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INTER-LIBRARY LOANS :  
RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

by

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## INTRODUCTION

In the United Kingdom, including to a lesser extent Eire, the last sixty years or so have seen the development of a system of national and regional inter-library lending of which the library service may be justly proud. That is not to say that the system which has already been developed is incapable of improvement, nor that the methods adopted for the furtherance of library cooperation have always been the most efficient and economical.

By outlining the main factors in this development, and noting some possible changes for the future, this study seeks to evaluate this complex method by which British libraries seek to make the total bibliographic resources of the country readily available to those who need access to them. In terms of the cost per item handled it could be argued that the methods used are relatively inexpensive; in terms of the total expenditure on duplication of functions throughout the country, it is certainly a costly operation.

It was in 1916 that the Central Library for Students was formed by Dr. Albert Mansbridge to enable isolated students, mainly members of adult education classes, to gain access to loanable copies of books which they required for their studies : sixty years later the British Library Lending Division began to plan the production and distribution of a combined, but selective, listing of those books which libraries participating in the Regional interlending schemes throughout the British Isles were prepared to make available for loan. A scheme originally devised to meet the temporary needs of adult education classes has developed into a concentrated system through which access to information can be afforded, albeit with greatly variable speeds of response, to the

library user and research worker. While the methods of arranging the system have changed considerably during the period under review, the basic objective has always remained unchanged.

Some of the basic procedures involved in library cooperation, such as the compilation of union catalogues of books and serial publications by conventional methods, have frequently been criticised as laborious, costly and inefficient. The rapid development during recent years of automated data processing techniques for certain routine activities in library practice has now added a new dimension to inter-lending. The establishment of "on-line" access to data bases of bibliographic information, coupled with subsequent delivery of photocopied texts from a central lending agency, represents a considerable advance from the days of book boxes and a central library-cum-depository struggling to survive on a few thousand pounds a year.

During the period of this study, attempts were made by means of governmental and other enquiries to rationalise and improve the system, and an examination will be made of the various ideas and proposals which did, or for some reason did not, reach fruition in the form of legislative or executive action, at national or local levels. To relate these concepts to an actual library situation, emphasis will be laid in a number of instances on the Wales Regional Library Scheme and its predecessors, the Aberystwyth Regional Library Bureau and the Glamorgan and Monmouthshire Regional Library Bureau. Statements on future policy, however, should not be regarded as expressing the official views of the Wales Regional Library Scheme, or indeed of any other Region. Forecasts of the likely trend of future developments are inevitably bound up with the policies and predilections of the British Library Lending Division, and the views of the leading staff members of the Division naturally condition much of the thought which is current in the sphere

of inter-library lending. Due acknowledgement has been made throughout of the views and opinions expressed in hitherto unpublished committee documents.

The developments described in the following pages reflect the undoubted success of the combined national and regional system of inter-library lending as it is observed today, but there must at the same time be an admission of regret and frustration that so many well-intentioned proposals in the past yielded comparatively few results. Against this background of past disappointment we can justifiably claim that the 1969 Dainton Report on the national library service, and the consequent 1972 British Library Act, heralded a new era whose promise is likely to overshadow all that has gone before.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Apart from the published sources consulted during the preparation of this study, which are listed in the bibliography (pp.226 - 234 ), I am grateful to a number of committees, organisations and personal colleagues for the opportunities offered to me to engage in formal and informal discussions on the theory and practice of inter-library lending in the United Kingdom.

For permission to quote from documents first requested by, or submitted to, the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation, I wish to thank the present (1978) Chairman, Mr. H. Radford, and Secretary, Miss J.M. Plaister. Inter-loan topics have naturally been the main concern of the meetings of the Association of Librarians in Charge of Regional Library Bureaux, and much useful discussion has ensued. I am also indebted to the British Library Research and Development Department for permission to quote from the final draft report of its Study Group (1976-78) on Transport for Inter-Library Loans.

I have enjoyed the privilege of quoting from documents submitted to various committees by the Director General of the British Library Lending Division, Mr. M.B. Line and by the Head of Lending, Mr. J.S. Davey. The cordial relationship which has grown anew between the Lending Division and the Regional Library Schemes can be attributed

in great measure to the courtesy and helpfulness of Mr. Line and Mr. Davey. I am also much indebted to Mr. W.H. Brown, Keeper in charge of the National Library of Scotland Lending Services, for much useful insight into recent developments, particularly in Scotland.

For their valuable guidance during the period of this study, I am grateful to the Head of the Department of Library and Information Studies at the Loughborough University of Technology, Professor P. Havard-Williams, and my supervisors, Mr. L.G. Durbidge and Dr. J.D. White. Librarians whose ready assistance has been made available to me include those of the National Library of Wales, the Library Association and Loughborough University.

My own personal involvement in inter-library lending resulted from the direction and encouragement of the present Librarian of the National Library of Wales, Mr. David Jenkins, and the members of the Executive Committees of the Welsh Regional Schemes since 1968, and I am grateful to those colleagues from whom I have certainly appropriated many attitudes and ideas. Among these I would wish to name a retired former librarian of the pre-April 1974 independent public library authority at Colwyn Bay, Mr. W.R. Flint, whose infectious enthusiasm for library cooperation and extensive knowledge of inter-loan procedures proved invaluable in the early formative years of the unified Wales Regional Library Scheme.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CITATION

References to published sources cited in the text of this study have been made by the Harvard system, as described in British Standard 5605 : 1978, with the addition of page numbers to the author's surname and year of publication, e.g.

Filon (1977, 106)

Jefferson (1977, 22-23).

When the same author has published more than one cited document in the same year, lower-case letters have been added to the year reference to distinguish the items referred to, e.g.

Newcombe (1936 a)

Newcombe (1936 b),

again followed by the appropriate page numbers.

Although not strictly in accordance with BS 5605, page numbers have also been inserted in the text to denote references to articles contributed to periodical publications. Such an example is a text reference to

Haugh (1966, 69 - 74)

with the complete reference appearing in the Bibliography as

Haugh, W.S. The future of library co-operation.

LAR 68 (3), 1966, 69-74.

The full entries in the Bibliography are then arranged, with references as appropriate, in alphabetical order of authors' names (or title entries), followed by the year of publication, e.g.

Line, M.B. 1973

Local acquisition policies in a national context.  
The Art of the Librarian; ed. by A.G. Jeffreys,  
pp. 1-13. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Oriel Press.

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The final year of the NCL. BLL Review 2 (1), 3-4.

McColvin, L.R. 1942

The public library system of Great Britain.  
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and Ireland, 1921-23. London, Carnegie United  
Kingdom Trust.

## CHAPTER I : RETROSPECT

### 1.1 The Formative Years

The history of the development of national and regional systems of library cooperation in the British Isles has already been well documented in the literature of librarianship, and detailed narrative treatment is therefore not required for the purposes of this study. Descriptions of the establishment of the structure of the interlending systems can be found, with varying emphases, in the works of E.V. Corbett (1966), George Jefferson (1977), Luxmoore Newcombe (1937) and P.H. Sewell (1950, 1956), while the year 1977 saw the publication of S.P.L. Filon's detailed and definitive history of the National Central Library. The historical perspective will, therefore, best be served by isolating some of the most significant of the early developments, in order to establish the extent to which, with hindsight, it can be claimed that the original objectives were, or were not, achieved.

Basic to the whole concept of inter-library lending was the principle that the resources of any one library, in monographs and serial publications, should, within a librarian's discretion, be made available to supplement the resources of another. This supplementation could be facilitated if combined, or "union", catalogues were constructed for storage and use at some central office or at regional agencies. It is salutary to point out, at this early stage,

that basically very little has changed. Regional interlending is still based upon the compilation of union catalogues, albeit in abbreviated formats, of the holdings of cooperating libraries in monographs, serials, music and other knowledge media, and the processing of these catalogues, or location lists, through "offices" or national agencies, such as the Bibliographic Services Division and the Lending Division of the British Library. It is the methods of arranging this shared facility which have changed substantially during the last sixty years : the basic objective remains unchanged.

The foundation in 1916 of the Central Library for Students in Galen Place, Bloomsbury, London was not the first example of mutual assistance in book provision. Luxmoore Newcombe (1937, 17-49) notes a number of occasions on which proposals had been made for the establishment of schemes of cooperation. It is clear that the earliest arguments for library cooperation had recognised the futility of each and every library seeking to be self-sufficient, even when the total global publishing output was considerably less than at present. Addressing a monthly meeting of the Library Association in March 1902, Professor Sidney Webb (1902, 193-203, 231-36) had suggested "a combined catalogue at a central office", listing the 200 or more collections in London outside the British Museum Library. The concept of subject specialisation, to which some of the contemporary Regional Library Schemes are still committed, was apparent in an address by E.A. Bond (1887, 4) to the 1886 Annual Conference of the Library Association.

In 1907, Sidney Kirby (1907, 266-269) had referred at a professional meeting to the idea of "central" or "store" libraries, which ought to be state-financed, in various parts of the country, with cooperation as a means by which libraries could avoid spending meagre resources on books which they could not afford.

An early forerunner of distributed union catalogues was the 1907 project by the librarian of Gravesend, A.J. Philip, whereby 20 of the London public libraries exchanged their printed catalogues and agreed to lend books to each other. The libraries of Woolwich, Gravesend and Erith were prominent in this scheme. The same A.J. Philip (1912, 388-96) suggested the need for a central reference library and clearing-house for London, the compilation of a union catalogue and lending between one library and another.

Newcombe also notes other suggestions made by A.W. Pollard (1913, 353-68) towards a cooperative function, namely a "right of call" by one university or college on the special collections of another, a storage facility for "unusable stock", a sort of national loan collection, cooperative provision of periodicals and an application for a grant to the Board of Education - all of which had in them the seeds of later developments such as the SCONUL interlending scheme for the main university libraries, the British National Book Centre leading to the Gift and Exchange Section of the British Library Lending Division, union lists of periodical resources such as LULOP (the London Union List of Periodicals) and the frequent suggestions in later years that the cooperative provision of information resources merited substantial Treasury grants-in-aid. It is indeed remarkable that many of the later developments which today excite our admiration had been anticipated in proposals made more than half-a-century earlier.

The Panizzi Club, founded in January 1914, had stimulated

some progress towards the compilation of a 'Union List of Current Serials', but work on it was halted by the outbreak of the First World War. As early as 1845, Sir Anthony Panizzi had made a suggestion that duplicate books might be lent from the British Museum Library - a far-sighted but perhaps alarming suggestion when seen in the context of the Museum Library's role as a reference library only : "but no book of which a duplicate was not in the Library should under any circumstances be lent out of it". (Newcombe, 1937, 32). So far as the Reference Division of the British Library is concerned - the successor to the British Museum Library in the terms of the 1972 British Library Act - it still remains the policy that loan copies are not made available from the Division's stocks.

It is necessary at this point to note the significance of the involvement of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust in the furtherance of the cause of libraries in the United Kingdom, and the narrative of such involvement is well recounted by P.H. Sewell (1956, 12-14). \* Professor W.G. Adams' Report on Library Provision and Policy, made to the Trust in 1915, recommended support for the Central Library for Students, which of course later became the National Central Library and the "keystone" of the United Kingdom cooperative system until July 1973. Other Trust reports, such as those of 1921 and 1925 had in them the seed of regional library development, as Sewell has suggested.

In 1919, the Third Interim Report of the Adult Education Committee of the Ministry of Reconstruction (Cmnd. 9237) emphasised the need for a state-aided 'Central Circulating Library' of which the Central Library for Students should be regarded as the nucleus.

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\* Minutes of the Carnegie U.K. Trust, including its libraries sub-committee, are held for the period 1914-1970 in the National Library of Wales.



Here we find evidence of the "reservoir" function envisaged for the CLS, supplementing the book collections of local libraries, supplying the more specialised subject interests, organizing the supply of bibliographical information and compiling and maintaining a general catalogue - all functions which were in due course to be assumed by the National Central Library, into which the CLS was re-constituted on April 21, 1931.

This Third Interim Report on "Libraries and Museums" was endorsed by the 1919 Library Association Conference, with a suggestion of government financing for the CLS, and between 1917 and 1919, public libraries began to borrow from, and subscribe to, the Central Library for Students.

#### 1.2 The Regional Pattern

"The initiative for creating the Regional Library Systems", says Sewell (1956, 11), "came from outside the libraries themselves". Apart from the encouragement of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, there had grown a realisation of the inequalities of local provision, coupled with the extremely damaging effects of economic stringency in the 1920's. The book-purchasing funds of the rate-supported public library authorities were inadequate for the task of extending the libraries' informational and educational role in the community and it became increasingly clear that the local library must be able to command access to resources beyond the boundaries of its own stock. The poor quality of book provision, particularly in rural areas, and the difficulties of access to good bookstocks experienced by the isolated reader were themes emphasised in the 1924 Report made to the Carnegie Trust by its Secretary, Lt.-Col. J.M. Mitchell, at a time when systematic cooperation was still in its infancy.

These were the very users - the isolated rural readers - for whom, with the assistance of the local librarian, the services of the Central Library for Students would be of great benefit. By means of a questionnaire, Mitchell had enquired into the degree of cooperation which already existed between individual libraries and the CLS. He had established the existence of some local specialisation purchasing schemes in Lancashire and other cooperative arrangements between public libraries and university colleges in Glasgow, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Birmingham, Bristol and Exeter. "Clearly", he continued, "the right method is a system by which the public librarian can borrow from a central store . . . those books which there is good reason to believe will be asked for by only one or two readers". State financing was also proposed, together with a suggestion that the Central Library in Dunfermline should have in its possession the catalogues of all public libraries in Scotland and should be able to borrow books from any public library for the use of another.

It is ironic to have to note that nearly half-a-century passed before another of J.M. Mitchell's suggestions came to fruition, because in 1925 he had expressed the opinion that Wales might be the first area in the British Isles to adopt a regional library system (Mitchell, 1925, 19-26). Regional systems, as we shall see later, were indeed adopted in Wales, but they did not take the form which Mitchell had suggested until 48 years later, in April 1973. In an embryonic "logical flow-chart" which Mitchell designed for an inter-library loan structure extending from the smallest village library to the national "copyright" libraries, no place was provided for the non-public libraries, nor was the role of the "copyright" libraries at all defined.

The year of the Mitchell Report, 1924, also saw the establishment of the Association of Special Libraries and Information

Bureaux, an important link in the national system of cooperation.

It should be noted that it was from a suggestion by F. Seymour Smith at an ASLIB Conference in 1927 that the London Public Libraries' Union Catalogue (LUC) came into being, paving the way for the system which was eventually to emerge as the most highly organised and progressive of the contemporary Regional Library Systems, namely LASER, the London and South Eastern Library Region.

Sewell (1956, 15-48) has already noted in detail the manner in which, under the stimulus of the Carnegie Trust's area conferences, the pattern of regional library systems in England and Wales took shape, starting with the Cornwall scheme of 1927 and developing throughout the 1930's to such an extent that, by 1940, the Trust was able to claim that a "minor revolution" had occurred in the standard of provision throughout England and Wales and in the attitudes of librarians towards each other.

One common factor which clearly directed the early energies of those who formulated the schemes was the readiness of the Carnegie Trust to offer financial aid for the compilation of union catalogues, considered to be a 'sine qua non' of regional cooperation, and only one region refused to conform to the emerging pattern by adopting a "unique solution" (Sewell, 1956, 43) of zones based on the four largest public libraries in its area, and directing requests for loan copies to those libraries on a rota basis. The region was, of course, Yorkshire, which remained in its pristine state of being without a union catalogue until the dictates of automation techniques brought the Yorkshire and Humberside Joint Library Services within the national scheme of locating loan copies through International Standard Book Numbers in 1974.

As the various schemes grew in number, so did their procedures grow in variety, and it is a reasonable viewpoint that more standardisation in the formative stages might well have yielded benefits.

as voluntary, non-statutory associations of libraries of various types, the schemes lacked central direction and local autonomy was undoubtedly given too free a rein. Although the compilation of the union catalogues was regarded as an important priority function, the procedures adopted varied considerably from region to region, defeating to a large extent the allied objective of creating a massive National Union Catalogue at the National Central Library, the apex of the total scheme.

Yorkshire, because of the very nature of its zonal structure, could not provide catalogue records for the National Central Library; nor could the West Midlands Regional Library Bureau notify the NCL of the wealth of material represented by the Catalogue of Birmingham Public Libraries, because entries for the Birmingham book-stocks were not included in the regional union catalogue. The two separate Welsh systems, established in 1931, adopted 5" x 3" card catalogues as the basis of their union cataloguing and therefore could not provide the sheaf binder slips required by the NCL.

The means of levying subscriptions from the participating libraries in order to support the cooperative schemes also varied considerably, but were in many cases inadequate and needed frequent revision. (A schedule of the bases for levying subscriptions in the Regional Library Systems in 1973 appears as Appendix I to this study). The South-Western Regional Library System, based on Bristol and established in April 1937, adopted the novel procedure of levying payment by statistics of usage, superimposed on a basic subscription. In Wales, the picture was clouded as usual by the age-old clash between North and South, the latter proud of its long-established libraries and strength of population, the former conscious of its scattered, rural communities and inadequate library provision.

Participation in the South-Eastern Regional Library System, established in 1933, was confined to rate-supported libraries, among which carbon copies of a nucleus catalogue were circulated as a means of recording bookstocks in an area. As the South-Eastern catalogue and the London Union Catalogue were both housed in any case at the National Central Library, their entries were not duplicated in the National Union Catalogue.

The rapid growth of the Regional systems does bear witness to a measure of zeal and enthusiasm which cannot fail to impress even the hardened and perhaps cynical analysts of the late 1970's, but at the same time there is evidence of a certain naïveté of approach. Newcombe (1937, 19-20) provides one example when he claims that any library attempting to take advantage of its regional system to economise on book expenditure would fall foul of its regional committee and have its requests rejected! At least, he recognised that regional schemes had certain limitations; they were not devices by which purchasing obligations could be avoided, nor would they intentionally make available loan copies of books which should properly be bought, such as students' textbooks and relatively cheap items in print. Direct interlending was to be condemned, as it would prevent the even distribution of lending among all libraries.

The element of the faith of the early years which must strike today's observer as being mis-guided and over-optimistic was that which attached to union cataloguing. The failure of the "union-catalogue complex", later to be seized upon in characteristic fashion by Dr. D.J. Urquhart, has been one of the costly disasters of national and regional interlending. Even so, it is difficult to suggest what other procedure might have commended itself at that time. Clearly there had been very little estimation of the cost of compiling and maintaining such large working tools, and the increased book-funds of later years

coupled with the "information explosion" in vastly increased world-wide publication, resulted in critical enquiry, by Maurice B. Line and others, into the value of "white elephant" or "golden retriever" library catalogues. P.H. Sewell's account (1956) of the Regional Systems contains frequent allusions to the problems which the Bureaux encountered in the maintenance of the obsolescent and expensive union catalogues very soon after their establishment.

In Scotland, the development of a cooperative interloan system had been hampered by the complications of the Scottish legal system, to such an extent that it now seems unbelievable that it was 1955 before it became strictly legal for burgh libraries to take part in cooperative schemes. The growth of the Scottish system has been concisely described already by W.H. Brown (Of One Accord, 1977, 35-43) and need not be repeated here. In Northern Ireland, a scheme proposed in 1927 had within it the required elements but even by 1937 there was no organized system. In 1929 a Departmental Committee on Libraries in Northern Ireland had recommended the establishment of a State Library, one of the functions of which would be the maintenance of a catalogue of the books in all the libraries of Northern Ireland. This "State Library should be the centre of the cooperative system . . ." (Govt. of N. Ireland, 1929).

In 1956, Sewell was still able to say that "no regional schemes similar to those in Britain exist in Ireland" (Sewell, 1956, 52). He went on to explain how, at the instigation of the Carnegie Trust, Belfast Public Library undertook to act as a central library and lend non-fiction books to libraries for a threepenny charge.

In Eire, the Trust had established the Irish Central Library for Students and post-war the Eire Government had been approached about the possibility of handing over this Library to an appropriate national body. An Act of 1947 established a Library Council, An

Chomhairle Leabharlanna, to which the Irish CLS was handed over in 1948. The pattern of library provision in Northern Ireland has now been reorganised under the direction of five Education and Library Boards, and both North and South Ireland are now represented on the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation. The minutes of a May 1976 meeting of the Association of Librarians in Charge of Regional Library Bureaux included the information that 48 libraries in Northern Ireland and Eire were notifying new book accessions to an ISBN-style microform location list. \*

### 1.3 The developments in Wales

While delivering an address in 1925 on "County Libraries" to a meeting of the Conference of Library Authorities in Wales and Monmouthshire, Lt.-Col. J.M.Mitchell, as has been noted, offered the suggestion that Wales might be the first area in which a regional library system could be established. The suggestion was taken up, not in 1926 as noted by Newcombe (1937, 83) but at the second Welsh Conference held in June 1927 which discussed the question of establishing a system of cooperation for Wales and Monmouthshire, with a union catalogue.

Three committees were to be formed, one each for the north, south and west - which suggests a typically wasteful fragmentation. However, positive action did not follow along those lines, and the publication in the same year of the 'Report on Public Libraries in England and Wales' - the Kenyon Report - gave a more formal direction to the discussions which had already started in Wales. With practical support from the Carnegie Trust, the decision was taken in 1929 to establish a system of library cooperation for the Principality of Wales.

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\* Unpublished private document.

