and Archives.
Texas. Texas State Library and the University of Texas.
Utah. Utah State Historical Society.
Vermont. Vermont State Library.
Virginia. Virginia State Library, the University of Virginia, and the Virginia Historical Society.
West Virginia. West Virginia University.
Wisconsin. State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
Wyoming. Wyoming State Library, University of Wyoming, and Wyoming Archives and Historical Department.

Comparatively few institutions attempt to collect state publications comprehensively. Probably the most complete collection is held by the Library of Congress, which has issued the Monthly List of State Publications since 1910. Other libraries reporting substantial collections beyond their own state borders include the following:

Arizona. Strength in selected fields from southwestern and western states at the University of Arizona.
California. The California State Library has a large collection emphasizing the major states and the western area. The University of California at Berkeley also has a good collection of publications of states west of the Rockies.
Colorado. The University of Colorado collects important publications in all fields from thirteen northwestern and southwestern states.
Connecticut. The publications of other states are collected extensively by the Connecticut State Library.
Georgia. The University of Georgia collects extensively from the southeastern states and in designated fields from selected states elsewhere.

Illinois. The University of Chicago collects extensively from all states in the social sciences, and legislative materials from nine states (neighboring states and New York, Massachusetts, California, and Texas). The Center for Research Libraries (formerly Midwest Interlibrary Center), in Chicago, is attempting to build a complete collection of state publications. The University of Illinois also collects comprehensively.

Indiana. Indiana University's policy is to collect all official publications from eleven states: California, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia.

Louisiana. The Louisiana State University tries to maintain a relatively complete collection in a number of categories for the southern states.

Maine. The University of Maine's holdings for the New England states are extensive.

Massachusetts. The Massachusetts State Library collects the publications of other states extensively. The American Antiquarian Society has a comprehensive collection through 1876. Harvard University attempts completeness for all New England states and twelve selected states elsewhere for administrative documents; the Library also has an excellent collection of legislative materials from all states.

Nebraska. The Nebraska State Library reported that its policy is to collect extensively.

New Hampshire. Publications of other states in the northeastern United States are extensively collected by the New Hampshire State Library.

New Jersey. The New Jersey State Library is a full depository for California and New York documents.

New York. The New York Public Library collects comprehensively for all the states and its holdings are extensive. Cornell University systematically collects the publications of other states, with particular stress on certain fields.

North Carolina. The University of North Carolina has complete collections of legislative and legal publications from all the states and extensive holdings of departmental publications.

Ohio. The Ohio State Library collects publications of all the states, but not on a complete basis.
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Oregon. The Oregon State Library collects extensively other state publications, emphasizing subject areas of research interest. The University of Oregon collects all available publications from thirteen western states and selectively from others.

Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania State Library has an extensive collection of publications from other states.

Rhode Island. The Rhode Island State Library collects the publications of other states in depth.

Tennessee. The Tennessee State Library has collected the documents of other states extensively for many years.

Texas. The University of Texas collects all publications of neighboring states and selectively those of other states.

Virginia. The Virginia State Library has extensive collections of publications for the states adjoining Virginia, and selected publications of all other states.

Washington. The Washington State Library collects the publications of all the states, but emphasizes those of eleven western states. The University of Washington collects the publications of California and Oregon comprehensively and other states selectively.

West Virginia. West Virginia University collects the publications of the states of the Appalachian region.

Wisconsin. The State Historical Society of Wisconsin has for a long period collected the publications of other states selectively.

In addition to the preceding collections, many university and state libraries reported that they regularly acquire state publications relating to subject fields of interest and value to them, e.g., agriculture, geology, education, public health, and taxation.

Local Publications

Far more neglected and uneven in library coverage than Federal or state publications are the publications issued by city, county, and other local governmental bodies. The current situation as reported may be summed up as follows, with the strongest collections of local publications noted for each state:

Alabama. The Alabama State Department of Archives and History.

Alaska. Alaska State Historical Library and Alaska State Library.

Arizona. Arizona Department of Library and Archives.

Arkansas. University of Arkansas.

California. California State Library and University of California at

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Berkeley, both of which collect comprehensively California local publications; the State Library selects publications from other states in fields of interest; the University's Institute of Governmental Studies Library has extensive holdings of municipal and county documents from out of state.

Colorado. Denver Public Library (Denver municipal publications) and Colorado State Historical Society Library.


Delaware. Delaware State Archives.


Georgia. Georgia State Library.

Hawaii. University of Hawaii.


Illinois. University of Chicago (good for standard metropolitan areas, cities over 500,000 population since 1950, older county publications); University of Illinois' collection is national in scope, but incomplete.

Indiana. Indiana State Library.

Iowa. State Historical Society of Iowa.

Kansas. Kansas State Historical Society.

Kentucky. University of Kentucky.

Louisiana. Louisiana State University.

Maine. University of Maine.

Maryland. Maryland Hall of Records and Enoch Pratt Free Library.

Massachusetts. Massachusetts State Library.

Michigan. Michigan State Library and Detroit Public Library (Detroit municipal publications).

Minnesota. Minnesota Historical Society.

Mississippi. Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

Missouri. Missouri State Historical Society.


Nebraska. Nebraska State Historical Society.

Nevada. Nevada State Library.


New Jersey. Newark Public Library.

New Mexico. University of New Mexico.

New York. The New York Public Library's municipal documents collection covers American and Canadian cities of over 30,000 population and foreign cities of 200,000 or more; its holdings of New York City documents are the most extensive in existence.

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North Dakota. State Historical Society of North Dakota.
Ohio. Ohio Historical Society.
Oklahoma. Oklahoma State Library.
Oregon. Oregon State Library.
Rhode Island. Rhode Island State Library.
South Carolina. University of South Carolina and South Carolina State Library.
South Dakota. South Dakota State Historical Library.
Tennessee. Tennessee State Library and Archives.
Texas. University of Texas.
Utah. Utah State Historical Society.
Vermont. Vermont State Library.
West Virginia. West Virginia University.
Wisconsin. State Historical Society of Wisconsin.
Wyoming. Wyoming State Library.

Summary

The distribution of United States government publications to libraries dates back at least a century, in one form or another, and for certain categories of material to the early nineteenth century. The Printing Act of 1895 brought together into one law all the previous acts and resolutions which concerned the printing and distribution of public documents. A substantial number of Federal, state, university, and public libraries presently hold comprehensive collections of depository publications for the past seventy years and in some instances earlier. Establishment of the regional system of depository libraries, now numbering thirty-four, by the Depository Library Act of 1962 assures strong collections of current publications in various locations around the country.

The Documents Expediting Service in the Library of Congress and the Readex Non-Depository Edition of Government Publications resolve to some extent, though not completely, the vexing problem of Federal publications, estimated as high as two-thirds of the total number, issued by agencies other than the Government Printing Office, and therefore not distributed through the depository system.
The most complete collections of state government publications are to be found in the states of origin. A limited number of comprehensive collections are held by such national institutions as the Library of Congress, the New York Public Library, and the Center for Research Libraries.

Least well represented in library collections are the publications issued by local governmental bodies. Here again, the strongest collections are generally available in institutions in the states where the publications originate. This obvious gap in their acquisition programs is a matter which merits the attention of state, public, and academic libraries, especially those directly concerned with teaching and research in political science and with the problems of local government.

References