On January 1, 1932 a "National Bureau" was established at the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth, and for the next 41 years it could be claimed that Wales enjoyed the distinction of having the only Regional Library System closely linked with an academic and legal-deposit library - a link which in subsequent years proved of great benefit to library cooperation. It is important to note also that the original 1907 Charter of Incorporation of the National Library of Wales \* had allowed the lending of duplicate copies of books from the Library's 'Department of Duplicates' and a substantial stock of monographs and serials of Welsh and Anglo-Welsh interest accumulated as a result of the Library's services to adult education classes. The "National Bureau" at Aberystwyth was thus a natural outcome of the Charter provision for lending and it is today the same "Department of Duplicates" which provides the staffing and administration of the interlending function for the whole of the Wales Regional Scheme.

A "sub-bureau", as it was slightly described, would operate from the Cardiff Central Public Library, administering the loan system in Glamorgan, Monmouthshire and the borough of Llanelli, which together provided a heavy concentration of population, while the remaining areas of Wales would be administered from Aberystwyth. This continued to be the pattern of the system until the merging of the two separate Bureaux in April 1973, when the National Library itself came to adopt an even more meaningful role in providing finance, staffing and policy direction - a participation which was accepted as being consistent with the new developments which the Dainton Report ( HMSO, 1969, Cmd. 4028 ) had outlined for the English sector.

The Carnegie Trust granted £1,500, with a promise of an

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\* A revised Charter is at present (1977) being prepared which will retain the right granted to lend duplicate copies from the stock of the Library.



additional £500, towards the cost of compiling a union catalogue, with a separate catalogue for the "sub-bureau". The first annual report of the Scheme (Aberystwyth, RLS, 1933) underlines the concept of a "national" bureau and of the importance of tapping the resources of all libraries in Wales before transferring requests to the National Central Library.

Some features of this first report strike an ironic note. The Bureau's own cataloguer, for example, spent very little time at the place of employment because of the peripatetic nature of the duties involved in visiting North Wales libraries to prepare entries for insertion in the union catalogue. This resulted from the discouraging response to a request that the libraries should supply the Bureau with card copies of their own catalogue records. Even so, the union catalogue did receive, during the calendar year 1932, nearly 30,000 entries from North and Mid-Wales libraries, a remarkable total when we recall the limited resources and economic depression of the early 1930's.

The basic rate of subscription for membership of the Scheme was ten shillings and sixpence for every £500 (or part of £500) of the library's income. The membership included many autonomous public library authorities which have long since surrendered their powers to larger authorities, but only two special libraries participated, the National Museum of Wales and the South Wales Institute of Engineers.

The problems of the peripatetic Welsh cataloguer were symptomatic of the difficulties later to be experienced at the national level. As early as 1936, Luxmoore Newcombe, who represented the NCL on the Executive Committee of the Welsh bureaux, found himself having to examine very closely the efficiency of union cataloguing, during an address to the 13th Annual Conference of ASLIB (Newcombe, 1936). b1

Of the six-and-a-half million volumes estimated to be held in the stocks of the "outlier" libraries which provided a "back-up" service to the NCL, only approximately 160,000 were represented by entries made by NCL staff into their Outlier Catalogue, maintained in card entry form. Cards were also being used in the Welsh bureaux and in the London Union Catalogue, the financial responsibility for which had been taken over in November 1934 by the Metropolitan Boroughs' Standing Joint Committee.

Newcombe argued strongly for the advantages of sheaf binder catalogue entries because of the ease with which multiple copies could be produced. With the exception, for different reasons, of Wales and Yorkshire, the Regions produced four copies of each catalogue entry, the first being retained at the Regional headquarters, the second being sent to the NCL and the third and fourth copies being circulated in two groups among the member libraries. Holdings of titles already represented on the 5" x 3" slips, and catalogue records for new titles, were subsequently reported to the Bureaux and to the NCL, thus creating a national, as well as a Regional, union catalogue.

Indeed, this was a reasoned and commendable ideal, but its practical application never fully matched the claims made for it, and presented insurmountable difficulties in later years for the Regional Bureaux and their staffs. Sewell (1956) provides numerous examples of the arrears of union cataloguing work which accumulated throughout most of the Regions, and this summary of the early developments in Wales can be concluded by stating that a legacy of uncompleted and dissimilar union catalogues inherited from the previously autonomous systems continues to hamper the contemporary procedures of the interlending agency of the Wales Regional Library Scheme. The only apparently feasible solutions to this problem, which is not confined only to Wales, are either

- (a) to abandon further unprofitable work which would be carried out by traditional, manual cataloguing methods, or
- (b) to obtain, either regionally or centrally, adequate finance with which to use automated data processing techniques for retrospective conversions of union catalogues into machine-readable form - a theme which will be considered in later chapters of this study.

#### 1.4 Completing the Pattern

An element which has been noticeably absent from the developments described hitherto is that of centralist, governmental direction; nor was this recommended by the important 1927 Kenyon Report, which continued to stress voluntary cooperation between neighbouring libraries, with the local library always being able to command access to resources beyond its own stock. Chaired by Sir Frederic Kenyon, the Public Libraries Committee of the Board of Education included among its members persons already prominent in library cooperation, such as Albert Mansbridge, J.M. Mitchell and John Ballinger, of the National Library of Wales. For cooperative purposes, the public libraries should be grouped around regional centres; there should be a federation of special libraries and finally, acting as the hub of the system, a Central Library.

Paragraph 440 of the Report stated : "We desire to see the library service go forward, by the linking up of . . . cooperating libraries into larger groups, each centred on some great library which may be conveniently described as a regional library, while all these groups or regions would again look to a common centre in the Central Library". The basis of such a federation would be a payment made by

the weaker libraries to the stronger. Although the subsequent "Regions" did not gather around the nodal centres suggested by paragraph 442 of the Report, recognition was made of the natural "federating" around the National Library of Wales.

The statutory imposition of a regional organisation was not recommended - a situation which still obtains today because of the non-implementation of Section 3 of the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act (1964, Chapter 75). In the Kenyon proposals for the 'Central Library', we do note the advancement of the idea of State aid : the library was to become a public institution, while it was also suggested (paragraph 475) that the Central Library for Students should be reconstituted as a department of the British Museum, becoming a "National Lending Library". The Central Library would become a "central bureau of library information and a repository of library experience" (paragraph 480). It would act as a referral centre, prepare select bibliographies and issue annual reports on the public service of the country - a series of optimistic objectives which it would be difficult to claim that the National Central Library ever fully achieved.

Thus was outlined the contribution which the public libraries could ideally make to the national pattern. The pattern, in fact, had within it other strands which had been traced before the date of the Kenyon Report, such as

- (1) the "outlier library" system which resulted from the Carnegie Trust grants to certain special libraries, on condition that stock was made available for general loan through the Central Library for Students;
- (2) the accession into the outlier system in 1923 of the Scottish Central Library and the Irish Central Library for Students, both products of Carnegie grants;
- (3) the establishment in 1925 of an enquiry office in Birmingham to

handle the universities' contribution to the national system, and also a Joint Standing Committee on Library Cooperation of the Association of University Teachers, a body still actively represented on the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation. \*

The Trustees of the British Museum, unfortunately, did not react favourably to the Kenyon Report's suggestion that the Central Library for Students should form a new department of the British Museum library, - a refusal which is by now doubly ironic in that the 1972 British Library Act could be said to have dealt a dose of the same medicine to both the British Museum Library and the NCL. In 1932 the NCL was granted its Royal Charter, constituting it as an independent body with its own Board of Trustees, on which were representatives of the Museum, The Library Association and the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. The new NCL's income was to be £3,000 per annum, although the Kenyon Committee had recommended a sum of £5,000.

The formative era can be said to have extended to the outbreak of the Second World War, and it is clear that significant progress had been achieved. Although the systems established regionally were uncoordinated and lacked adequate finance, the "central catalogues of all the books in the libraries of particular areas" for which John Ballinger had called in 1927 \*\* were being compiled and there existed the liaison body which the 1931 Library Association Conference had appointed - the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation. But there was already some ground for doubting that the relationship

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\* Following the reconstitution on April 21, 1931 of the Central Library for Students into the "National Central Library", the universities' loans clearing house was transferred in turn from Birmingham to the NCL.

\*\* National Library of Wales typescript of June 1927 Conference Proceedings.

between the "local" and the "national" wings would prove to be entirely harmonious.

Was the expenditure involved in union cataloguing in the participating libraries entirely justified? Opponents of the union catalogue argued that the smaller libraries would not stock any books which were not in the larger ones, while the larger libraries would all stock the same books. Moreover, the larger libraries would be forced to lend large numbers of books and receive very little in return.

Claiming that "efficient and economic cooperation is impossible without union catalogues", Newcombe (1936b, 9 - 11) brings forward evidence from the Northern RLS report for 1935, from the East Midlands, Wales, the South Eastern Region and the London Union Catalogue to show that the percentage of duplication of stocks was comparatively small. Nor was it proved that lending was confined to the larger libraries. As the number of participant libraries increased, so the load of lending became more evenly distributed. In the Glamorgan and Monmouthshire Region, the share of lending borne by the Cardiff City Library had decreased from 89.4% in 1932 to 63.6% in 1935, as the usefulness of the union catalogue increased.

A different strain upon the marriage of the regional and national agencies is clear from another address which Newcombe delivered in 1936 (Newcombe, 1936a). Speaking to delegates attending the Annual Conference of Library Authorities in Wales and Monmouthshire, he appealed that Welsh libraries should not reduce their financial contributions to the NCL, as others had done, merely because of the demands of their own regional systems. The NCL had always depended to a large extent on voluntary subscriptions. During 1935 it had received £1,789 from the large majority of the urban and county libraries

and many of the University and special libraries in England and Wales. This sum included £48:4:0 from 18 public libraries in Wales. \* \*\*

Of the £11,396 which represented the NCL's total income for the financial year 1936-37, £5,000 would be a grant-in-aid from the Treasury and £4,000 from the Carnegie Trustees. The latter sum depended upon the Treasury's aid not falling below £5,000, while that grant in turn depended upon the contributions from member libraries not falling below £2,000 by March 31, 1938. The sum of the Carnegie grant estimated in advance by Newcombe as £4,000 in fact proved to be £4,100 for that particular year, as shown by the useful and revealing Appendix I of S.P.L.Filon's volume on the history of the NCL (Filon, 1977, 267-8).

Did Wales - and by implication did any other Regional Scheme - still need the services of the NCL? While 4,062 books had been issued through the Cardiff and Aberystwyth Bureaux during the previous year, Welsh libraries had still needed 1,718 books from the NCL, which was an increase of 1,264 on the total of loans made to Wales in the year before the inauguration of the Welsh schemes. The NCL was being called upon to supply many more specialised and scarce items and was purchasing books which would not be available from any other library. Unfortunately, the NCL's purchasing fund for 1936-37 would total only £2,500.

Although it had suffered a slight loss of income, the NCL did not regret the establishment of the Regional Bureaux and the systems were not in competition. As the national system became better known, demand would increase, but without the NCL as a link, interlending would cease at the boundaries of the Regions. The 160 outlier libraries provided, through the NCL, a "national" loan stock of 6,400,000 volumes

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\* During the last year of its autonomous existence (1972-73), the Aberystwyth Region contributed £120 to the NCL's finances.

\*\* The Welsh public libraries' contribution represented approx. 0.5% of the NCL's total income for the financial year 1934-35.

and 32,000 periodical sets and their own special subject collections formed an extremely important lending source.

A chord which was to be heard many times in later years was struck by Newcombe (1937, 100) when he claimed that decentralisation of the interlending function was not essential. "Given sufficient income, a central organisation could do most of the work now being done by the Regional Bureaux, so far as the lending of books is concerned". Forty years later, the Working Party set up by the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation to make recommendations on the future pattern of interlending concluded that, for many reasons, the Regional Systems still had a useful function to perform. \* Indeed, two of Newcombe's criteria in 1937 for successful regional interlending were (1) a bureau and (2) a union catalogue. Both still hold good, while density of population, another 1937 factor, is still used widely as a mechanism for levying subscriptions with which to finance regional schemes.

Set against the very substantial number of loans being made currently by the British Library Lending Division to overseas borrowers, the total of 302 books lent in one year by the NCL to foreign libraries and mentioned by Newcombe seems a very modest achievement indeed. Yet it provides some illustration of the growth and diversification of the systems during forty years. During the financial year 1936-37, the central lending agency at the NCL received £5,000 as the government's grant-in-aid (Filon, 1977, 267). During 1976-77, the central lending agency at the British Library Lending Division at Boston Spa received £2,092,000 in total earnings, but did not disclose the amount of grant-in-aid received from Treasury funds. (The British Library, Annual Report, 1976-77, 19). Parallels can still be detected in

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\* A copy of the final report of the Working Party on the Future of Interlending appears as Appendix XV.



their respective functions, such as the maintenance of a large central loan stock, a depository and exchange service, the provision of locations to requesting libraries of loan copies and the construction, albeit by very different methods, of a nationwide union catalogue.

If we may assume that the framework of the interlibrary loan system was complete by the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939, then another strange parallelism can be traced. Within three years, there was to be published the report of an enquiry by L.R. McColvin which cast doubt already on many facets of the system. In July 1973, the NCL and the National Lending Library for Science and Technology were merged to form the British Library Lending Division and again within three years a working party of enquiry had been set up by the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation to examine the future of the pattern of interlending. Indeed, it is tempting to question whether this repeated process of assessment and enquiry is a testimony to the librarian's passionate search for the ultimate perfect system, or on the other hand whether it is a tacit admission that the whole activity of the last sixty years is to be dismissed as a tragic and costly failure.

## CHAPTER II : THE YEARS OF ENQUIRY

If we regard the year 1939 and the outbreak of the Second World War as terminating the formative period of both the national and regional pattern of library cooperation, then the next thirty years or so were certainly an era of both consolidation and critical assessment. While the national system of inter-library lending in the United Kingdom underwent great changes, the regional structure remained comparatively unaltered, except for the merger of the London Union Catalogue and the South Eastern Regional Library Bureau.

The process of critical enquiry began as early as 1942, when the Report by L.R. McColvin on the state and efficiency of the interloan network stimulated thought and discussion for years to come. It was followed in turn by the series of Reports of Vollans (1952), Baker (1962), Bourdillon (1962), Parry (1967) and Dainton (1969). Although we are not here concerned with the relevance of these Reports to the library service as a whole, each contributed in some measure to the persistent debate on the most cost-effective and practicable methods of inter-library cooperation.

### 2.1 The McColvin Report

The elaborate NCL/RLBx network, claimed the McColvin Report, was being under-used and there was a lack of standardisation of procedures between the Bureaux; there were, in any case, too many Regional Bureaux. Undue reliance was being placed on the role of the public library systems in cooperative activities, with little participation by university and college libraries. The "comprehensiveness" ideal of the union catalogue would be difficult to achieve and cooperation should rightly begin at the acquisitions stage, with subject specialisation schemes

being built into the total system at both local and national level.

It was recommended that the NCL should form the centre for compiling a national bibliography and for a centralised cataloguing agency. Both these functions were subsequently undertaken not by the NCL but by the Council of The British National Bibliography, and it is sad to have to note that some of McColvin's observations could be applied to the total interloan system as it stands today. Procedures still vary from Region to Region - in the collection of statistics, in the use of varying types of stationery for conveying loan applications, in the use of transport systems and the levying of rates of subscription to finance the Regional Schemes. Public library systems still predominate and there is an uneven level of involvement on the part of academic libraries as one passes from Region to Region. \* Nor is there a comprehensive allocation of subject-classes in the Dewey Decimal Classification Scheme for agreed purchasing in all the Regions.

The poor quality of both financing and achievement shown in the Aberystwyth Bureau's Annual Report for 1942 ( Aberystwyth, RLS, 1943 ) lends support to McColvin's strictures. The sum total of the members' subscriptions was a little over £138, while the percentage of loan applications satisfied by the Bureau's own member libraries was approximately 34.2%. If some of the same deficiencies now obtain as were criticised in 1942, then it can hardly be denied that progress towards the evolution of the most efficient scheme has indeed been halting.

The immediate post-war period did, however, result in tangible progress at the national level. D.J. Foskett (1964, 86 - 95) has shown how the concept of a national lending library resulted from

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\* The Wales Region in 1976-77 had a 100% membership among university libraries, polytechnics and institutes of higher education.

the vast increase, after the Second World War, in the number of research workers and the quantity of research published. Because these needs first became remarkable in industry, it was in the scientific field that the idea first appeared of a national lending library standing at the head of the national library service.

Patterns of literature use by scientists had already been studied in the early 1920's by Samuel Clement Bradford (1948), while working in the Science Library, South Kensington, and his conclusions about the "scattering" of readers' interests throughout a number of journals on the periphery of their basic subject concern led him to pioneer the first lending scheme which sought to meet such demands.

The Science Library, from being an important collection serving the staff of the Science Museum, was changed into the most up-to-date scientific library in the country, making loan copies available through its Supplementary Lending Scheme. As Foskett points out, it was S.C. Bradford's attempt to create also a vast central index of scientific literature, which led to the eventual creation of the National Lending Library for Science and Technology and to government support for libraries on a hitherto unprecedented scale.

Increased support from government sources for central scientific libraries and information services was also the subject of one of the resolutions passed by the Royal Society Scientific Information Conference of 1948; another called on library committees to give more attention to cooperation, in order to reduce undesirable duplication and extend access to a greater proportion of the world's literature. In 1949 the Library Association's Library Research Committee appointed a sub-committee to consider the cooperative provision of books, periodicals and research materials in libraries and the three reports which it issued between 1949 and 1957 (Jefferson, 1977, 22 - 23)

indicated a climate of opinion from which a number of diverse developments resulted. Of great importance among these developments was a critical review of the functions and organisation of the Regional Bureaux and the NCL, and the relationship between them, which resulted in the publication in 1952 of the Vollans Report.

## 2.2 The Vollans Report

The detailed and meticulously compiled survey by R.F. Vollans became a standard text for any study of library cooperation in the British Isles, although it should be remembered in passing that it ante-dated by almost three years the first official recommendation for the establishment of the NLLST, made in the 1954-55 Report of the Advisory Committee on Scientific Policy ( HMSO, Command Paper 9537). .

Vollans, therefore, could take no account of any of the subsequent exciting development of the new national loan service in science and technology, although he could have been aware of the continuing discussions at the Advisory Council on the need for a national lending agency for scientific and technological material. Nor did the Report offer specific recommendations on inter-library lending in Scotland.

The Vollans Report turned its attention to the very foundation of all interloan schemes - the acquisition, recording and retrieval through catalogue records of the books and other forms of recorded knowledge in the stocks of the cooperating libraries. Up to an agreed date, it should be ensured that the regional union catalogues were a complete record of the holdings of constituent libraries. The National Union Catalogue at the NCL should likewise incorporate all the holdings of the constituent Regions up to the specified date.

Thenceforth, the Regional catalogues should contain entries for British books as they appeared in the British National Bibliography, using the BNB serial numbers as the medium for notifying libraries'

accessions to the Bureaux. Entries for foreign and American books and other titles published before the agreed date would also be notified to the Bureaux. New accessions of British books would not be notified to the NCL, and within each Region, self-sufficiency of British books should be attained by cooperative book purchase or by special allocation schemes.

To some degree this bold concept of "regional self-sufficiency" still dominates much of the contemporary thought in certain Regional Bureaux, although in all honesty it should be seen as a counsel of perfection which proved costly and often fell short of complete achievement. In the Wales Region, and certainly in LASER<sup>\*</sup> (The London and South Eastern Library Region), the view is still held that subject specialisation is still a worthwhile exercise, so long as discretion is allowed to enable librarians to refuse to purchase extremely expensive titles for which demand will be unpredictable, or at most extremely low. The Vollans recommendation was an ambitious attempt to lighten the load of the demand for British titles which was expected to fall upon the central lending stock and to allow the NCL to pursue its main objective of meeting student and research demands in the humanities and social sciences.

The two Welsh Bureaux, it was recommended, should be merged on both economic and administrative grounds. During the year of the Vollans Survey, each separate Bureau had achieved a satisfaction rate of only 58% in meeting requests, compared with an average of 83% in the English regions. Except in the London area, all university and special libraries located within the territorial boundaries of a Regional Scheme should become a member of that Region, but retain the right to send requests direct to the NCL. Within the London and Home Counties area, university libraries should apply direct to the NCL for loans, with special libraries remaining as NCL outliers, and the membership of the London and South Eastern Library System should remain

\* See Appendix III

restricted to public libraries.

Sadly, the significant recommendation that all university and special libraries should become members of the appropriate regional scheme is still far from being realised. Without recounting other detailed recommendations in the Vollans Report, it is worthy of note that, in considering the stipulated staffing levels for Regional Schemes, the present staff structure of the Wales Region, allowing for terminological changes, is exactly that suggested in the Report. Another recommendation, however, has had less fortunate consequences in the Wales Region, where an over-literal interpretation of a Vollans suggestion has by now proved to be something of an embarrassment.

It was suggested that the weekly BNB lists could well be used as the basis of the future union catalogue, by placing library location symbols, in the form of letters or digits, against the BNB catalogue entries. Unfortunately, when this suggestion was put into practice, the Aberystwyth Bureau resolved to mark locations in the author/title sections of BNB, while the Glamorgan and Monmouthshire Bureau placed location symbols in the classified subject sequences of the weekly lists. The enormity of the task of amalgamating such diverse records was not to be appreciated until some twenty years later, when preparations were made to convert the BNB-based record into machine-readable form in readiness for conversion into a saleable microform location list. \*

### 2.3 The Roberts Report

The process of enquiry took a further turn on September 3, 1957 when Lord Hailsham, then Minister of Education, appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Sir Sydney Roberts "to consider the structure of the public library service in England and Wales, and to advise what changes,

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\* The Vollans Report in fact recommended that, in the Welsh systems, a new BNB-based catalogue should be started, in preference to the earlier card catalogues.

if any, should be made in the administrative arrangements, regard being had to the relation of public libraries to other libraries". Chapter IV of the subsequent Roberts Report (Gt. Britain. Ministry of Education, 1959, Cmd. 660) relates to 'Library Cooperation' and the list of organisations which submitted evidence to the committee included both the NCL and the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation.

The basic recommendations on library cooperation were:

- 2.3.1 that the existing regional committees be given statutory recognition and should be required to provide a satisfactory scheme of cooperation within their region and work in conjunction with the NCL to provide a national system of cooperation:
- 2.3.2 the cost of the work should be allocated among the constituent local authorities, "less any contributions received from non-public libraries", and when the schemes had been approved by the Minister, each local authority should pay its share of the cost, including its contribution to the NCL:
- 2.3.3 local authorities should contribute substantially to the cost of the NCL, have greater representation on its governing body and play a larger part in its administration :
- 2.3.4 the completion of an "adequate series" of regional catalogues, and of the catalogues at the NCL, should be undertaken as a matter of urgency, with the assistance of a non-recurring Treasury grant.

Bearing in mind the later developments in the creation of audio-visual media for the transmission of human knowledge and the problems which these media present today in library cooperation, it is worth noting that one of the Roberts Report's recommendations under the heading of 'Library Legislation' was that all library authorities



should be empowered to provide and lend material such as gramophone records, pictures and films (par. 130 (2) (iii)).

The essential feature of these recommendations was, of course, that statutory recognition should be given to the regional committees. None of the Acts passed from 1850 onwards had made provision for the statutory enforcement of library cooperation, and the voluntary principle was so well founded that to enforce cooperation by statute might indeed have sounded strange. Five years were to elapse before the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act ( 1964, Chapter 75) provided a legislative platform on which to base the interlending function, by the creation of statutory "regional councils", but by the present date of writing the relevant Section 3 of the 1964 Act still awaits implementation.

The Roberts Committee had recognised that few, if any, of the public libraries would be self-sufficing (par. 57 (2)). In the fear that interloan applications would increase unduly, it rejected the view presented by the Association of Municipal Corporations that all borough and urban districts, regardless of size, should be library authorities, and also the submission of the Urban District Councils' Association and the Smaller Public Libraries' Group that an expenditure of about £2,000 a year, at 1959 prices, was a sufficient guarantee of a thriving and efficient autonomous service.

The Committee recognised that, as the number of books supplied by interlending represented only about one quarter of a million, out of a total of 390 millions of public library issues, the unit cost of borrowing was inevitably high. During 1957-58, the amount of subscription income received from the member libraries of all ten Bureaux totalled £20,867 (Cmd. 660, Appendix VIII). If an inflation factor of 5x is allowed, a present-day comparison would set this figure at about £100,000. It is, therefore, an indication of how interlending services have expanded, both in cost and variety, that the 1976-77 subscription income of the largest contemporary Region, LASER, in itself exceeded the £100,000.

suggested as an inflation-corrected equivalent of the whole regional subscription income for 1957-58.

In spite of the adverse comment on the small number of loans involved, the Committee was of the opinion that voluntary cooperation had transformed the public library service into one capable of providing any book required by the specialist reader. Having commended the voluntary spirit in paragraph 80 of the Report, the Committee in paragraph 82 set about listing its numerous defects. As each Region was autonomous, co-ordination was imperfect : both the NCL and the Regional Schemes lacked sufficient financial resources : the regional catalogues were highly unsatisfactory and with the exception of one Bureau - presumably but not explicitly the South Eastern - the contributions by member libraries had always been insufficient to recruit adequate staff.

With the benefit of hindsight, and the contemporary use of automated techniques for data processing, it is easy to look with disfavour upon the support which the Roberts Report lent to the concept of the "series" of regional catalogues, when common-sense would today argue strongly for one central catalogue. Again, one would question the placing of the main burden of financing cooperation squarely on the shoulders of the public library authorities, when clearly the non-public sector, in academic and special libraries, should be playing a more positive part in the cooperative venture.

#### 2.4 Baker and Bourdillon

A corollary of the Roberts discussions was the establishment, under the chairmanship of E.B.H. Baker, of a committee to study the technical implications of the Roberts Report on inter-library cooperation, and the 'Baker Report' was published in January 1962. Evidence to this enquiry was submitted by the NCL, the Regional Schemes and the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research.

The Baker Committee's main conclusions were that

- (a) the number of Regions be reduced to four or five and that library authorities should have a statutory responsibility to take part in, and contribute towards the cost of, inter-library cooperation, and
- (b) that the regional union catalogues should be completed, as a first priority, and arrangements made for their future maintenance. An Exchequer grant should be made available to assist with their completion and with that of the NCL.

tl So we find a positive recommendation that there should be a formal, statutory requirement for public libraries to aid the cost of interlending, alongside the steadfast adherence to the traditional concept of creating regional and national catalogues of a substantial size. Of the first principle, it still remains formally untried; of the second, it can fairly be described as having been tried and, to a considerable degree, found to be wanting.

The main concern of the Report of the Bourdillon Committee, also published in 1962, related to the standards which should be set for achieving increased efficiency in the public library service in England and Wales, and its relevance to library cooperation was therefore a good deal less than that of the Roberts and Baker Reports. Even so, it did suggest a considerable extension of cooperative arrangements between libraries to secure access to a wider range of material than a library itself possessed. In considering applications by library authorities with populations of less than 40,000 to be allowed to retain their autonomy, the Minister of Education should take into account the extent to which they were able to make satisfactory provision by cooperation.

As could be expected, the enunciation of pious hopes of this sort, without the force of statutory compulsion, made little impact

on the cooperative front, and as S.P.L.Filon later pointed out, (Filon, 1977, 94), very little of what either the Roberts Report or the Baker Working Party proposed regarding cooperation ever came into being.

Filon, indeed, was most critical of two of the Baker recommendations from the NCL's point of view. He questioned whether reorganising the Regions and reducing their number was a logical reform, since there was no evidence that creating larger Regions would result in greater efficiency. It was doubtful whether the availability of greater bookstocks and financial resources would offset problems of local communications, rival Regional headquarters and incomplete union catalogues. Whether amalgamations proved successful could only be put to the test in an actual Regional situation.

The Baker Report had also concluded (recommendation 29) that a case had not yet been established for a new National Lending Library for the Humanities to undertake work which would be mainly an extension of what the NCL was already doing. The NCL's resources for the purchase and storage of books, however, should be considerably increased to enable it to remove many of the difficulties of research and supply in the humanities.

This recommendation, claimed Filon, was meant to imply that no new library in the humanities other than the NCL should be created, and although the NCL should have increased purchasing power, it was not required to cover systematically material in the humanities, as was to be done by the NLLST for the scientific field. Filon wondered at the wisdom of this limitation, which was in direct contrast with the ultimate triumph of the principle of lending from a central source, as the Lending Division of the new British Library was to be planned to meet the demands of both sciences and humanities. The historical accident of the gaps in coverage during the NCL's autonomous existence

will, it is forecast, present the Lending Division with significant problems in the years to come.

## 2.5 The non-public library in cooperation

The very nature of the inter-library lending systems created and the terms of reference of the enquiring commissions which have already been described made it inevitable that the emphasis hitherto had lain heavily on the role of the public library in cooperation. The prime mover of the system was that sector described by Jefferson (1977, 24) as the "National Central Library/Regional Bureaux axis". Although it can be claimed that the "era of enquiry" in a sense continued unabated to 1969, with the Dainton Report on the national library service, the shift in emphasis in the 1960's certainly drew more attention away from the role of the public library in cooperation and towards a potential involvement to a greater degree by the non-public sector. With the 1961-62 development of the NLLST at Boston Spa, with the 1967 Parry Report and its recommendations on the role of university libraries in cooperation, with the study by M.B. Line of the role of automation in the national library service, we seem to move into an era of transition, where exciting new developments could be foreseen. This theme of transition and the emerging of the powerful arguments on behalf of making the maximum provision from a national lending source will form the basis of the next major section of this study.

In the meantime, however, account should be taken of the important contribution which was already being made during "the era of enquiry" by non-public libraries through local cooperative schemes for industry and commerce. It is now easy to lose sight of the fact that the pioneer in the network of local cooperatives, namely the Sheffield Interchange Organization (SINTO) was established as long ago

as 1933. Based on the Department of Commerce, Science and Technology of the Sheffield Public Library, SINTO developed cooperative functions beyond the original scope of interlending, drawing its membership from the whole range of library services within its area - the public library, the university, research associations and commercial and industrial firms.

From 1951, which saw the formation of CICRIS based on the Acton Public Library, <sup>there followed</sup> a long sequence of acronymically-designated schemes of local cooperation whose aim was to provide, from the joint resources of public, college and special libraries a service of information to the industrial and commercial needs of their areas. Because, as Jefferson claims, (1977, 81) the national interlending arrangements "were not attuned to the speed of industrial need", the cooperatives were seen as the solution to the better exploitation of local resources. Their value and effectiveness are illustrated by the rapidity with which new acronyms found their way into the literature of librarianship, to tax the memory of students and exhaust the patience of cataloguers. Their role and methods of operation have been well documented in library literature and at this stage it is necessary only to acknowledge the range of their contribution to the integrated interlending function by naming networks such as HULTIS (based on the Hull City Library in 1953), CADIG (Coventry, 1953), LADSIRLAC (Liverpool, 1955), BRASTACS (Bradford, 1961), HATRICKS (Hampshire, 1964) and NANTIS (Nottingham, 1963). This is to name a selection only from a long list of similar organisations.

#### 2.5.1 University and college libraries

As a complement to the proposals which the Library Association had issued in 1943 for the post-war reorganisation of the public library service in the light of the McColvin Report, the University and Research Section of the Association issued its own proposals, for the development

of the university and research libraries of Great Britain. \*

These proposals confirmed without hesitation that university and research libraries had a definite part to play in the national interloan system. Indeed, the organisation of inter-library lending through the NCL owed much of its success to the willingness of non-public libraries to take part in it - a willingness described by McColvin (1942, 160) as a "surprising and inspiring reality". As outliers of the NCL they had placed their resources fully at the disposal of those who needed them, in most cases, said the Section, "without reward".

While university and "special" libraries could not risk losing their independence by submitting to some general administrative system of control, neither could they be left out of account if full use was to be made of the country's resources. They should be included in any national scheme of cooperation in which all participating libraries might look to receive a share of any public funds available for this aspect of book-provision.

The Section's document went on to suggest that a detailed survey of the country's book resources and special collections was a matter of urgency, and much of the material for such a survey was already in the possession of the NCL and ASLIB. National cooperative book selection, particularly in the purchase of periodicals, appeared to be a well-justified economy, and to some extent this was already happening with German studies and medicine. Photographic reproductions made for particular purposes tended to remain unused and unknown on the shelves of the libraries which acquired them - a situation which could be remedied if the NCL could be asked to undertake a union catalogue or central repository, or a combination of both, for this class of material which would increase as photo-reproduction techniques improved.

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\* The Library Association, University and Research Section (undated pamphlet)

Adequate financial support for the NCL was again emphasised, not only for its work in administering the whole system of interlending, but also in order that it might build up its own resources to assist research workers. It was assumed that inter-library lending would continue and be extended as the "indispensible basis" of the proposed developments. The work of the Regional Bureaux needed to be re-considered and part of it co-ordinated with that of the "regional reference libraries" suggested by the Library Association's 1943 proposals. Greater uniformity would also be welcomed in the conditions and "housekeeping" routines of inter-library loans.

S.P.L. Filon (1977, 156-158) illustrates the important part played by university libraries in their relationship with the NCL from 1950, when the Library joined the newly-formed Standing Conference of National and University Libraries, and particularly when it took over the work of the Universities' Joint Standing Committee Bureau for the handling of loan applications. By the outbreak of World War II, the number of books borrowed by university libraries from or through the NCL was about 3,500 per annum, nearly three times the loans to university libraries in 1931-32. From the end of the war, loan transactions increased significantly, until by 1970-71 loans to university libraries by, or through the agency of the NCL, totalled 56,353, representing 39.19% of the total number of applications satisfied. Loans made by university libraries at the request of the NCL, or through the Regional Systems, were 52,635 or 36.61% of the total loans made in 1970-71.

Such figures, of course, confirm the value of the role played by the university libraries in the total system. Filon (1977, 157) at the same time produces revealing statistics which underline the frequent complaint by university librarians that they suffer disproportionately from "one-way traffic" in their membership of the



regional systems. (Not all universities, in any case, are members of the regional schemes). Out of 40,815 loans made by university libraries in 1965-66, 20,300 were lent through regional systems, the remainder being lent at the direct request of the NCL. By the year 1970-71, out of 52,635 loans, only 12,654 were made through the regional systems. Thus in five years the percentage of "regional" transactions made by universities decreased from approximately 50% to less than 25% of the total and we are left to wonder whether, by today, the "surprising and inspiring willingness" detected by McColvin has not evaporated.

The academic institutions are invariably the "heavy lenders", claiming that within the regional systems they receive very little in return. Within the Wales Region, the annual statistics of loan transactions testify that the university libraries do indeed have justifiable grounds for complaint. Here are some examples :-

- (i) During 1970-71, University College, Aberystwyth borrowed through both the Welsh Bureaux only one volume, but lent 85;
- (ii) During the same year, University College, Cardiff borrowed through both Welsh Bureaux 53 volumes, but lent 548;
- (iii) During the same year, University College, Swansea borrowed only 8 titles, but lent 559;
- (iv) During 1976-77, University College, Aberystwyth borrowed only one volume from any other member of the Region, but lent 179.

Such an imbalance between lending and borrowing becomes even more accentuated when refunds of postal charges are no longer obtainable or when van delivery schemes operate on the basis of levying charges for each parcel carried away from a particular library. In order to cushion the financial effects of the preponderance of lending over borrowing, some university libraries have understandably resolved to lend only on receipt of the British Library Lending Division's

pre-paid application form. Unfortunately, such action can cause resentment in regional systems where internal, non-value application forms are intended to be used on a reciprocal basis.

In fairness to the university libraries and college libraries which do participate in regional schemes of interlending, it should be emphasised that public libraries are greatly indebted to the range and variety of the bookstocks held by their academic colleagues. Their special collections, often of great historical or bibliographical importance, are a ready resource to be tapped. In regions where schemes of subject allocation or specialisation still survive, the assistance of the academic libraries in shouldering part of the burden would be welcomed. Unfortunately the demands of academic departments, often in conflict over the allocation of funds, make it difficult for university and college librarians to agree to accept purchasing commitments over a stipulated span of Dewey Decimal Classification subject-classes. A recent attempt was made within the Wales Region to seek to lighten the burden of the local Subject Specialisation Scheme which falls entirely on the public library sector of membership. Predictably, only one college library was able to agree to the suggestion that it might partake in a revised scheme for the future. (A draft of the questionnaire circulated to the non-public libraries in the Region appears as Appendix II to this thesis).

#### 2.5.2 The special library in cooperation

Special libraries, and their potential role in cooperation, present problems which differ considerably from those outlined in 2.5.1 above. Until the publication of the Atkinson Report ( University Grants Cttee.,1976) and its revolutionary impact, it would have been a safe assumption that university and college libraries would be likely to maintain their

traditional policies of building up substantial collections of monographs and serials for use at undergraduate, staff and postgraduate research levels, serving the needs of their own "closed communities" and in some cases allowing access by members of the public in their locality. The wealth of their collections was such that to deprive the national interlending systems of access to them would have been a startling omission.

Special libraries, in hospitals, industrial concerns, research associations, broadcasting and television companies and elsewhere, also meet the needs of their private clientele over closely-defined ranges of subject-matter, but these needs have to be satisfied with greater speed than often obtained<sup>s</sup> in the public and university library sectors. Moreover, the needs are most frequently for serial publications or photocopied matter of a highly specialised nature, and rarely for the general informational or recreational type of monograph normally seen on the shelves of most public libraries. A high proportion of the books represented by entries in the Regional union catalogues are therefore unlikely to be requested as loan copies by the special libraries, while the relatively unsatisfactory speed of supply achieved by some of the regional schemes militates against their exploitation by the specialist requester.

Apart from the intrinsic restrictions of the special library organisational pattern, with their controlled circulation systems often restricting the scope of borrowing and lending, there are other factors which affect the very existence of special libraries, such as economic fluctuations and policy decisions on the part of the company or the employing authority. Two recent examples can be quoted from the Wales Regional Library Scheme, when cuts in health service expenditure caused the library of a Medical Research Unit to leave the scheme, and when policy decisions to transfer the activities of a major chemical concern to another area resulted in the closure of the entire information

service at a Welsh site.

The degree of participation by special libraries in the national interloan system, or at least in organised interlending as opposed to informal, direct approaches, was assessed in 1955 by S.P.L. Filon and R.H. Hill (Filon, 1955, 477-80). Some 200 libraries, out of a total that must have exceeded one thousand, were outlier libraries of the NCL. A smaller number, about 100, belonged to the Regional Systems, although some Regions, such as the South Eastern RLS, excluded special libraries entirely. A certain number, not officially outliers, did lend through the NCL, including a number of libraries in the London area. The memorandum by Filon and Hill noting the 1955 situation had been considered by the Library Association's Sub-Committee on the Cooperative Provision of Books, Periodicals and Related Materials in Libraries, chaired by E. Alan Baker, which had been examining the way in which the spirit of the recommendations of the 1948 Royal Society Conference could best be given practical demonstration.

The incorporation of special libraries into the overall system had a two-fold purpose; firstly to provide a rapid loan and information service to special libraries of all kinds, and secondly to harness their special collections for more general loan by libraries of all kinds. Among the disadvantages of the 1955 situation were the slowness of Regional organisations and their lack of staff with sufficient specialised knowledge. Because of the lack of knowledge of locations of many specialised works, a heavy burden of interloan requests was being placed on a very few special libraries, while again special libraries had no organised means of searching cognate and other appropriate special libraries before invoking the aid of the national inter-lending system.

The Hill/Filon memorandum expressed doubt as to whether the existing Regional Systems could adapt themselves to the point of

absorbing the special libraries successfully. It was feared, for example, that the extra loans called for among them, in addition to those made already through the NCL, through ASLIB or direct, would be far too many; moreover, the service given by the Regional Systems was never likely to be expeditious enough for individual needs, and because of the dominant influence of the public library systems in cooperation, the foreign books and research periodicals likely to be requested by the special libraries were very scarce.

The authors of the memorandum then set out the detailed advantages and disadvantages which they detected in three possible solutions to the problem of integration, namely

- (i) that all special libraries should become "outliers" of the NCL;
- (ii) that special libraries be grouped by subject on a national basis, and
- (iii) that special libraries should be grouped geographically (and not by subject) into regions, which would not necessarily coincide with the existing geographical regions, but would function quite independently as "Special Regions".

Painstaking arguments were rehearsed by the authors of the memorandum in favour of, and against, all three solutions, but it does seem an over-elaborate plan when a more profitable remedy would have been to appeal for more rigorous discipline in the collection of entries into the NCL Outlier Catalogue. The subsequent establishment and growth of the National Lending Library for Science and Technology to some extent rendered unnecessary the debate as to how special libraries might best be drawn into alliance with the Regional Schemes, as it became increasingly clear that their main channel of supply for monograph and serial loans in scientific and technological subject-areas would be the expanding central resource at Boston Spa.

This is not to say that, in the contemporary situation, the special libraries do not have a part to play in the regional pattern of cooperation. One of the most active members of LASER is the BBC Reference Library, and no library can test the efficiency of a cooperative lending system more assiduously than the information service of a broadcasting or television company. The leisurely pace of regional interlending will not satisfy the television or radio producer who needs a serial part, a monograph or a photocopied reproduction this very day. The speed of telex installations and the increasing frequency of their use for notifying locations of loanable copies has speeded the interlending function and reduced the need for time-consuming housekeeping routines in the cooperating libraries.

The following brief examples will illustrate the degree of involvement of special libraries within the current organisation of the Regional Schemes :-

- (1) Of a total of 43 cooperating members of the Wales Region during the financial year 1976-77, 11 were classed as special libraries, including hospital libraries and the information services of other public utilities, two museum libraries and two industrial concerns:
- (2) The analysis of loans transacted in the Northern Region during the year 1968-69 indicates that, of a membership of 70 libraries, 47 were non-public, and of these 47 the special libraries numbered 24:
- (3) The annual report of the East Midlands Region for the year 1969-70 listed 47 public library members and 26 non-public libraries: of this latter category 11 were special library members:
- (4) In its 40th Annual Report for 1976-77, the South Western Region noted a total of 74 members; of 64 non-public members, 23 were special libraries, including those of companies and government departments:

(5) The North Western RLS Report for 1975-76 noted a total membership of 54, of which 17 were public libraries. Of the remaining 37 members, 12 were special libraries.

In the Regions surveyed, the percentage of special library membership thus varies between one-third and one-quarter of the total membership, suggesting that cooperation on a regional basis still has something to offer to the special library, despite the alleged preponderance of "public-library-type" books in regional interlending. On the other hand, the Regional Systems are well aware of the existence within their territorial areas of a substantial number of industrial firms, research associations and commercial houses which completely by-pass the Bureaux and become registered borrowers at the British Library Lending Division only. Undoubtedly their specialised requirements dictate such a policy, but even so it is a matter of some concern that their potentially valuable stocks rarely find themselves recorded in regional union catalogues or resource lists.

### CHAPTER III : THE YEARS OF TRANSITION

Hitherto, this study has attempted to identify the component parts which, by accident or design, came together to form the inter-library lending system of the United Kingdom as it stood more or less at the start of the 1960's. Some account has also been taken of the various efforts made, by committee of enquiry and by report, to recommend changes or improvements in that system, although two of these attempts, the Baker and Bourdillon Reports, properly belong to the next significant historical span, from 1962 to 1972.

The inescapable conclusion is that we are somehow dealing with a continuously evolving system within which periods of relative calm and stability are punctuated by acts or decisions of great influence, as though a clouded scene was from time to time illuminated by a flashing beacon on a distant hill. The "beacons" of the formative years were certainly names such as Mansbridge, McColvin and Vollans. As the span of years from 1962 to 1972 ushers in a period of rationalisation and eventual radical change, it will become clear that influential forces were at work which affected the pattern of inter-library lending to an even more remarkable degree.

It is not necessary, within the scope of this study, to attempt a complete recital of all the developments within this period at the national and regional level, and it will suffice to identify the "climate of opinion" and note only the most significant factors. The continuing objective, it should be remembered, was the search for the most efficient, the most economical and the best integrated method of transacting inter-library loans, transcending the conventional barriers between libraries of different types and exploiting our total national bibliographic resource.



### 3.1 Features of the Transition

- 3.1.1 The 1960's were notable for an "explosion" in higher education which gave rise to new universities, created colleges of advanced technology and enhanced the status of the former teacher-training colleges, all making new demands on the capacity of the inter-lending system and suggesting that a new approach would be necessary towards cooperation among academic libraries.
- 3.1.2 The improvement in techniques of reprographic reproduction and in photocopying equipment offered scope for a reconsideration of some of the procedures of interlending, with an emphasis on supplying photocopies of periodical articles for retention by the requester rather than the lending of items which needed to be returned to the supplying library.
- 3.1.3 The possibility that techniques of automated data processing could be applied to library routines, and as a method of storing and transferring information, offered encouragement to believe that the tedious and inefficient compilation of conventional union catalogues could be reduced, or perhaps eventually eliminated by working in an "on-line" mode.
- 3.1.4 There was a growing awareness of the concept of "networking" among libraries of different kinds within a locality to provide an amalgamated information service, such as in LADSIRLAC, SINTO and other similar organisations.
- 3.1.5 The volume of arrears in the union catalogues both at the NCL and at the Regional Bureaux had necessitated a revision in the late 1950's of the traditional roles of both the central and regional agencies, by which the Regions agreed to adopt policies designed to lighten the burden of work carried by the NCL, which between 1931 and 1945 had consolidated its position as a national loan centre and as the link between the Regional Schemes.

- 3.1.6 The post-war phenomenon described by George Jefferson (1977, 62) as "the self-generating momentum of scientific research" gave an impetus to a vast increase in literature of a scientific or technological nature, with the resultant problems of acquisition, retention and exploitation - the very factors which led to the establishment in 1962 of the National Lending Library for Science and Technology.
- 3.1.7 Growing dissatisfaction with the limited resources and restricted capabilities of the smaller public library systems was advanced as one reason for reorganising the pattern of local government areas. The resultant larger library systems would command better financial backing and afford access to larger bookstocks, hopefully lessening the need for heavy dependence on inter-library loans.
- 3.1.8 The development of "machine-consciousness" in libraries suggested that a growing acceptance of, and familiarisation with, machinery other than the common-or-garden telephone could help to speed the transaction of inter-library lending, particularly by the use of Telex installations as a rapid medium for information exchange.
- 3.1.9 In July 1963 the University Grants Committee established, under the chairmanship of Dr. Thomas Parry, \* a Committee on Libraries, its function being to consider the best and most economical methods of meeting the needs of the Universities and Colleges of Advanced Technology and Central Institutions for books and periodicals. Such an examination must inevitably

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\* Dr. Thomas Parry, a former Librarian of The National Library of Wales and Principal of University College, Aberystwyth, was created a Knight in the Birthday Honours List in the Summer of 1978.

take account of the scope for cooperation and for shared facilities between the institutions themselves and between the institutions and other libraries. The Committee's recommendations on these matters were published in 1967 as the Parry Report. (University Grants Committee. Report of the Committee on Libraries. 1967).

3.1.10 Energetic arguments about the merits of quantitative lending from a national, central source, as against "local" or "regional" provision were a constant feature of the early 1960's, and the dramatic success of the NLLST, operating on a national basis and with strong financial resources, pointed towards the urgent need to create an equally powerful base for acquisition and loan in the field of the humanities.

3.1.11 Finally, there emerged towards the end of the decade a renewed interest in the concept of "the national library service" - a case forcibly argued in library literature by D.T. Richnell and others. This culminated in the publication during 1969 of the Report of the Dainton Committee on the National Library Service, set up to examine the functions and organisation of a number of national institutions and agencies and to consider whether they should be merged into a "unified framework". The resultant British Library Act of 1972 effectively marked the end of the era of transition in the organisational pattern of inter-library lending.

We shall, therefore, look in a little more detail at some of these main features of the transitional era, in the fear that we shall find some evidence of piecemeal planning and lack of central direction; we shall find, indeed, to adapt a phrase used in another context by W. Caldwell (1964, 8-14), "the ointment and the flies".

### 3.2 National or Local? Who Should Provide?

Much of the controversy surrounding inter-library lending in the period already described as "the era of transition" turned upon the relative merits of providing a loan service from one large national source or from a series of inter-related but not integrated, regional and local sources. As early as 1961, D.J. Foskett (1964, 86-95) seemed to argue on the side of national supply from one central source: the research worker, he claimed, had a right to have his material where he wanted it, not where some librarian might have decided to store it, and the availability of loan access was therefore essentially important. Secondly, D.J. Urquhart had argued that "the union catalogue complex" had given us a cumbersome and costly machinery which, for certain classes of material, could not compare in efficiency with one central store. Finally, our actual resources in certain classes of material were negligible and the country as a whole lacked a good deal of information which would help considerably in all fields of research.

As P.H. Sewell (1962, 35-42) claimed in an address to the Llandudno Conference of the Library Association, there were "undercurrents of unease" about the structure of regional and national cooperation. The weight of demand upon this structure would increase because of the rapid expansion of all forms of higher education, the increased complexity of life and thought in its scientific and technical aspects and the new demands posed by the increase in leisure time would be "sustained in volume and [would] increase in complexity". There were numerous deficiencies in the availability of material in the humanities and social sciences, while the situation in the provision of medical literature was undetermined.

In the same address, Sewell looked critically at the role and performance of the NCL, alleging that it was neither strong enough to stand alone nor adequately integrated into the national structure of library provision. The NCL's structure of relationships with its users and with the sources of bibliographical strength were out of step, and its limited resources were preventing it from assuring the major national supply function of the burgeoning NLLST. The speed of response to requests for loans through the NCL was still unsatisfactory and dissatisfaction with its services persisted.

In 1962, there were some 180,000 loans being handled by the Regional Bureaux. Could not the NCL be adding these to its own 90,000? The fact that the RLBx were handling double the annual loan traffic of the NCL seemed to suggest that they still had a useful function to perform, apart from their involvement in subject specialisation schemes, the fiction reserves, joint storage schemes and the collection of play-sets and foreign literature.

Sewell's address also contained an interesting foretaste of later developments, namely the creation of a machine-based system of recording the holdings of participating libraries by using a random access machine to scan BNB requests and mechanically print out a rota of supplying libraries - the centralisation of interlending work on the basis of a ready-made serial or identifying number. Records of post-1950 British books could be kept at regional level only, with a centralised record being maintained for foreign and older British items. Financial aid should be sought to make the central catalogue as complete as possible by including those city and university libraries which were at that time unrecorded. One stage of enquiry only would be necessary if the national catalogues recorded the location of books in individual libraries within

regions, rather than recording the actual region in which a book was located. All other than BNB items could be recorded at the NCL, and the only regional record to supplement this could be a file of BNB entries in serial number order printed on cards giving a numerical location grid.

The intractable problem of the union catalogue again attracted Sewell's attention, although his suggested solution, had it been implemented, would by definition have nullified the meaning of the "union" catalogue. He suggested recording the whole stock of selected libraries only and only the rarer items in others - a device which would certainly have directed the bulk of a region's loan requests to a few well-stocked member libraries. Alternatively, one or more large libraries in each region could take on the function of Regional Central Libraries, to build up comprehensive stocks and lend to smaller libraries. There was, in any case, an overall need to strengthen the resources of British libraries in the humanities and social sciences - a range of material for which the establishment of a new national lending library was being actively canvassed by Urquhart, Foskett and D.T. Richnell. (The NCL in 1966 did in fact extend its purchasing policy into the field of the social sciences).

Further attention, said Sewell, should also be given to the possibilities of joint storage as an aid to cooperation. Public libraries involved in subject specialisation schemes were already finding storage problems embarrassing. There was a need to preserve nationally for lending purposes one or more copies of British books no longer in current use and which would be increasingly difficult to obtain as time passed, while both public and academic libraries should be involved in the Background Materials Scheme for the preservation of pre-1801 literature.

The main requirements, as Sewell saw them in 1962, were an

improvement in the total resources available for loan through British libraries and in the speed and efficiency of the arrangements for locating and lending them. In stressing the need for further central resources to be made available to supplement the resources of individual libraries, Sewell again foreshadowed the later inelegantly-phrased concept of "maximising" lending from a central, national source.

The alleged shortcomings of the NCL were again among the themes of a Library Association Public Libraries Conference address at Rothesay in 1964, when John Bebbington (1964, 43-50) claimed that the Library was neither a true national library nor a coordinator of interlending. With inadequate money and insufficient powers, it was trying to achieve the impossible. Although the focal point of the system, it had fallen between two stools in trying to supplement the resources of other libraries from its own bookstocks, acting as a clearing-house for loans, both home and overseas, and also acting as a national bibliographical centre. Although, for interlending only, the United Kingdom probably had the most effective system in the world, it was not yet good enough to meet the exacting demands of the future.

The NCL, said Bebbington, must have found the RLBx a source of both strength and weakness. It was the inadequacy of the union catalogues in the Regions which formed the weak link in the chain, and he seriously questioned whether the Bureaux should continue in their current form. He pointed to the growing army of local cooperative schemes - those in the commercial and technical sectors, the Co-Book Scheme, the Metropolitan Special Collections Scheme and other subject-allocation schemes in the North West, South East and West Midlands. Because of the existence of national specialisation in the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme, the NCL could now adopt a more positive acquisitions

policy. A great deal could also be gained from studying some of the policies adopted overseas in cooperative storage and acquisition, such as the United States' Farmington Plan, the Scandia Plan, established in 1957, the Mid-west Inter-Library Center (1949) and schemes in Germany, Finland and Eastern Europe.

As the Baker Report had already done in 1962, Bebbington also suggested that bringing a copyright library into an interlending scheme would solve many problems. While this suggestion was not entirely new - F.G.B. Hutchings had already made a similar remark at the 1962 Llandudno Conference - it was a clear statement that the national resource was not being exploited as well as it might. A library of maximum potential, created by long-held legal-deposit privilege, was crucial to the "access to resources of region and country" desired by the Bourdillon Report.

Bebbington believed, and rightly so, that the NCL should be supported from public funds, as was the NLLST. For a country as small as Britain, one National Catalogue was surely the obvious answer and the regional catalogues could be dissolved and substituted by a really efficient National Catalogue. In this, the holdings of only the larger or more important libraries in the Regions should be recorded, with old and rare books, foreign books and books in specialised subject fields. The NCL should cease to be a stock-holding library and should become a first-class national bibliographical centre, cooperating with the British Museum, BNB, the National Reference Library, NLLST and others. It should also continue its association with the British Union Catalogue of Periodicals, the British National Book Centre and the World List of Scientific Periodicals. These views re-affirmed some of the opinions of both McColvin and Vollans; the former had argued for a single National Catalogue, together with specialising library catalogues, while Vollans, could see no point in the NCL continuing to be a holding library.



To meet the needs of those working in areas other than science and technology, Bebbington suggested, perhaps with little expectation of seeing the idea come to fruition, that central national depositories should be established in various subject areas, particularly for foreign books and for those areas of English-language material where the deficiencies were worst. These depositories would gather into themselves the fruits of the national specialisation scheme, the universities' Background Materials Scheme and eventually the stocks of the NCL, which would relinquish its responsibilities in subject areas as the national depositories came into being.

Unfortunately the suggestion did not include any recommendations as to where the depositories should be located or how they were to be financed, and it is not surprising that such a revolutionary idea came to nothing. The discussion following Bebbington's address did, however, lead to a statement by J.S. Davey, an NCL staff member, that the Library considered centralisation of the catalogue records to be a possibility and had certain proposals to offer towards that objective.

### 3.3 Spreading The Load : The Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme

We have already seen that one of the most important recommendations of the Vollans Report related to the need for the Regional Schemes, from an agreed date, to become wholly self-sufficient in meeting requests for current British non-fiction monographs. An Implementation Committee comprising representatives of the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation and of the Executive Committee of the NCL was set up in 1954, and in 1956 the NCL announced that from January 1, 1958 it would cease to accept applications from the RLBx for such monographs. But because of certain objections in the North Western Region, this ambitious national scheme of allocations for the coordinated purchase of books did not come into force until January 1, 1959.

In the Scheme, each Region undertook to ensure coverage of books listed in BNB within sections of the Dewey Decimal Classification, thus releasing the NCL from the task of deploying its inadequate financial resources to meet the Regions' growing volume of requests for current British books, and enabling it to concentrate more on supplying the needs of researchers and students, particularly in the humanities and social sciences.

Requests for books listed in BNB and not satisfied within a Region were now to be passed not to the NCL but to the appropriate specialising Region, and the Dewey classes were allocated by the National Committee on the basis of the estimated expenditure within each class and the financial strength of each Region. The difficulties of ensuring adequate coverage of periodicals Region by Region resulted in a general recommendation which "hoped" that libraries would strengthen

their holdings in the same subjects as had been allocated to them for purchase of monographs.

The allocations to the Regions were :-

| <u>DDC Class</u> | <u>Region</u>                                 |
|------------------|---|
| 000 - 099        | Northern                                      |
| 100 - 199        | Wales   |
| 200 - 299        | South Western                                 |
| 300 - 349        | Yorkshire                                     |
| 350 - 399        | Scotland                                      |
| 400 - 499        | East Midlands                                 |
| 500 - 599        | West Midlands                                 |
| 600 - 699        | North Western                                 |
| 700 - 799        | LASER (formerly the Metropolitan<br>Boroughs) |
| 800 - 899        | East Midlands                                 |
| 900 - 999        | LASER (formerly the South Eastern RLS)        |

These changes, designed to relieve some of the pressure on the NCL by spreading the load of interlending traffic more extensively, were accompanied by other alterations in the policy of the NCL. From the agreed date it would cease to enter into its National Union Catalogue the duplicate entries which it received from some, but not all, of the Regions for current British imprints as listed in BNB. The NCL's own Stock and Outlier Catalogues would be merged to form the Union Catalogue of Books, and the main source henceforth of notifications for new additions would be academic and special libraries.

The magnitude of the task facing the Regions can be appreciated when we realise that their member libraries would be expected to purchase and retain, indefinitely, all items with post-1958 United Kingdom imprints appearing in BNB, although admittedly the total number of entries in a cumulated annual volume of the Bibliography in those years was considerably less than at present. \* As most Regions sub-divided

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\* The 1958 Annual Volume of BNB contained 19,341 serial numbers. By 1973 the total had increased to 32,419 and since then has continued to increase to some 35,000 serial numbers.

their allocated classes yet again among their member libraries, the extra demand falling upon libraries already involved in specialisation schemes at the internal, regional level was considerable. The two Regions which did not sub-divide the allocations among individual libraries were the Northern and the West Midlands RLBx, both of which adopted a monitoring role over the residue of titles which escaped the nets of the normal purchasing policies of their member libraries.

The introduction of this new tier of collective responsibility for post-1958 British monographs was one of a number of factors enabling the NCL now to re-shape its procedures in order to concentrate on the "difficult" requests needing more bibliographical verification and to adopt a new acquisitions policy. It would devote more attention to acquiring earlier British books published from 1800 onwards, books from the USA and the Commonwealth and foreign books on a wider scale. Government publications, theses, the publications of learned societies and periodicals would be stocked more comprehensively and donations to the holdings of the library were invited, particularly of pre-1959 and foreign titles in the humanities. The new policy implied a national lending role, integrated more closely with the objectives of other schemes of cooperative provision, such as the NLLST and the Background Materials Scheme, while the responsibility was divided at national (NCL) and regional (RLBx) levels in a two-tier system - ostensibly a model solution.

Unfortunately, these changes of emphasis took place against a background of other influences which affected the alliance of the NCL and the Regional Schemes. The rapid development and success of the NLLST strengthened the hand of those who argued for lending from a central source, while cooperative schemes unrelated to the NCL/RLBx alliance were being developed by various types of library. As Vollans had shown, the cost of transacting inter-library loans by means of the

NCL/Regional system was unacceptably high and the service provided was slow and cumbersome. Even so, the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme, despite its imbalances, did bring about between 1959 and 1973 the creation of substantial subject collections of great value in many of the participating libraries, so much so that the Wales Region continues to make frequent use of specialising libraries in other Regions as potential suppliers of direct loans. The Region's Annual Report for 1976-77 (page 10) shows that 508 requests received at the Bureau were passed direct to libraries in other Regions which held the appropriate allocation within the Scheme.

We shall consider, in a later section of this study, some of the considerations which led to the abandonment of the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme at the end of 1973 and it is ironic to reflect that a plan designed to lift a load from the shoulders of a central lending agency was itself eventually cast aside because of the promise of greater success which would be achieved by another, successor central agency. Some of the allocations of the original Scheme certainly appear unbalanced, with the East Midlands Region carrying both the substantial 400 and 800 classes of the Dewey Decimal Classification. Five London boroughs between them shared the heavy load of European and world history at 940 - 999, together with the related Geography or Description and Travel classes at 914 - 919. It is again curious that original French literature (840 - 849) and translations of that literature should have been divorced in the East Midlands allocation, the former at Leicester University Library and the translations at Nottingham Public Library. Again, in the Wales Region, many of the member libraries were either fortunate or skilful enough to avoid allocations at all in the 100 - 199 class. A Directory of Allocations was issued by the NCL in 1962 and re-issued in 1973, and it had also appeared in other forms, such as a part of the useful 'Manual of Interlending' compiled by the North Western RLB.

Criticisms could certainly be made of the Scheme both in its general outline and its particular application to the Wales Region. One such critic in 1966 was W.S. Haugh, then City Librarian of Bristol, who underlined (1966, 69-74) some of the dangers and imperfections. The London libraries, he claimed, had never officially incorporated themselves into the Scheme on an equal footing with other Regions, but had voluntarily accepted a temporary obligation to meet requests for Class 700 publications. One could also envisage the possibility that the South Eastern Region, in amalgamating with the London Union Catalogue, might opt out of the National (i.e. the Inter-Regional) Scheme, leaving Class 900 also "in the air".

Some of the books purchased under the Scheme had been placed in the stocks of Reference Departments of public libraries or in university libraries and were not readily available for home reading; others were being lost or worn out by the demands of normal lending, either from local bookstocks or in response to Regional requests. The Scheme had not been implemented with equal efficiency in all parts of the country and the stocks were fragmented by reason of their arbitrary location at hundreds of different libraries, making the Scheme costly to administer. Haugh also added, with some justification, that some of the Dewey sections allocated to various authorities were unpopular with their librarians or library committees.

If it was accepted that a "back-stop" Scheme in some form or other must continue, to ensure the availability for loan of at least one copy of British non-fiction monographs, then it should be arranged in such a way that over the years it would become a reliable, comprehensive and safeguarded collection. Quite the most economical and efficient way to achieve this, suggested Haugh, was to convert the two National Schemes - the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme for non-fiction titles and the National Fiction Reserve - into a single National Lending Collection, which would be administered, if possible, by the NCL, or if the NCL could not

take the responsibility, by another appropriate national body. Such a National Lending Collection would, presumably, be financed jointly by the Department of Education and Science and by local authorities in agreed proportions. It was to be hoped that authorities in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Eire would wish to contribute financially to the Collection and enjoy its advantages on an equal footing with England and Wales. To avoid abuse of the National Lending Collection, the Regional Schemes should be made adequate for current coverage, which could be selective if their Councils so wished.

It is not easy to understand how any degree of selectivity can make sense within any scheme of coverage which is meant to be watertight, and unfortunately a great deal of laxity crept into the operation of the Inter-Regional Scheme over the years. Documentary evidence in the form of correspondence and copies of loan application forms could be adduced from the files of at least one Region which would show that many of the monographs applicable to the allocated subject-classes were not in fact purchased by the appropriate libraries. The allocations were proving costly and frequently the volumes purchased were of little interest to the clientele of the local library. Collections were being amassed which barely justified their shelf-space and resistance was growing towards a procedure which seemed to force the library budget to be spent on books for other people's use. Admittedly, this indicated an odd interpretation of what "co-operation" should mean, but is perfectly understandable when one remembers that comparatively small public library authorities were involved, and in some cases authorities whose very existence as autonomous services was being threatened by proposed library legislation.

Two examples within the Wales Region's allocations immediately spring to mind, both indeed relating to public authorities which were subsequently merged with the county library service in April

1974. A quite disproportionate allocation in the Dewey 150 - 159 Class was given to the small Caernarfon Public Library, which had great difficulty in meeting its commitment to make the necessary purchases. The result was that, in certain instances, the Library would refrain from stocking the books concerned until an actual "specialisation" request was received. Another allocation in the former area of the Glamorgan and Monmouthshire Regional Bureau was the Dewey class 129 - 129 at the urban public library authority of Pontypridd, which to its credit made every effort to meet its obligations to the Scheme. A source of bewilderment, however, to the users of the Pontypridd Public Library was the question of why the shelves of the lending department were so full of new books on Buddhism and other aspects of non-Christian religion, in an area where the main interests of the populace were coal mining, pigeon fancying, choral singing and Rugby football.

Even though it must be admitted that the National Specialisation Scheme did not achieve 100% effectiveness in its intended coverage, it is nevertheless a significant component, or cog, in the composite interlending "wheel" and it was not without receiving firm assurances in 1973 from the British Library Lending Division that the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation finally took a formal decision to abandon the Scheme as from 31 December 1973. The nature of those assurances belongs to the narrative of the new era of interlending "post 1973", and will be examined later in this dissertation.



### 3.4 "Something of the Supermarket" : the NLLST

In his history of the National Central Library, S.P.<sup>L.</sup> Filon (1977, 79) has described the manner in which, from about 1955, inter-library loan requests both to the NCL and through the Regions had begun to decline, partly because of improvements in book-purchasing policies in public libraries and the growing self-sufficiency of the Regional Schemes. The NCL and the Regional Schemes were becoming a more specialised organisation. But at the same time there was coming into existence "a totally different organisation with a radically different raison d'être and philosophy . . . ." This was the National Lending Library for Science and Technology, whose "quantitative" approach to the amassing of scientific and technical literature, much of it in the form of periodicals, had "something of the supermarket in its nature", said Filon (1977, 106).

This is the national institution which, since its establishment, has probably excited more simultaneous admiration and hostility than any other comparable system. Indeed, one can doubt whether there is a comparable system, dedicated to the acquisition, storage and rapid dissemination, by loan or photographic reproduction, of a wide-ranging spectrum of published matter from a central source. The references to the NLLST in library literature are now so numerous that it needs little more than confirmation of the fact that the Library was officially opened at Boston Spa, West Yorkshire on November 5, 1962 by Lord Hailsham, then Minister of Science; that its first Director was Dr. D.J. Urquhart, a civil servant whose formal university training had not been in librarianship but in the physical sciences, and whose questioning spirit and often dismissive attitude towards many of the cherished traditions of conventional library practice frequently brought him into conflict, at open meetings and in print, with other leading personalities in the library world.

The original suggestion for a national lending library for scientific and technical literature and the steps subsequently taken to implement it have been concisely summarised by Bernard Houghton (1972), by Filon (1977, 79 and 106) and by Keith Barr (1975, 29-42), and need not be repeated here. It need only be stated that in late 1956, the Advisory Council for Scientific Policy established a Lending Library Unit under the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) and placed Dr. Urquhart in its charge, with some funds allocated for the provision of a nucleus of literature, placing special emphasis on the importance of Russian scientific literature.

To gain a portrait of the Director, who was eventually to change beyond recognition many of the hallowed concepts of traditional British library practice, one can do no better than read the three addresses made on the occasion of his presentation for honorary degrees at three British universities in the summer of 1974, as published in the volume of Essays on Information and Libraries, edited by Keith Barr and Maurice Line. There emerges a portrait of a man of great vision and determination, dedicated to the pursuit of an exciting new concept in meeting the information needs of research workers by the shortest possible course from one central collection, and greatly suspicious of the leisurely and somewhat genteel approaches of librarians and academicians whose usual stock-in-trade was in the range of the humanities and social sciences.

Traditionalists in the library world were appalled to realise that the new national lending library would not follow any accepted scheme of bibliographic classification in its arrangement of subject-matter, that many serial parts would be bound singly rather than in complete volumes, that a train of trolleys would operate just above head-height to convey monographs and serial parts to a packing and posting

centre arranged like the despatch department of a mail-order store. When the then Editor of the 'Library Association Record', J.D. Reynolds, visited the building at its opening - this "derelict munitions factory out in the fields two hundredmiles from London" (1962, 452 - 454) - he described it as "a vast and rapidly growing storehouse of information, organised as a second string to traditional libraries, depending for action on the customer knowing what he wants .... but .... not a library at all".

The Director's own description of the buildings and the service to be provided had already appeared in an earlier issue of the 'Library Association Record' for that same year. At the time of Reynolds's article, the NLLST was averaging 800 requests a day, but a source of grievance was the Library's insistence on its "local agents" having reached a certain minimum standard in their stocks of bibliographies and abstracts. The "local agents" problem was only one of a number of controversial issues in which the NLLST subsequently became engaged, but in 1965 the Library did issue a circular \* stating that it wished to increase the number of "local agents" in public libraries, which could help by providing more publicly available collections of the main abstracting publications in English. The NLL did grant borrowing facilities to organisations whose staffs needed scientific literature, and local authorities could be included. It would also give a qualified 'yes' to lending to other public libraries which were not "local agents", but a great deal of the material housed in the NLLST was not likely to be of interest to the users of public libraries.

Attention was also devoted to the place which the collection and loan of medical literature would have in the proposed services of the

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\* LAR 67(8), 1965, 57

NLLST - the meeting of loan requests for medical monographs and serials being a notoriously "difficult" area of inter-library lending. Information on some of the functions which the "projected" NLLST would undertake had been given by D.J. Urquhart in 1957 and it appeared that, whatever else the NLLST would undertake, it would not prove to be a "National Library of Medicine". The need for such an institution was supported in 1961 by John L. Thornton (1961, 79 - 82) and D.J. Foskett, addressing a Reference, Special and Information Section Conference of the Library Association in April 1961 at Cambridge, claimed that the NLLST would treat medicine as only a marginal subject. The Conference resolved that medicine needed to be treated at a national level in the same way as science and technology, and that the national lending library facilities which ought to exist in fields other than science and technology and medicine should be based on the National Central Library.

In a reply to Thornton, Dr. Urquhart (1961, 178 - 179) stated that the eleven branches of medical disciplines in which the original plan of the NLLST proposed to collect literature were based on the tradition of the Science Museum Library. Increasing this range to cover the whole of medical literature would increase the intake of the NLLST by only about 10%, and the creation of a separate lending library for medical literature would be uneconomic. The Library would welcome lists of serial titles in medicine for which the volume of inter-library loan demand was embarrassing, and titles which were difficult to obtain. When the NLLST started to grant direct borrowing facilities, applications would be accepted from all sorts of organisations, including hospitals.

On a personal, rather than<sup>a</sup> conceptual, level there was also disquiet among the library profession at the priorities which were to be applied in the appointment of staff to the NLLST, and the Library Association as early as 1959 had sought to represent the wider interests

of its members by protesting against what it considered to be a form of discrimination against the holders of its chartered qualifications. The priority for selection to the staff of NLLST was scientific training and linguistic ability, while the possession of formal qualifications in librarianship seemed to come a good deal lower down the ladder. Again, this bitter reaction appeared to arise from the conviction that the new institution was determined to "demystify" - to borrow a Maurice Line term - many of the cosily-held tenets of conventional library practice. At no time in its history has the NLLST, or its successor the <sup>British Library</sup> Lending Division, held back from imposing rigid standards of discipline upon its registered users, and in an age of laxity and indiscipline, this surely must be acknowledged as an essential requirement.

Looking beyond the sparring and the admittedly exciting controversies of the early 1960's, it is more appropriate for the purposes of this study to discover what opinions the Director held about the structure and effectiveness of the interlending system overall, as the NLLST was to play such a vital role in its future development.

Addressing a conference of the University and Research Section of the Library Association at Reading in 1965, he made (1965, 341 - 349) a definitive statement of his views on the "ecology" of inter-library loans. In supplying scientific literature, speed was of the essence, and the slow rate of response to loan requests through the NCL could be attributed to the deficiencies of union catalogues. Research workers wanted to know what literature existed, not necessarily which titles were stocked by the individual library. Library catalogues were of little use in indicating the contents of periodicals.

As a result of the Vollans Report, a more vigorous scheme of cooperative purchasing had developed, with the aim of ensuring that each Region should be self-sufficient in British books. But gaps were

still to be found in coverage, and despite the efforts of the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme, still more gaps existed. An additional defect was that the "copyright" libraries had always held aloof from the interlending system, and Urquhart claimed that the British Museum Library, holding the major collection in the humanities, should consider lending from its stock, as a national library should take some cognisance of a national need.

He then revealed that the NLLST had considered whether "Regions" were still needed, for the technical execution of inter-library lending, and had concluded that they were not. After all, the United Kingdom was a comparatively small country and the postal service good. So much literature was used so little that one loan copy in the United Kingdom would be sufficient. Even if more copies should be needed, it would be better to centralise a service with, say, five copies rather than have five regions each holding a copy. The output of the NLLST in 1965 was about equal in volume to that of the NCL and the Regions together and there was no technical reason why the NCL and the RLBx should not be replaced by one truly central organisation.

Urquhart also disputed the Roberts Committee's claim that most of the work of the NCL was related to the needs of local libraries. In 1963-64 only 44% of the requests received by the NCL were from public libraries. A two-tier structure could only work well if very few requests were transferred from the regional tier to the national tier. If the intention was to secure a better service based on union catalogues, then we should think twice before adding any more entries to those at the NCL. A loan service based on union catalogues could never be so rapid as that provided from a central collection such as the NLLST, which had eliminated the need for holding stock records, either at the Library itself or elsewhere.

Here is a classic illustration of the analytical incisiveness and teasing playfulness of Dr. D.J. Urquhart at one and the same time. While the force of some of his arguments must be conceded, his summary dismissal of the Regional Schemes seems to suggest that he believed they existed only to arrange inter-library loans. The Regions even at that time had other functions which no central lending collection could perform - the arrangement of conferences and staff seminars within their respective areas, the liaison function between libraries of all types within the Region's boundaries, the collection of drama and of music scores, the supervision of the subject specialisation schemes, defective as they might have been, and ensuring that the Regions' participating libraries were represented in the higher courts of counsel through attendance at the NCL's Annual Meeting of Contributors and by the rota system which gave each Region in turn a measure of representation on the Executive Committee of the NCL. The argument that one loanable copy in a central collection would be sufficient for national needs was clearly untenable and was later proved to be so, as the British Library Lending Division found itself compelled to issue waiting lists of monographs in heavy demand and to seek the help of the Regions in meeting these requests.

With the benefit of the experience of later years, one can also question Dr. Urquhart's faith in the efficacy of postal services in the United Kingdom as the primary means of delivering readers' requests and in a later section of this study a summary will be provided of the steps taken to supplant postal services with a co-ordinated transport system for the carriage of inter-library loan items. The argument that one loanable copy, or even five, stored at a central distribution point would be adequate was reduced to its absurdity by J.P. Wells, of Oxfordshire, when he suggested at a meeting of the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation that libraries could then dispense entirely

with books on shelves and set up instead one small enquiry desk for the receipt of loan application forms.

The wide range of NLLST activities other than the loan and photocopy service is not strictly of relevance to this study and has in any case been fully described in the Library's own promotional literature, in particular the descriptive booklet of March 1967, amended and re-issued in 1969. Following the merging of the NLLST and the NCL on July 1, 1973 a revised publicity pamphlet, as a brief guide to the services, was published under the imprint of the Lending Division in 1974.

The dominant theme of the NLLST's own promotional booklets was naturally the part which it could play in meeting speedily the loan requests of researchers, and emphasis was laid on expansion - in the purchase of stock, in the accession of donated materials and in the volume of traffic generated. By March 1969 the number of current serials being received was over 32,000 and this total was increasing by about 2,000 titles a year. 80% of requested serials published before 1920 were being supplied and this rate would increase as more of the older material was acquired by donation. The success rate was understandably highest for the most recent material, reaching more than 95% for serials not more than three years old.

Unlike the majority of large libraries, the NLLST needed few records of its holdings, and serials and books were arranged on the shelves in alphabetical order of titles by the Berghoefffer method which had been used as a time-saving device at the NCL. The avoidance of the delays usually associated with cataloguing meant that publications reached the shelves more quickly and the stock was itself its own catalogue record. As an exception to the general rule, catalogues had been prepared <sup>of</sup> ~~by~~ the



Library's Russian holdings.

The efficacy of the NLLST's arrangement of its stock by title attracted comment, both favourable and critical, in the professional press. Before embarking on costly mechanisation projects, libraries should determine the true function of the catalogue, claimed M.W. Grose and M.B. Line (1968, 2 - 5), and assess whether it is an efficient tool. Mechanisation often provided the opportunity for a break with the past, if its cost could be justified. In the early days of the NLLST, when the Science Museum Library was still carrying a large part of the workload, volumes were being delivered on loan from the NLLST several days before shelf marks could be put on similar requests which had gone to the Science Museum Library.

D.L. Sowerbutts, however, subsequently pointed out (1968, 80) that the NLLST had found it necessary to catalogue certain sections of its stock, and that the fact of being a closed access library helped to avoid disarrangement of the shelves, thus rendering a catalogue less of a necessity. Norman Roberts (1968, 81) went a good deal further by asserting that "a warehouse worked by its storekeepers", being little concerned with personal service upon its own premises, did not need a catalogue. Dr. Urquhart's experiences, in a truly unique organisation, neither proved nor disproved the need for a catalogue.

From its 800 loan requests a day at the time of the 1962 official opening, the NLLST developed into the most influential and important national specialised library of its kind, while at the same time taking on the role of a cooperative store, by accepting significant files of little-used periodicals which could be exploited more easily than by libraries which were not geared to nationwide lending methods. The Library succeeded so admirably, if controversially, by adapting its

procedures, and creating procedures where none existed, to fill a wide gap in the national framework of inter-library cooperation, to perform, in fact, a function which no other agency seemed capable of approaching. It achieved its aim by amassing a vast collection of that very material which the "public-library-imagined" Regional Library Schemes, and the humanities-based NCL had found "difficult" to supply - report literature, conference proceedings, scientific and technological serial publications, theses, official publications, translations of foreign-language monographs in science and technology, and microforms. Its success was so spectacular that it is in no way an exaggeration to claim that this is the institution which brought an entirely new dimension to the concept of inter-library loans.

We are fortunate that it is not necessary at this point to try to measure the importance of the achievements of the NLLST; its range of services acts as the Library's own testimonial. Reports on its progress did appear from time to time in issues of the NLL Review, but perhaps the most revealing accounts are those which appeared as consecutive articles in the same issue of the BLL Review - the first entitled "How It All Began", by Rosemary M. Bunn, tracing the detailed history of the origins of the service, and the second being the Director's own "Progress Report" for the year 1973/74. Read in succession, the articles well illustrate one of the epoch-making developments in the library world. \*

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\* BLL Review 2 (3), 1974, 75 - 78 and 79 - 83.

### 3.5 Planning For The Future

#### 3.5.1 The "public" sector

Within the transitional era of inter-library lending, legislation was enacted for England and Wales which, in its re-framing of the public library structure, inevitably affected the potential of the public sector to engage in cooperative activities. The Public Libraries and Museums Act, 1964 consolidated all previous legislation and provided a new basis for the re-forming of the public service, and it will be remembered that the Bourdillon Report of 1962 had recognised the presence, or absence, of a will to cooperate as a criterion which might decide the fate of public library authorities with populations under 40,000. At the close of the transition, the Local Government Act of 1972 reduced the number of library authorities in England and Wales from 385 to 121, including the four district authorities in Wales which were allowed to retain autonomous powers. The enhanced authorities would serve larger populations and command greater financial resources, and it was therefore a reasonable hope that their dependence on inter-library loans could be lessened.

Section 1 of the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act imposed a duty on the Secretary of State to superintend and promote the improvement of the public library service in England and Wales and to secure the proper discharge of their functions by local authorities - the first time a Minister of the Crown had been charged with this specific duty and given powers to carry it out.

Our particular concern, however, is with two other clauses of the Act, and firstly with Section 3, which provided for the constitution of regional councils to promote inter-library

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\* Chapter IV, para. 3, page 36.

cooperation. The areas of these councils were to be determined by the Secretary of State as soon as might be after April 1, 1965 and the schemes should include requirements as to the payment by library authorities towards the expenses of the regional council. At least a majority of each council should consist of members of library authorities within the region and powers to make orders or schemes should be exercisable by statutory instrument. An extremely significant provision was that the Secretary of State might require councils to enter into arrangements with other councils to improve or promote the development of the public library service - an opportunity, perhaps, for future recommendations or orders to merge one or more of the current regional schemes of inter-lending into the larger regions suggested by the Baker Committee of 1962.

Circular 4/65 issued by the Department of Education and Science referred to an intention by the Secretary of State to consult the existing regional organisations on the definition of the areas of the regional councils, having regard for the most convenient and economical arrangements for maintaining catalogues and the relations between regions and the National Central Library. It did, therefore, appear that there was some purposive and deliberate planning of a reinforced and co-ordinated scheme of inter-library cooperation on the horizon, so much so that, speaking at the 1964 Rothesay Conference of the Public Libraries Conference of the Library Association, Miss L.V. Paulin (1964, 7) was able to say that it would be good to look forward to regional systems working on a sound financial footing and dealing with the reduced number of separate authorities which would result from the implementation of the Act.

At the same Conference, W. Caldwell (1964, 8 - 14) was less optimistic and saw that the weakness of this Section of the Act

was the concession that the power to draw up a new regional scheme could be annulled by resolution of either House of Parliament. Any library authority which objected, perhaps to higher contributions, could put pressure on Members of Parliament for annulment. He also noted the influence of the 1955 Public Libraries (Scotland) Act on this particular Section 3 of the 1964 Act : the earlier Act having been the first occasion of compulsory payment of contributions to a scheme of library cooperation. Caldwell claimed that the greatly increased effectiveness of library cooperation in Scotland, based on the Scottish Central Library, was the result of its secure financial basis.

The 1964 Act also included another provision which appears to have attracted very little subsequent attention, but which had latent possibilities for the Regional Schemes, had the appropriate advantage been taken. Section 9 (2) authorised the Secretary of State to make grants to any body which maintained catalogues or indices, or made available other facilities to which all library authorities were permitted to refer. Complaints about the parlous state of the Regional union catalogues had already been so frequent that this provision must have offered some hope of a helping hand. A Regional Bureau is surely a "body" which maintains "catalogues or indices", whether they be combined resource lists of serials, music or drama holdings or any other category of loanable material. Nor could it be denied that all member libraries within a region were not "permitted to refer" to such union lists. The mere act of telephoning a single enquiry, or sending a Telex message, to a Bureau could be construed as an act of "referring" to the regional record. There seems no direct evidence available of any attempt to derive benefit in the Regions from this suggestion in the 1964 Act, but the most disappointing outcome of all, of course, is that even by 1978 the provision to establish statutory regional councils has still not been implemented.

Whatever legislation might achieve for the "public" element within the framework of the interlending system, it is very clear, from the library literature of the transitional decade, that dissatisfaction still persisted. The NCL, in spite of increased Government aid, had been reduced to the humiliating position in 1961 of circulating an appeal to libraries to increase their subscriptions and in the same year the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation again asked in vain that concessionary rates should be allowed by the Post Office for the carriage of inter-library loans. During 1962, the NCL completed with the aid of a special Treasury grant the incorporation into the Union Catalogue of arrears of entries from the Regions, but no funds were available for work on entries from special libraries or the amalgamation of the sheaf and card catalogues. On a more encouraging note, the Trustees of the NCL in 1962 approved the new policy of purchasing more widely in the field of foreign literature and periodicals in the humanities - a new direction to which considerable impetus must have been given by the growing success of the NLLST.

The problems encountered by the NCL were indeed crucial in the developing discussions on the question of a National Lending Library for the Humanities, to match the function of NLLST, in the non-humanities range of subject-areas. D.T. Richnell, for one, believed strongly that the NCL had an important part to play, but that many improvements would need to come about first. He suggested (1961, 197 - 214) that a prototype for a new "NLLHum." could be fused together from an enlarged NCL, the libraries of universities, special and society libraries and the Regional Bureaux : there would be a statutory obligation upon the Bureaux to become individually self-sufficient for all modern British works, and this, together with the completion of the NCL and Regional catalogues, would reduce the interlending function of the NCL.

The existing stock of the NCL would act as the nucleus for the acquisition of discarded material and of frequently requested material normally regarded as unobtainable. Surveys would have to be made of extant holdings of older books and periodicals and of foreign material, and as the wholesale copying of library catalogues was now possible - by microfilming or xerographic copying - this was one way of incorporating entries for books already catalogued into the Union Catalogue of the NCL. But Government aid was hopelessly inadequate and we would succeed only by proving that cooperation alone achieved only partial success. Strengthening the total resources in bookstocks was also the aim of the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation when it agreed in 1963 to ask librarians to supplement their collections by purchasing foreign and British books, without prejudice to their commitments under the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme. At the National Committee, feeling was hardening in favour of centralised purchasing by the NCL and in April 1965 it was resolved that, from an agreed date, the purchase and preservation of material under the IRSCS and the Joint Fiction Reserve Scheme should be done centrally by the NCL, or some other central organisation, and not on a regional basis. This suggestion, or resolution, again did not materialise into positive action.

The same fate also befell an imaginative proposal made by P. Havard-Williams \* for a "Celtic Region", which would include Scotland and Ireland, and would have a total population of about nine million people. Based on cooperation between the Scottish and Irish Central Libraries, it would match the larger English regions proposed by the Baker Committee's Report. Mention of Ireland in fact serves to remind us that inter-library lending did figure in the 1966 Report on

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\* Reported in LAR 67 (2), 1965, Liaison, 12.

Public Libraries in Northern Ireland - the "Hawnt Report", which recommended that a "Provincial Library" be set up to provide a central collection of books for reference and lending, to maintain an interlending bureau and to supervise a subject specialisation scheme. As it happened, most of the functions suggested were at that time being supported by the Belfast Central Library.

Time and again the emphasis was placed upon the dissatisfaction felt about the sum total of literature available for loan, particularly in the humanities. The statement issued in 1965 by the National Reference Services Sub-Committee of the Library Research Committee, under the title 'Access to Information : a national bibliographic service' \* pointed out that the NCL catalogues were confined to interlending material and were far from complete. To be effective, they should include the holdings of major national, university and research libraries, irrespective of whether the material was or was not available for interlending. Among the tasks of a national bibliographical centre would be the establishment of full union catalogues of both lendable and non-lendable material. While this was certainly a praiseworthy ideal, the £131,931 income of the NCL from all sources for the year 1965-66 (Filon, 1977, 268) would clearly have been quite inadequate for such high purposes. In passing, it is sad to note, from the statistics supplied by S.P.L. Filon (ibid.) how the percentage of the NCL's income provided by other libraries fell gradually to the figure of only 2% in 1971-72. In 1930-31 it stood at 17% and reached its highest mark, 24.7%, in 1946-47.

The need for more and for better catalogues was also emphasised by Sir Frank Francis, addressing the Harrogate Conference of the Library Association, as President, in 1965. In the humanities, said Sir Frank (1965, 184) the material for study often only becomes known when special catalogues are provided. Our lending arrangements in the humanities

\* LAR 67(4), 1965, 131-2, 134.



needed more resources, although he rejected the view that the British Museum Library should lend its books. The relationship of the BM, and the other national libraries, to the total system had not yet been properly thought out. As we shall see later, this was a prophetic pronouncement to be confirmed from 1973 onwards, when the national libraries other than the Museum did indeed find themselves being drafted into the total system of inter-library lending.

It is somewhat surprising to find S.P.L. Filon (1977, 105) claiming that one of the results of the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act was to restrict the relative independence which the NCL had enjoyed, since<sup>e</sup> the public library service and more particularly the Regional Systems, were now to be superintended by the Secretary of State for Education and Science. This appears to suggest that the NCL was in some way subservient to the public service and carried out most of its work on behalf of public libraries - a view admittedly taken by the Roberts Committee but disproved by Filon himself. Even so, it is opportune at this point to redress somewhat the unfavourable portrait of the NCL which has hitherto emerged by noting briefly the position in 1966, fifty years after the first opening of the Central Library for Students.

Filon himself in his history of the Library (1977, 85 - 111) has provided a perceptive account of the period from 1958-68, which he regarded as "the climax of independent development" at the NCL, and it is against the 4,000 - 5,000 loans noted in the 1916-17 Annual Report that we must set the 128,567 loan applications received in 1965-66. Some of these applications were for items outside the scope of the service, but of those which were satisfied, 14.2% came from the Library's own stock, 55.7% were lent by other libraries through the NCL's agency as the "switching centre", and 4.1% were satisfied by providing photocopies

instead of loans. 1.2% were obtained by the requesting libraries through locations supplied by the NCL. The figures for international loans were included in those totals, the success rate for obtaining items from abroad being about 70%. The union catalogues, comprising the National Union Catalogue of sheaf slips from the Regions, the Union Catalogue of Books and the Slavonic Union Catalogue together held more than 2,334,000 entries, while the Library's commitment to the publication of BUCOP and the World List of Scientific Periodicals was being maintained.

Between 1959-60 and 1965-66 the bookstock had increased by over 60%, despite the fact that the bookfund in 1965-66 was still only £12,000, (and even by 1967-68 it had not increased beyond £16,000). Credit for this accession of stock was due to the libraries which had made substantial donations of books. The British National Book Centre during 1965-66 also redistributed 138,000 books, periodical volumes and parts to British and overseas libraries.

Planning a future for the "public" sector of the inter-lending system in isolation would, of course, have been meaningless and the emerging concept of "the national library service" began to place the "public sector" in a completely new context. Two questions, however, remained to be answered. Had the whole undertaking proved its worth, or was it a costly and cumbersome failure? And did the system need regional sub-structures, duplicating each other's procedures and expenditures, or should centralised services take over the whole operation? Answers to both questions were offered in different ways.

The National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation, in commenting on the 1969 Dainton Report, demonstrated the effectiveness of the NCL/Regional "axis" in a series of statistics later quoted by Filon (1977, 134). Out of a total of 424,559 requests in 1967-68 received by the whole interlending system, 67% were supplied by the Regions and

23.4% by the NCL. While the satisfaction rate for all requests was 90.4%, the overall rate for requests originating from libraries in Regions, taking into account applications emanating from the Regions and dealt with successfully by both Regions and the NCL, was 93.7%.

The second question, whether to centralise or regionalise, was the starting-point of the so-called "East Midlands Experiment" of 1969, whereby requests from libraries in the area of the East Midlands Regional Bureau for books other than British imprints since 1959 were routed direct to the NCL. The experiment lasted for twelve months from April 1969 and its methods and conclusions were described by S.P.L. Filon (1970, 263-271) and W.R.M. McClelland. The most important finding was that there had been an improvement in the overall supply rate for all East Midlands requests from 86% to 92.7%, while the proportion of valid requests satisfied by NCL stock was 31.2%. The analysis of loan applications by subject disclosed that, in the humanities, 34.0% were supplied by the NCL, 39.4% by libraries within the Region and 16.8% by other libraries; in the social sciences, the percentages were respectively 38.3, 37.1 and 16.0, and in the sciences and technology, 24.9, 48.4 and 16.3. The 24.9% of science and technology titles supplied from NCL is surprisingly high. Other analyses also indicated that the average time of supply of loans showed an improvement over the previous East Midlands average. 50% of all requests were satisfied in just over one week and 80% in three weeks.

The experiment had shown conclusively that centralising the non-BNB based procedures could offer advantage in improved satisfaction rates and speed of supply, but the timing of the exercise coincided unhappily with far more radical changes which were being canvassed at the national level. Despite thorough discussion of the experiment and its

conclusions at the National Committee, at which the present writer attended, no other Region felt sufficiently convinced to make corresponding arrangements with the NCL.

### 3.5.2 The Future Needs of the "Non-Public" Users

"There can be no doubt about the importance of providing Universities with library services which are adequate to the needs of their students and staff. But books and periodicals are expensive and, with the great increase both in the number of Universities and in the total University population, it is important that library services should be organised in the most effective and economical way possible". These were the words of Sir John Wolfenden, then chairman of the University Grants Committee in his foreword to the March 1967 publication of the Committee on libraries - the Parry Report.

The establishment of new universities in the 1960's, the extension of existing universities and the granting of university charters and stat<sup>u</sup>tes to other technical institutions all exerted extreme pressure upon the ability of academic libraries to meet the needs of their users, at undergraduate, research and staff levels. The "very high degree of self-sufficiency" which M.B. Line (1973, 1 - 13) had credited to university libraries began to falter in the period between 1960/61 and 1964/65, according to the analysis made by Norman Roberts (1976, 153 - 165) and Gillian Bull of trends in external borrowing by University libraries. From 1960/61 to 1972/73, university libraries became increasingly dependent upon external sources for the satisfaction of local demands - a not surprising result, as the full-time population of the universities of England and Wales grew by 124% and external borrowing by university libraries increased by the staggering amount of 929%.

A warning about the likely increase in demand had already been sounded in 1961 by the Library Association in its evidence to the

Robbins Committee on Higher Education. \* It condemned the inadequate facilities and book purchases of the libraries of most institutions of higher education and criticised the practice of buying only single copies of books, whereas in the United States of America books were provided by some universities in the ratio of one copy to every ten readers. The Association urged that British university libraries must do something similar if students were to have undelayed access to standard works.

The Parry Report ranged widely over a large number of aspects of the university library scene, including acquisitions, cooperation, foreign accessions, accommodation, library techniques and finance, but our concern is to discover the way in which the Committee saw inter-library lending as an integral part of the general provision, currently and for the future. In order to arrive at its recommendations on interlending, the Parry Committee had before it the results of a quantitative investigation made at the NCL from January to June 1964, when 53,902 loan applications were coded and analysed in order to obtain factual information about the use which universities were making of the NCL, and the contribution which universities themselves were making to interlending. The investigation has been described by S.P.L. Filon (1966, 289 - 294 and 305) and I.P. Gibb, and an amended version of the data was published as Appendix 4 (pp. 203 - 212) to the Parry Report.

The basic table of statistics showed that, of the 10,577 applications received from university libraries during the survey, 75.8% had been satisfied : the percentage of success with the requests received from all libraries was 78.9%. Other analyses showed that there was no significant failure-rate variation# between the main subjects requested, but university libraries did request a "disproportionately

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\* Reported in LAR 63 (11), 1961 (Liaison), 89.

high share of foreign language books" (Parry Report, p. 205). About 50% of all failures related to items in the English language published outside the United Kingdom, mostly American titles. In foreign language publications, most of the failures occurred in the Romance and Germanic language areas.

In speed of supply, the slowest service given was for pre-1800 books and current publications from 1960-64. Only where the work requested was available from the NCL's own stock could a very rapid service be given. Other tables indicated the rates of success when union catalogues were used to locate a loanable copy and when "speculative" approaches were made - the latter being frequently the method relied upon in searching for pre-1800 books and those published between 1960 and 1964. The investigation of the various types of library as sources of loans in specific subject-areas showed that university libraries were the group which lent most, with the highest percentages of loan successes being recorded in philosophy, philology, medicine and literature.

S.P.L. Filon's reaction to the Parry Report was that the services of the NCL had been described unfavourably and not always accurately, and of course this reaction is understandable, in that the Report made some radical proposals for the NCL, in its relationship to the British Museum Library. The Report recommended that the library departments of the British Museum should become the British National Library, one of whose functions would be to act as "the centre of inter-library lending" (Parry Report, para. 298(g)), thus removing one of the platforms beneath the activities of the NCL. If it was considered appropriate, the maintenance of all types of union catalogues should be a task of the British National Library, which should also take on the responsibility for all material for which there was inadequate national

provision for lending, duplicating as necessary those items for which there was likely to be more frequent demand.

The recommendations went on to state that all the legal-deposit libraries should be prepared to lend their books and another function of the British National Library should be the publication of catalogues of national holdings of various types of material. An independent organisation should investigate the value of the NCL's union catalogues and assess the advantages of alternative methods. If the full NCL Union Catalogue was to be retained, more control should be exercised both at the acquisitions stage and in the selection of categories of items.

Responsibility for providing a national lending service in science, medicine and technology should remain with the NLLST (Parry Report, para. 634(b)) and national planning for social science literature should take into account the fact that the NLLST would be in a position to lend some social sciences periodicals by 1967 - the decision having been taken in 1966 to extend the NLLST's acquisitions policy into that subject-field.

An official statement issued on behalf of the NCL \* welcomed in principle the main Parry recommendation that there should be a British National Library, without perhaps foreseeing that the eventual achievement of this objective under different conditions would terminate its own separate existence in 1973. The NCL considered, however, that within a consortium of "four national libraries", it should itself remain independent, as was recommended for the NLLST. The statement also stressed the importance of improving lending arrangements as a matter of urgency, with literature being collected more vigorously for the NCL and the

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\* IAR 69 (9), 1967, 303 - 304.



catalogues brought "to the point of greatest efficiency".

In paragraph 298 of its Report, the Parry Committee admitted that it had been extremely difficult to relate the position of the university library to the national library scene primarily because there was no "true apex" to the library system of the country. The important functions being assumed by the national libraries of other countries had of necessity to be shared among a number of libraries, not all of which were adequately equipped to undertake them. In a review of the Report, P. Havard-Williams (1967, 299-303) acknowledged that the Committee had followed to the end the consequences of its thoughts on library co-operation on the national scale in a way no other committee had done before; the Report implied a reconstituted British Museum at the apex, a network of national and copyright libraries, together with university libraries and other large collections all regarded as the nation's library resources. He then emphasised the recommendation in paragraph 634(a) of the Report that "all publications likely to be of value to scholars should be readily found in a British library and most should be available for loan either in the original or in photocopy".

Whatever might have been the "official" welcome accorded to the Parry proposals by the NCL, Filon in his own history of the Library (1977, 115 - 116) questioned whether a civil-service type library like the British Museum could administer interlending, involving contact with some hundreds of libraries, and create union catalogues more effectively than an ad hoc organisation like the NCL. Unless there had been considerable changes of heart, it was unlikely that the Museum would now reconsider accepting the same function as it had rejected, in conjunction with the proposals for the Central Library for Students, some forty years earlier.

The chorus of voices calling upon the legal-deposit libraries to lend their books was also joined by the Sub-Committee which the Library Association had set up from its own University, College and Research Section and from the National University, College and Medical Libraries Committee. In a statement on the Parry Report (LAR 69(9), 1967, 304 - 305) this joint sub-committee considered that the British National Library should take over new functions only when it had the necessary staff, finance and accommodation to do so, particularly the functions of the NCL. In the meantime, the interlending service based on the NCL would be improved if the legal-deposit libraries could agree a policy for lending, through the NCL, books other than British copyright material which was in print. The NCL should also receive a greatly enlarged Treasury grant in order that it might build up the central collection of loan copies for which there was likely to be heavy demand.

Particularly in its third Chapter (paras. 82 - 118), the Parry Report examined in great detail the role of university libraries in the interlending system and emphasised the significance of that role, but criticised at the same time a number of aspects of the system - the cost of interlending, delays in supply, the frequent instances of unwillingness to lend, the incompleteness of the NCL catalogues, the failure rate and the inordinate amount of time taken up in circulating "wants" lists from the NCL to a large number of libraries. The conclusions which resulted, however, from this detailed investigation were somewhat disappointing (paras. 115 - 118) and can be summarised as "the four mores" : what the system needed was more cost control, more photocopies, more staff dealing with inter-library loans and more Telex installations.

Equally unhelpful was the lack of clarity in the phraseology of paragraph 303, which claimed that "under the terms of the various Copyright Acts, a copy of every book published in Britain may [sic] be distributed to the following [copyright] Libraries . . . In so far as one of these libraries, the National Library of Wales, is concerned, there are quite specific categories of publications which need not be deposited by their publishers, and the question of whether these categories "may" or may not be deposited does not arise.

Before leaving the "non-public" sector of interlending, it is worth noting that the participation of special libraries in the system remained untouched by committee recommendations or government legislation. Filon (1977, 157 - 158) has pointed out that borrowing by special libraries had increased very sharply both during and after the Second World War, and according to Frank Atkinson (1974), some special libraries had complained that they were lending so much material that their own services suffered. D.J. Foskett (1964, 86 - 95) claimed that his own special library was lending through NCL ten times as much as it borrowed. Their specialised collections - in research reports, trade literature, serials holdings and rare monographs in the libraries of learned societies and professional associations - were invaluable and at the time of the Dainton Report in 1969, 1,575 special libraries were borrowing direct from the NCL and 183 through Regional Systems. The suggestion was made in an article by G. Wheatley (1972, 408 - 409) that grants should be made to special libraries from central government to enable them to participate fully in the national system of library cooperation. Later, the British Library, in its capacity as a sponsor of other libraries, did begin the practice of making substantial grants to certain society libraries to enable them to improve or complete catalogues of their stocks.

Taking a typical year of activity (1971 - 1972) in the formerly separate Welsh Bureaux, we find that the university, college and special libraries borrowed within the boundaries of Wales 10.51% of the total borrowings and 29.55% through the NCL. (These were the special library members of the Aberystwyth Bureau only). The same libraries lent 12.14% of the total lendings through the Bureaux and 30.96% through the NCL and through other Regions. The corresponding libraries in the area of the Cardiff Bureau borrowed, intra-regionally, 15.68% of the total borrowings and only 3.11% through the NCL; they lent 20.26% of the total lendings intra-regionally but only a meagre 1.43% through the NCL. Some of the special libraries at present in membership of the Wales Region generate so little traffic in interlending that one might seriously question the purpose of their remaining in membership. The trend of demand by special libraries certainly can be seen to be moving away from the Regions and towards the central source at the Lending Division and this is what might reasonably be expected. In the East Midlands Region during 1975/76 \* requests for locations by academic and industrial libraries totalled 1331, compared with 1957 in the previous year, while two county libraries, Leicestershire and Norfolk, each generated more location-requests within the East Midlands System than did the whole of the academic and industrial membership in 1975-76.

As the cost of inter-library loans inevitably increases, it is a reasonable assumption that closer scrutiny is being made in university and college libraries to determine that only genuine requests do in fact reach the stage of becoming a loan application. Such has been the financial stringency in both universities and colleges of education that two examples spring to mind in the Wales Region where

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\* Document circulated to Association of Officers, RLBx.

academic libraries have been forced to recoup from the individual library user the value of the pre-paid BLLD loan application form on which the request is made - a procedure which would be completely illegal in public libraries under the terms of the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act. The belief that the Regional Schemes have very little to offer, in terms of stock and resources, to the majority of the special libraries would seem to be confirmed by the fact that the British Library Lending Division numbers some 140 Welsh institutions among its registered borrowers. 93 of these are not in membership of the Regional Bureau.

### 3.5.3 Planning For National Needs

By proposing the creation of a "British National Library", the Parry Report in 1967 focussed attention on the pressing need to solve the so-called "national library problem". The eventual solution to that problem, as proposed by the Dainton Committee's Report on the national library service and enacted by the British Library Act of 1972, had far-reaching effects on the inter-library loan organisation of the United Kingdom, and indeed also of the Republic of Ireland in the sense that the eventual establishment of the single loan collection in the Lending Division of the British Library enabled a much freer exchange of cooperative activity to be fostered throughout all the constituent parts of the overall system.

From its first publication in 1950, the British National Bibliography had played a vital part in the union cataloguing routines of some of the Regional Schemes and from 1959 had provided the basis for cooperative acquisition machinery under the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme, and for subject specialisation schemes in certain Regions. The "basic bibliography" function which UNESCO had considered to be a pre-requisite of a national library service was recommended by the Dainton Committee for inclusion in the scheme of provision of the national library service, and so it was enacted by the British Library Act of 1972.

The third, but by no means the least important, element in the rationalisation programme proposed by the Dainton Committee was the creation of the Reference Division of the new British Library, re-constituting the Library Departments of the British Museum apart from the Antiquities Departments and aiming at "comprehensive coverage of worth-while world literature", to quote D.T. Richnell (1968, 153). Unfortunately, before the Dainton Committee began to deliberate, it had seen the frustration of some twenty years of earlier planning when it was announced that a

new, adjacent site in London's Bloomsbury area would not now be acquired for the extended and improved reference and scholarly research service which the "national reference library" in its new guise should be expected to provide.

In 1965, the Trustees of the National Central Library negotiated an agreement with the Bodleian Library and the Library of Trinity College, Dublin by which the two legal-deposit libraries would make statutory copies of British books available for loan, provided they were no longer in print. It had previously been argued that the privilege of legal-deposit should be extended to the NCL itself. It is an intriguing speculation to consider whether, in the event of the other copyright libraries including the British Museum having seen their way clear to lend their books, the NCL would ever have suffered the fate which befell it in 1973. Had the copyright libraries together agreed to such sweeping changes, the argument that there was insufficient central provision in the humanities and social sciences would have been countered.

Following the Parry Report, the Library Association in a memorandum to the Secretary of State had called for an independent investigation of how best the responsibility should be allocated for the operation of all the national reference, lending and bibliographical services, and the Dainton Committee on its appointment in December 1967 was required to consider whether "national library facilities" should be "brought into a unified framework".

So the stage was set for the debate between the supporters of the centralist theory of provision, with its potential economy and efficiency, and those who feared the monolithic bureaucracy with its alleged stringent inflexibility. As we shall see later, this divergence was clearly to be seen in the discussions which took place between the

representatives of the Regional Library Schemes and the Lending Systems Planning Group of the British Library Organising Committee (BLOC), and it is no exaggeration to claim that the future of the Schemes hung very much in the balance at that time. It says a great deal for the resilience and determination of the Regions that they were able to withstand the centralist pressures and subsequently to substantiate a valid argument for their survival and for a new approach to a whole range of diverse activities.

In his history of the National Central Library, S.P.L. Filon (1977, 116 et seq.) provides a resumé, albeit a rather embittered one, of the conflicting arguments and the chronicle of events relating to "the national library problem" from the Parry Report onwards. One cannot but feel sympathy for the valiant stand which Filon takes on behalf of the institution which had borne the brunt of much criticism and struggled to perform at least three major functions with totally inadequate resources. Filon admits that the absorption of the NCL into the newly designed framework of the British National Library had been expected, but he is particularly embittered by the "most disagreeable shock" administered by the Dainton Committee, which took an unfavourable view of almost every aspect of the work of the NCL. "The Dainton Committee", says Filon (1977, 117), "and the government departments later concerned with implementing its views steadfastly refused to admit (or perhaps even to understand) that the problem of providing on loan what could not be supplied locally differed entirely in the two fields of science (including technology) and the humanities".

It is not necessary for the purposes of this study to recount in detail the passage of events which led from the establishment of the Dainton Committee to the merging in July 1973 of the services of the NCL



and NLLST as the Lending Division of the British Library at Boston Spa. A masterly elucidation of the whole "problem" had been offered as early as 1968 by D.T. Richnell (1968,148 - 153) in an address to the Annual Conference of the Library Association. After summarising the historical development of national library provision in the United Kingdom, he posed a number of questions which he considered should be faced by the Dainton Committee. His proposals drew upon a memorandum of evidence which the Library Association itself had approved in April 1968 for submission to the Committee,\* and both Richnell and the Association were agreed in their view that the NCL, the NLLST and the Library Departments of the British Museum should be brought within a unified framework to create a National Library Service under a Director-General. Richnell further suggested that non-British material might be lent from the "National Reference Library" on the Bloomsbury site, as this would only marginally affect the reference service: cooperative inter-library lending should be maintained, particularly for current British material and for retrospective material, with the other legal-deposit libraries and the major academic libraries playing a greater part in this service: the national union catalogue should achieve the most comprehensive possible coverage of titles, but not of holdings.

Anticipating that such far-reaching proposals would take a long time to reach fruition - but in the event probably less than Richnell had imagined - a number of minimal improvements were suggested which could be implemented forthwith, such as a considerable increase in the book grant of the NCL to enable it to purchase monographs as part of the extended loan collection, the extension of the NLLST's coverage of periodicals to all subject fields and the inclusion of the holdings of other major academic libraries in the national union catalogue.

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\* IAR 70 (6), 1968, 154 - 159

It is interesting to note that the Library Association's memorandum of evidence had included the recommendation that the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales should be brought into relationship with the National Library Service, although strictly they lay outside the terms of reference of the Dainton Committee, and the Committee itself in turn made no formal recommendations about them. The events leading up to the national plan did, however, coincide with the emergence of an increasing emphasis on national identities in Wales and Scotland, and a growing aspiration in both territories for a greater say in governmental decision-making. Particularly in Wales, the wastefulness of maintaining two separate Regional Bureaux had been recognised, although they were deeply-rooted northern and southern prejudices at work striving to retain the status quo. Despite its lack of direct recommendations for Wales, it was undoubtedly the impact of the Dainton Report which transformed the situation in Wales, together with the firm commitment made in 1972 by the National Library of Wales that, if a unified Bureau could be achieved, the cost of its staffing and all its ancillary requirements in accommodation and household needs would be met by the Library, with subscriptions from the member libraries being kept to the absolute minimum.

The theoretical national plan was converted into positive action in the winter of 1971 with the publication of a government White Paper, Cmd. 4572, announcing the intention to set up the British Library as an independent corporate body under the control of a British Library Board, and combining the NCL and the NLLST. The White Paper also proposed the establishment of a British Library Organising Committee, which in fact started its work in 1971. The British Library Act (Eliz. II, C. 54) was dated 27 July 1972 and the Board itself was constituted in April 1973. The periodicals stocks of the NCL were

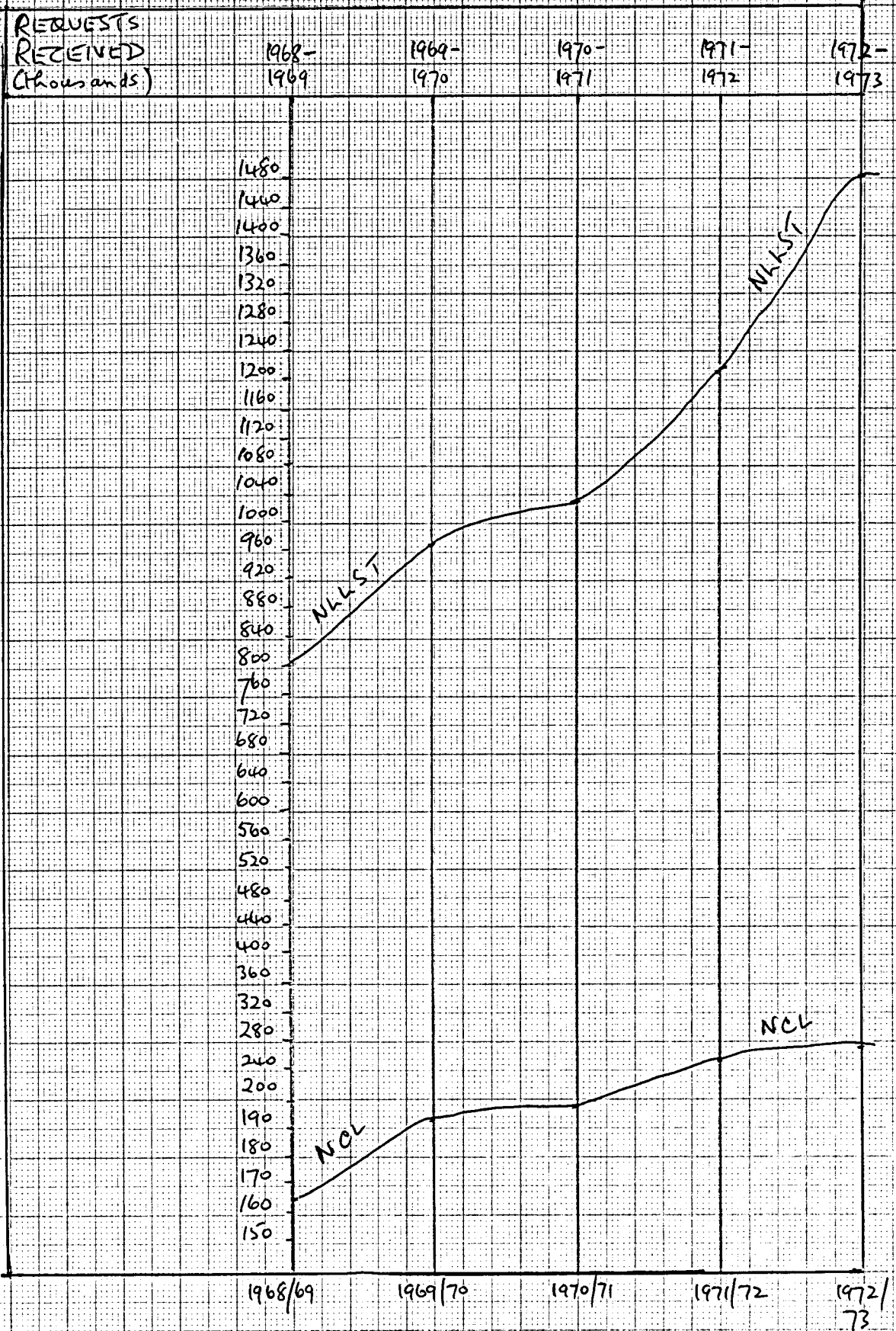
transferred to Boston Spa in the summer of 1972 and the bookstocks during July-August 1973, with the NCL formally ending its independent existence on 30 June 1973. Its union catalogue of pre-1801 books was transferred to the British Museum Library and a microfilmed copy retained by the Lending Division for its own purposes.

As the passing of the British Library Act closes another era in the history of library cooperation in the United Kingdom, it is ironic to note that M.B. Line (1974, 3-4) refers to an increase of 16% in the NCL's loan traffic in the last year of its independent life. In the year ended on 31 March 1973, the NCL had received 277,351 applications, of which some 40,000 had to be returned as queries or for other reasons. 235,457 had actually been dealt with. 32% of the requests had been satisfied from the NCL's own stock, a good record in view of the recency of the NCL's extended acquisitions and the scattering of requests in the humanities over a wide range of publication dates.

The weight of demand, Line claimed, was already passing from the Regions, which had suffered a decrease of 3% in the year under review, to the central sources of supply. The cumulative growth of demand on both the NCL and the NLLST in the closing stages of their separate existences was noted by D.J. Urquhart (1974, 79 - 83) in his 'Progress Report' for 1973/74, and a comparative graph appears on the following page. It should be noted, however, that the figures for 1972/73 had begun to be affected by the merger of both bookstocks.

GROWTH OF DEMAND ON NCL and NLLST, 1968-73

(Source: BLL Review 2 (3), 1974, 79-83)



In addition a total of 159,700 items had been supplied to overseas requesters through the photocopying service, compared with 103,800 in 1972 and 147,700 in 1973. The use of telex requesting at Boston Spa had increased dramatically from 9,187 in 1964 to 255,000 in 1973, \* while the year reviewed by Line had also seen a major study on the notoriously difficult problem of providing music on inter-library loan. Plans had also been made to improve international loans in availability, speed and procedures, while some 70 libraries in the United Kingdom had been identified as having significant accessions of foreign language material, and these had agreed to send catalogue records to the Lending Division; a sample of these records would be put into machine-readable form.

Bearing in mind the solid records of achievement of both the NCL and the NLLST as separate entities, there were good grounds for optimism that their combined strength at Boston Spa would prove to be so effective in operation that lower-tier schemes of cooperative provision at regional or local level would gradually be rendered unnecessary. The Regional schemes naturally felt some concern for the future of their systems, particularly those which appointed and paid the salaries of their own staff members under the direction of Regional Executive Committees. Would the newly-fledged Leviathan of the British Library declare war or choose peaceful co-existence, or more to the point, would it result in the most effective and economical method of planning inter-library lending, both at home and in the sector of international loans? In particular, what role, if any, remained for the Regional schemes to perform? These were some of the questions which called for consideration during 1972 and 1973, and which the present writer believes have been satisfactorily answered in the new pattern of improving relationships and vigorous forward planning which are features of the present-day interlending scene.

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\* BLL Review 2 (1), 1974, 20.

## CHAPTER IV : PROSPECT

By May 1972 the Bill to create the British Library had reached the Report Stage in the House of Lords, and as we have seen, the British Library Organising Committee had already started its work during the previous year. The Regional Library Systems, having served as the bedrock of the interlending structure since the 1930's, clearly felt that their future role was, to say the least, undefined, as the Bill included a firm commitment to merge the stocks of the NCL and the NLLST into one central lending unit, to "maximise" direct lending from one central source. At its meeting in London on December 10, 1971 the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation had resolved that a special session should be convened on 24 March 1972 in order to seek to arrive at a consensus of opinion which could be presented to the Lending Systems Planning Group of the Organising Committee (BLOC) as a "Regional" viewpoint.

This meeting on 24 March 1972 proved to be the first of an important series of similar discussions which sought to establish the future role of the Regional Schemes and to plot the course of whatever measure of cooperation might be agreed between the Regions and their new "senior partner", as it were, in the Lending Division of the British Library. A summary of these discussions will, therefore, help us to see more clearly the respective roles which both parties to the bargain sought to establish and will also serve as a distillation of the thoughts which were current at the time, as the prospect of an entirely new concept of library cooperation was beginning to catch the professional imagination.

#### 4.1 BLOC and the Regional Schemes

In general terms, the "Regional" view, including that of the Scottish Central Library and the Welsh Bureaux, was that future organisation would be as much a matter for the Regions as for BLOC itself, and the Regions were not at all convinced that "very substantial advantages", as BLOC argued, would be gained from concentrating direct lending from a central stock. The Regions understandably took a sceptical view of BLOC's suggestion that the Regional Schemes could be gradually abolished as a lending source and questioned the superiority which BLOC had accredited to the East Midlands/NCL Experiment already described.

The proposed transfer to Boston Spa would not bring about the end of Regional schemes of self-sufficiency, as there would still remain a need for Regional resources as a first port of call. The success rate claimed for the NLLST was based primarily on the lending of serials and on photocopying, but the success rate for book loans, the Regions claimed, was about 50% of the requests received. Receipt of new acquisitions from the USA was extremely slow, and Regional Bureau editors needed far more information on the NLLST's book-acquisition policies.

The "Regional" view was also suspicious of the finding-lists based on Standard Book Numbers which BLOC foresaw as the replacement for the traditional union catalogues at regional level. Detailed costings had not been submitted for such finding lists, nor should the British Library go ahead with computerised or SBN-based cataloguing until the experiments then being conducted at Brighton, for the BRIMARC Project, and at Birmingham for the establishment of BLCMP were completed.

Moreover, the Regions should not be denuded of the stocks

built up since 1959 under the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme, by the opening of a door for those who wished to be rid of their obligations. It was also considered important that the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation should be strengthened, because it would lose its contact with the NCL when the merger at Boston Spa was completed.

Unfortunately, there were some misconceptions in the "Regional" view which did not stand up to close scrutiny. One was that it would take BLOC from five to ten years to implement some of its proposals - a miscalculation exposed with very little delay. Equally misguided was the opposition to the SBN-based finding lists as being a costly and difficult operation. In fact, the compilation of these location tools subsequently proved to be an economical and fairly trouble-free exercise. The "Regional" view was also mistaken in its apprehension that the projected new system would entail the exclusive use of a pre-paid, valued form for all loan applications. In the event, the pre-paid form has not been forced upon Regions for their own internal, Regional applications.

The debate entered a second phase on May 9, 1972 when representatives of the Regions met the Lending Systems Planning Group itself for an exchange of opinions, and representatives of the Department of Education and Science also attended. A transcript of the proceedings \* shows that the main argument again turned on the relative merits of central and regional provision. The Regions claimed that they were basic to the whole framework of interlending, that they had in the past given great support to the NCL and would not wish to see all the catalogues, for example, moved to Boston Spa. The National Committee, it was claimed, must continue to function and there must be consultation with the Regions on the introduction of standardised loan application forms and the fixing

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\* Unpublished, private document.



of charges. The service to the users should not be allowed to deteriorate because of the dislocation expected during 1973.

As the Regions had never enjoyed enough finance for proper union catalogues, they should not be condemned on the grounds of lack of "speed and reliability". Finance for maintaining union catalogues was meagre and totally inadequate. The Regions conceded that the old ideas on union cataloguing methods were dying quickly, with the impending approach of techniques such as LASER had pioneered with SBN-based listings, data banks and Computer Output Microfilm. The Regions further claimed that an avenue of consultation between their representatives and the Organising Committee must remain open and the Regional Executive Committees must be retained.

#### 4.2 The Regions and Their Own Future

This continuing attempt to arrive at a modus vivendi between the partners in collaboration went a stage further at a special meeting convened at the NCL on November 9, 1972 to discuss the future of the Regional Library Systems. A report of the proceedings at this meeting, circulated to the Regional representatives, \* indicated that, although direct lending was likely to increase rapidly, on the basis of union finding lists in SBN-order, the general view was that Regional Library organisations would be needed for the foreseeable future. The merging of the Welsh Bureaux was anticipated and exploratory talks were reported between the Northern and the Yorkshire Regions concerning the possibilities of amalgamation.

While some standardisation throughout the systems was desirable, in certain routine matters, the Regions should still maintain their autonomy. Their needs differed, and too rigid standardisation would prevent worthwhile experiments such as that in the East Midlands.

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\* Unpublished, private document.

A number of detailed investigations should be undertaken to pin-point real needs. The experience of the NLLST had been that the scientific books most in demand were titles commonly held by libraries. It was not known whether this was true of the humanities and social sciences, and the fact that 80% of LASER's requests were for out-of-print books suggested that the problems could be different in these fields.

On purchasing policy, it was generally agreed that, if the Lending Division were to buy one copy of every new book published in Great Britain, the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme could be abandoned, and the books held by libraries under that Scheme transferred to the Division in a phased operation. The Division would be prepared to retain two copies of every title acquired. It was pointed out that the present lending services of the NLLST and the NCL were not only inadequate to supply the number of copies of English language books likely to be required, but failed altogether for a substantial proportion of titles. The acquisition policies of both institutions needed close study. If the Lending Division did adopt a policy of buying all new books, their<sup>n</sup> cataloguing for the British National Bibliography might well be based on the Lending copy rather than on the accessions into the British Museum Copyright Receipt Office. The publishers were more likely to deliver the books more promptly for payment, rather than as a deposit obligation.

Turning its attention to catalogue records for lending purposes, the meeting considered the innovations which LASER had pioneered in the conversion of its catalogues to a computer-based system and the Birmingham Libraries Cooperative Mechanisation Project (BLCMP), which could, if required, produce a union list similar to that of LASER, although its primary function would be to produce, in the first place, a computer-based full catalogue of the holdings of Aston and Birmingham University Libraries and the Birmingham Public Libraries.

The discussion on computer-based cataloguing resulted in a recommendation to the National Committee that the Regions be recommended to consider adopting the LASER system for establishing a machine-based union finding list for the interlending of books.

It was apparent that the Regions were prepared to adapt their procedures and engage in a vigorous forward-looking policy and it is encouraging to note that subsequent developments were very much along the lines of the suggestions made at the November 1972 meeting, except that there has been no formal merger between the Northern and the Yorkshire and Humberside Services. A valuable suggestion which has not yet been acted upon was the recommendation that a union catalogue, or finding list, in short-record form might be compiled of foreign language books held in certain libraries which had been identified as having significant holdings. Such a list would prove to be a helpful location tool, although it should be emphasised that academic libraries in membership of the Regional Schemes and acquiring foreign language titles do submit International Standard Book Numbers for such titles to the Regional - and consequently to the Combined - microfilm location lists.

Having made their own firm declaration of faith in their potential for the future, and seeing that future as one of collaboration rather than internecine struggle, the Regional Schemes then looked to see how national policies were to be re-directed towards the aim of extending the overall lending resource, and how new elements, in Wales and Scotland, in the legal-deposit libraries and in special "back-up" institutions were to play their part in a truly integrated, nationwide service.

Wales and Scotland

Although the Dainton Report on the national library service made no specific recommendations on library cooperation in Wales or Scotland, the important changes which occurred in both countries in the 1970's can be explained only in the light of that Report. The gratifying result, whatever the original motives might have been, has been the emergence of a much more positive role for both the National Library of Wales and the National Library of Scotland in cooperative activities.

Reference has already been made ( page 12 ) to the merging in April 1973 of the previously separate Welsh Bureaux. On 19 April 1974, the final meeting of the Executive Committee of the Scottish Central Library unanimously carried the resolution

"that from and after 1 May 1974 the functions of the Library be transferred to and amalgamated with those of the National Library of Scotland and that the whole assets of the Library, both heritable and moveable, be made over to the Trustees of the National Library of Scotland or their nominees and that the Trustees of the Scottish Central Library be, and are hereby, authorised to execute all conveyances, minutes or such other documents as may be required to effect such transfer or amalgamation." ( Of One Accord, 1977, 41-42)

In Wales, the administration of the interlending function continued to be the duty of a Regional Executive Committee, with the staff of the Bureau being drawn from the Department of Printed Books of the National Library : in Scotland, the work of the Scottish Central Library was absorbed into the Readers' Services Division of the National Library of Scotland, and to guide liaison with Scottish and other libraries, a Library Cooperation Committee - a title formerly

held by one of the Scottish Central Library's sub-committees - was established. So within twelve months of each other, both the Welsh and Scottish systems acquired gains which would consolidate their future performance as links within the chain of cooperation and also confirm their separate national identities - an important consideration in a period of political instability.

In order that the intention of the Wales Region to perform a meaningful role should be made clear, the Working Party on the Future Pattern of Interlending, set up in 1976 by the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation, had before it on February 26, 1976 a document from the Region for its consideration. \* It emphasised the heavy dependence of the Region upon the National Library as a "parent" institution, in terms of staffing, accommodation, ancillary services and a certain amount of financial aid. The original 1907 Charter of Incorporation had allowed the lending of duplicate copies of books from the Library, and adult education classes had been assisted in this way before the establishment of the county library services.

Member libraries of the Region still elect an Executive Committee annually. Subscription rates have increased only slightly since the amalgamation, and compare favourably with those levied in other Regions (See Appendix I ). During 1976-77, the highest rate of subscription paid by a university or polytechnic library was £25. In the public library sector, the subscriptions are calculated according to a formula based on population statistics and could be regarded as being perhaps too high when compared with the modest number of annual loan transactions between member libraries.

The unique situation by which the Region depends heavily

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\* Private, unpublished document.

on the "parent" makes it extremely unlikely that it would wish to consider any merger with any other Regional Scheme, while still cooperating, naturally, with the other interlending agencies. One significant factor which emerged after the formation of the Working Party on the Future Pattern of Interlending was the publication of the Government's White Paper on Devolution (Cmnd. 6348). The proposals were later embodied in the Scotland and Wales Bill of November 1976. While good reasons could be advanced for reducing the number of Regions - indeed they have been advanced frequently since the days of the McColvin Report - it nevertheless remains true that any group of libraries banding itself into a cooperative scheme should continue to enjoy the autonomy of remaining so, provided it does not conflict with the general objective of producing an efficient system.

It was the impact of the Dainton Report which prompted a number of advances in the activities of the National Library, such as an increase in photocopying facilities which are now at the disposal of the "back-up" services of the British Library Lending Division, an increase in staffing and a new awareness of the Library's obligations towards cooperation. Whatever changes might be recommended in the future pattern of the Regional Schemes, the Wales Region considers it important that these advances should not be impeded.

One corollary of the proposals for devolution has been the appearance of a strong lobby advocating another reorganisation of local government into an unspecified number of unitary authorities in which the standards of public library service would be, at the least, problematical. Consequently, any failure to meet reasonable loan requests from the stocks of the Region's own libraries could only lead to the transfer of a heavier burden than at present on to the central source at the Lending Division and on to the other Regional Schemes.

Taking a broader perspective, the Wales Region also suggested to the Working Party that another desirable course would be the raising of central funding to convert the union catalogues of all the other Regions except LASER into saleable microform to cover the period from 1950 to 1973. A national policy for the union cataloguing and lending of audio-visual resources also needs urgent attention, including regulations for cassette lending and television video-tapes produced for commercial use. Indeed, attention needs to be devoted to the numerous problems which arise when we leave the day-to-day routine of lending monographs and photocopying serial articles. How many universities, for example, will lend microforms of material from private, deposited collections?

The reorganisation of local government in Scotland in May 1975 reduced the former total of 71 public library authorities to 40. One former county library area is now covered by seven new districts, each being allocated a proportion of the old county bookstock. Plans were therefore made to deal with the considerable work involved in the relocation of stocks as against the records shown in the Scottish Union Catalogue. Reorganisation also meant that many functions were centralised on library headquarters. Book stocks were critically reviewed because of storage difficulties and the National Library of Scotland Lending Services undertook to store further collections of "last copies", together with the allocations under the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme which cooperating libraries wished to have retained in Scotland, but re-housed.

and  
The Scotland/Wales Bill of November 1976 proposed that a Scottish Assembly, if and when established, would be able to make laws amending or repealing Acts of Parliament within the area of its legislative competence as defined in the Bill. This could at some future

date result in legislation for Scotland on library matters, including lending policies, not in accord with the nature of the legislation for the remainder of the United Kingdom and perhaps materially affecting the relationship between the NLS Lending Services and the other interloan agencies. Provision was also to be made for the exercise by the Welsh Assembly of prerogative and other executive powers of the Crown and of Ministers, but the making of legislation by the Welsh Assembly was to be limited to that of subordinate legislation only.

Schedules 6 and 7 of the Bill defined the "subject groups" of devolved matters in Scotland and Wales upon which the respective Assemblies would, or would not, have power to legislate or to act. Matters upon which the Scottish Assembly could legislate and the Scottish Executive could act included libraries, but not universities or grants to universities, again allowing the possibility of a strange dichotomy in which the financial support for an interlending scheme containing both public and university libraries could find itself at the mercy of two different sets of masters and comptrollers.

The Welsh "devolved matters" included local authority libraries among the "Education" group of subjects involving the exercise of statutory powers, together with the Public Libraries and Museums Act of 1964. Again, the control of universities, and by implication of their libraries, is not to be devolved to the Welsh Assembly and it is to be hoped that fluctuating policies or financial restrictions in the future will not endanger the harmonious cooperation which now exists between academic and non-academic members of the Wales Region. One possible consequence of the devolution of library powers to the Welsh Assembly might be a more dynamic approach to the library adviser's function in Wales, by the establishment of such a post at the



Welsh Education Office. A similar appointment has already been made in Scotland.

Both the Welsh and Scottish services have acquisition policies, concentrating respectively on Welsh and Anglo-Welsh literature and Scottish and Scottish-related literature to ensure that loans can be made freely without recourse to legal-deposit stocks. The National Library of Scotland Lending Services also maintain the Scottish Books Exchange - an annual listing of books of Scottish interest notified by contributing libraries for disposal. The Scottish Union Catalogue of Music, originally incorporated in the Scottish Union Catalogue, is now separately maintained by the Music Section of the Department of Printed Books. In addition, the Union Catalogue of Art Books in Edinburgh libraries, the Scottish Fiction Reserve and the Scottish Gaelic Union Catalogue provide further testimony to the comprehensive effort being made in Scotland to catalogue the Region's resources effectively.

### The legal-deposit libraries

The legal-deposit function of the so-called "copyright" libraries of the United Kingdom and Ireland has, by definition and tradition, always been of a custodial nature. Apart from internal arrangements at those university libraries which also enjoy the privilege of legal-deposit, lending to other libraries or to individuals has not usually been permitted. Indeed, the whole concept of legal-deposit argues for the retention in the library of the deposited copy for consultation by visiting readers.

Accordingly, it was a historic departure from tradition when representatives of the legal-deposit and other related libraries were invited to attend a meeting at the NCL on October 30, 1972 to discuss what role these libraries, apart from the British Museum Library, might have in the future pattern of interlending.

This preliminary discussion took place, of course, before the merger of the NCL and the NLLST, but in the light of the changes proposed by the British Library Act of 1972. The libraries represented at the meeting comprised the Bodleian Library, Oxford and the Taylor Institution, Cambridge University Library, the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, the NCL and the NLLST. The discussions, of which a summary is available, \* ranged widely over general questions of cost, lending procedures and possible payment for services, but no firm decisions were made. Cambridge University Library, however, did agree to take part in a monitored experiment with the NCL for a period of three months, as a

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\* Private, unpublished document in the National Library of Wales.

"back-up" to the NCL's service, and in the light of this experiment further discussions would take place in order to formulate a draft contract between the legal-deposit libraries and the new British Library.

The main indications of the type of lending functions involved were as follows :-

- (i) With the exception of the British Museum Library, it was considered that all the copyright libraries would lend out-of-print books as a last resort, after the British Library Lending stock and the union catalogues had been tried, and that they would lend only for use in the borrowing library:
- (ii) it was considered desirable that requests should be routed as far as possible through the British Library, to enable the system to be monitored and controlled:
- (iii) as Trinity College, Dublin had a primary responsibility to Irish libraries, its lending function would be used, on behalf of libraries in Great Britain, only for Irish items and items unobtainable in the other libraries:
- (iv) the total annual demand upon the legal-deposit libraries might be between 15,000 and 20,000 items: it would not be evenly distributed, as the Bodleian Library and Cambridge University Library were known to be able to satisfy a much larger number of requests:
- (v) the number of serials which libraries might be asked to provide could be very large, causing some practical problems. If a British Library serials list was constructed in machine-readable form, this could be augmented by the holdings of "designated libraries", including the copyright libraries:
- (vi) without some knowledge of what the libraries held, time and effort could be wasted at all parts of the system. Most of the libraries had already considered the possibility of microfilming

their catalogues, with a sharing of the costs between them and the British Library:

- (vii) the favoured lending procedure was by the use of a British Library form (the Lending Division not yet being officially in existence), and by this form the libraries would be approached to ascertain their willingness to lend. The use of such a form would also provide a method of financial reimbursement:
- (viii) some payment, over and above the value of a BL form, seemed desirable, if not absolutely necessary. The National Libraries of Scotland and Wales saw it as part of their function to give service without further payment; since they were directly supported by central government funds, they might be differently placed from the university libraries, which in any case would have to carry a heavier burden of lending.

A further step in these arrangements was taken on November 23, 1973 at a meeting held at Boston Spa to seek agreement on policies and practices which would, preferably, be common to the legal-deposit libraries with the exception of the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, whose role in the scheme had not then been determined. The proposals circulated by the Director General of the Lending Division for consideration at that meeting \* show that a revolutionary development was in the offing, and a development which the legal-deposit libraries themselves might view with certain misgivings. It was, indeed, the first indication that the "copyright" libraries were to be drawn into the national interlending network at a level hitherto unforeseen.

On January 1, 1974, or as soon as possible thereafter, the

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\* Unpublished, private document.

legal-deposit libraries should accept from the Lending Division (if necessary, only from the Division) interloan requests which could not readily, or so easily, be satisfied from elsewhere. The initial levels of loans requested were set at about 3,000 each per annum for the National Library of Wales and of Scotland, and 15,000 each for the Bodleian Library and for Cambridge University Library. The type of library requesting the loan should have no bearing upon the decision whether or not to allow the loan, and British books should also be lent abroad under appropriate safeguards.

On the basis of the British Union Catalogue of Periodicals and the printed lists of serials of each library, the Bodleian and Cambridge would be asked to supply annually an estimated number of 4,000 serials each. Of requests for British monographs published before 1900, the Bodleian and Cambridge would be asked to meet between 2,500 and 3,000 requests each, while the same number of post-1900 monographs would be handled by the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales. An estimated maximum number of requests for foreign-language monographs, about 11,500 to each library, would be sent to the Bodleian and to Cambridge. Requests for official publications would be routed first to Scotland and Wales and then to the Bodleian and Cambridge. If possible, relevant parts of library catalogues would be copied, as a source for locating loan copies, but so far as the National Library of Wales is concerned, little progress has yet been achieved in this matter. Nor has the projected level of loan traffic likely to be requested from the National Library of Wales yet approached the forecast.

The November 1973 proposals were to some extent based on the findings of an experiment at Cambridge between January and April of that year, when requests were sent to Cambridge University Library for serials not held at Boston Spa and for other categories, mainly monographs, not in

stock and not recorded in the NCL's union catalogues. In addition, a sample of monograph requests was checked against the catalogues at the Bodleian Library and of serial requests against BUCOP.

A sample of serial requests not in the stock of the Lending Division was checked in BUCOP and locations found in the British Museum Library, the Natural History Museum Library, the Bodleian and Cambridge. The sample, taken at the NCL in January 1973, somewhat under-represented science and technology, although it included requests which had been to the NLLST without success. The libraries between them held 74% of the items checked; the British Museum held 52%, the Bodleian 45% and Cambridge 37%. The British Museum had 11% of unique titles, the Bodleian 7% and Cambridge and the Natural History Museum 3% each.

During the period of the experiment, Cambridge could not supply 37% of the requested items, 17% because the item was not held in stock and the remaining 20% because of a variety of administrative reasons. 5% of the failures resulted from the requested item being in use at the time - an argument which seems to support photocopying as against lending, thus reducing to the minimum the amount of time the publication is absent from the shelves. The total number of requests could be reduced greatly if the legal-deposit libraries were used after other locations given in BUCOP. The purpose of using Cambridge and the Bodleian would be not merely to supply items not otherwise obtainable, but to achieve a faster supply of items without additional effort on the part of the requesting libraries.

During the same experimental period, the NCL sent requests to Cambridge for British monographs not satisfied from other sources. Theoretically, a copy of any British monograph should be in one or more of the "copyright" libraries, although it would be a fallacy to believe that

no publication ever escapes the collecting nets of the six libraries. Again, the British Museum Library was not included in the proposals, as it will not in any case lend British books. The legal-deposit stocks of Cambridge and the Bodleian naturally have a greater retrospective coverage than those of Wales, Scotland and Trinity College, Dublin.

Well over half the requests during the survey were for humanities titles and more than a quarter were social science subject-matter. 43% were published between 1800 and 1899 and 35% between 1900 and 1939. About 59% of requested items were in stock, but only 44% were supplied, the remaining 15% comprising

6% which were loanable only to a University,

4% which Cambridge declined to lend,

2% which were in use,

and 3% which were unavailable for other reasons.

The items not in stock, 41% of the requests, were almost by definition relatively rare books, but it was expected that a reasonable number of them should be in one or other of the remaining legal-deposit libraries.

One disturbing feature of these results was the 6% of requests which Cambridge would lend to a university, but not to the public libraries from which the requests originated, thus giving the lie to the theory that any book located in any other library should be available for consultation by any reader or requester. At the same time, the basic right of a librarian to retain absolute discretion as to whether a loan should, or should not, be permitted was emphasised by the representative<sup>s</sup> at the November 1973 meeting, and this discretion is also preserved by the constitutions of some of the Regional Schemes.

The importance of the new role to be adopted by the legal-

deposit libraries deserves to be emphasised. The IFLA Committee on International Lending had already approved the principle that every country should be responsible for providing loan access to its native publications, \* and without the "back-up" facilities of the copyright stocks, the Lending Division could not hope to guarantee such access to all British monographs. Moreover, the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme, which aimed at, but never fully achieved, total coverage of all British non-fiction titles listed in BNB was to be terminated at the end of 1973, by an agreement reached at the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation (Minute no. 572, 1973). The decision to abandon the Coverage Scheme was prompted by the Lending Division's commitment to provide access to at least one loanable copy of British books published from January 1974, excepting fiction and items in print costing less than £1.25.

Sources of supply in United Kingdom libraries for non-British monographs clearly presented more difficult problems. If requests for all non-British monographs not otherwise satisfied in the United Kingdom were sent to the "copyright" libraries, these would between them receive some 14,000 United States and 11,500 other foreign items a year, but the Cambridge experiment and the check against the Bodleian catalogues indicated that both libraries together would be able to supply about 30% of the requests. This apparently low percentage has to be set against the alternative of international loan, which is expensive, usually slow and often uncertain. Again, the particular strengths of the various libraries in foreign monographs are regulated by the purchasing policies of the institutions themselves. The National Library of Wales, for example, would expect to score a relatively high standard

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\* A principle further reinforced by the Western European Seminar on Inter-Library Lending jointly promoted at Banbury, March 1973 by The Library Association, SCONUL and The British Council.



of supply in foreign language monographs which related to Celtic, Romance or Classical disciplines, while its satisfaction rate in meeting requests for foreign-language scientific and technological texts would be low.

The proposals circulated by the Lending Division to the five legal-deposit libraries also emphasised the need to improve access to foreign books in British libraries, by filming, for example, catalogues of libraries not represented in the BLLD's union catalogues and by an arrangement which was already in operation with the London Library. Accurate screening of requests, with a consequent increase in the rate of success, could be made only if the existing catalogues of the libraries were made available to the BLLD. However, the reproduction, or conversion into convenient microform, of such substantial catalogues, in some cases in more than one sequence or format, would present insurmountable problems. Moreover, long and expensive microfilming projects could hardly be justified if the net return would be the duplication, over a wide range of British publishers' output, of the catalogue records of five similar libraries.

Suggested routine procedures to be adopted in the day-to-day handling of requests were also outlined at the November 1973 meeting, but need not be enumerated here. Costings undertaken during the three-month Cambridge experiment, covering personnel, telex usage, xerographic copying and postage had shown a sum of 40.5 pence per satisfied request, and the Lending Division suggested that a reasonable payment to the legal-deposit libraries could be 50 pence per satisfied request and 5 pence for the work done on unsatisfied requests. During the subsequent development of the "back-up" service, these original modest sums have been increased to a level more commensurate with the true costs undertaken by the libraries in meeting such requests.

So were the foundations laid for the first direct involvement

of the legal-deposit libraries, except the British Museum Library, or rather the Reference Division of the British Library, in an inter-related national lending service. The immediate impact of the agreement at the National Library of Wales, at least, was a significant and sudden increase in the number of serial requests received via the BLLD and satisfied by photocopy. This added responsibility in turn enhanced the status and role of the Library's own photoprinting services, resulting in the purchase of additional machines and equipment. Indeed, the growing involvement of the legal-deposit libraries in the national loan system can be seen as one of the major innovations of the British Library, and undoubtedly the acid test of the true power of persuasiveness of the Lending Division will be the outcome of the discussions currently taking place (early 1978) in an attempt to bring about lending from the monograph stocks of the Reference Division itself.

#### 4.5 Extending The Resource : The "Back-Up" Libraries

We have already seen how, in its formative years, the National Central Library bolstered its rate of satisfying loan applications by calling upon the resources of a number of "outlier" libraries, which exploited their own stocks to meet demands which the central loan collection could not satisfy. Because of the accidents of past history and the incompleteness of coverage in acquisitions at the national level of lending stocks, it is unlikely that the British Library Lending Division will ever be able - and indeed the Division would not be so foolhardy as to claim - to meet all demands made upon it without the assistance of other substantial subject collections. Indeed, the experiment conducted jointly in 1976 by the Lending Division and the West Midlands Regional Library Bureau proved conclusively that there are still subject areas in which the Division's rate of response is quite disappointing, and this matter will be examined later in this study.

In early 1974, several major British libraries began to act as "back-up" sources to the Lending Division and by October 1977, more than 200,000 inter-library loan requests had been satisfied by the back-up libraries, which receive payment on a special scale from the Lending Division for the work undertaken. Excepting the Reference Division of the British Library, the other legal-deposit libraries take part in the service, as do five of the major subject libraries at Oxford, the Royal Society of Medicine Library, the British Museum Natural History Library, the Science Museum and the London Library. In order to meet specific requests in clearly-defined fields, the back-up libraries also include the Westminster Central Music Library, the British Library of Political and Economic Science and the Library of SOAS, the London

University School of Oriental and African Studies.

Although the Reference Division of the British Library will not make direct loans to outside requesters, it does provide a back-up service to the Lending Division : the Department of Printed Books will supply photocopies of serial articles, the Science Reference Library will lend Japanese scientific monographs and will photocopy serial articles, the Colindale Newspaper Library will supply photocopied newspaper articles, and loans and photocopies can be supplied from the Library Association Library.

Certain principles have been agreed between the Lending Division and the back-up libraries as guidelines for the efficient operation of the service, in the expectation that the participating libraries will, hopefully, be able to offer a service of equal speed and efficiency as that of the Division itself. Back-up libraries try to return unsatisfied requests within a day of receiving them, and to despatch loans and photocopies within three days of receiving the forms. The payments agreed for the service have been calculated to cover the costs of staff, materials (i.e. for photocopying and packaging) and postages, but not for accommodation or depreciation of stock. Payments are made only for handling requests which the Lending Division has been unable to satisfy itself, except in certain agreed cases.

Although back-up libraries do satisfy requests whenever possible, there is no over-riding obligation either to lend or to photocopy anything in their stocks. They are free to stipulate general restrictions on lending policy, including allowing loans for use in libraries only, excluding home reading and the lending of early printed books of antiquarian value or rarity. The legal-deposit libraries, understandably, exercise great caution and would probably all decline to meet a request to send - as a recent incident testified - an extremely

expensive Roxburghe Club publication to a library in Japan. Safeguards against abuse of the system cannot, of course, be completely foolproof, but borrowing libraries which cause breaches of the rules laid down by the lenders do run the risk of falling foul of the Lending Division, as the back-up libraries are asked to report such breaches to the Division itself.

Most requests for serial articles are sent to back-up libraries on the basis of positive evidence that the serial part in question is held, the evidence being confirmed by the World List of Scientific Periodicals, BUCOP and the published lists of some of the libraries. With the exception of the Reference Division's Department of Printed Books, the back-up libraries have agreed to accept requests from the Lending Division on a speculative basis, but the experience of the National Library of Wales has certainly been that a very high percentage of such speculative approaches turn out to be failures.

In an otherwise meticulously planned system, the Lending Division's attitude to bibliographical verification causes some puzzlement. The Division in general sends requests to back-up libraries for only those items whose existence has been verified, either by means of an entry in the Division's own records, or by confirmation from a published bibliography, or by the requester having provided a photocopy of his source of reference. The scale of payments for back-up services does not include an element for bibliographical checking and libraries are enjoined not to spend time on such checking if this will in any way delay the progress of the request.

The Lending Division considers that it is the responsibility of (a) the applying library and (b) the Division itself to ensure that requests are bibliographically adequate. If a back-up library is not able to locate the item in its own stock and believes the details are

incorrect, the request should be returned to Boston Spa. If it subsequently comes about that the item was in the stock of the back-up library but was not found because of inadequate description, the Lending Division quite illogically wishes to take the blame for the failure upon its own shoulders, not upon the back-up library. Surely it is a matter of professional self-respect that the back-up libraries will invariably wish to do as much bibliographical verification as possible within its own resources of staff and reference tools, if a request is to be properly handled, and quite irrespective of whether payment is being offered for the checking or not.

Among the back-up libraries are three which themselves maintain union catalogues - the National Libraries of Wales and Scotland and the Library of SOAS; from these libraries request forms may be passed to the holding library, or locations of loan copies may be provided, for requests originating in the United Kingdom. Requests originating overseas, of which many find their way to the back-up libraries, are satisfied either by loan or by the supply of a photocopy or microforms for retention.

The return of unsatisfied request forms to the Lending Division in itself acts as a monitoring device to check the efficacy of the system, and in addition annual returns are made of the total number of requests received and the total percentage satisfied by each back-up library. The flow of requests directed to each participating library is, of course, geared to the known strength of that library in monographs of a specialised nature, in particular language holdings, such as in the National Library of Wales and the SOAS Library, and in the very wide coverage of earlier printed books in both Cambridge and Oxford. The percentage of requests satisfied by the National Library of Wales in the back-up service for 1977-78 was approximately 50%, but this seemingly disappointing achievement was affected by the failure to

supply a large number of ill-defined and bibliographically "inadequate" items of a speculative nature.

Despite certain obvious difficulties, such as the reluctance of libraries to lend material of rare and irreplaceable value, and gaps in holdings resulting from sheer carelessness or - in the case of the legal-deposit libraries - the sheer obstinacy of certain publishing houses - the back-up service is an essential component in the exploitation of the total national resource, and its success since 1974 has brought about a substantial improvement in the effectiveness of the interlending system of the United Kingdom. There still remains, however, the one obstacle to the complete consummation of the total system - namely the exclusion of the Reference Division's own Department of Printed Books at the Bloomsbury, London site from the overall network of back-up lending libraries. Should this obstacle ever be overcome, this would certainly rank among the major achievements of the British Library, its Board and its Advisory Councils.

## 4.6 Resources At The Centre

### 4.6.1 BLLD's Acquisitions Policy

The nature of the acquisitions policy of the British Library Lending Division is a crucial factor in any discussion about the relative merits of national and local cooperative provision, and it will be remembered that a clear statement of BLLD's intentions in this matter was one of the desirable features suggested by the November 1972 meeting at which representatives of the Regional Schemes contemplated their own future (See 4.2). Such a statement was issued in July 1974 by the Director-General of the Division, Maurice Line, to the Association of Librarians in Charge of Regional Library Bureaux and noted that the Division endeavoured to acquire :-

- (i) all significant serials in all languages and subjects:
- (ii) all significant English language monographs, wherever published.  
Coverage of this category from January 1972 was comprehensive, good but not comprehensive for the period from 1960 - 1972 and selective before 1960:
- (iii) all classified report literature from all countries:
- (iv) East European monographs in science and technology:
- (v) A few selected categories of other foreign language monographs:
- (vi) British official publications:
- (vii) Selected music scores, mainly definitive collected editions, but wider coverage was being considered.

In addition, items for which loan requests were received and which were not available in the stock of the Division or elsewhere in the United Kingdom were being purchased, if in print and within the scope of the acquisitions policy. For post-1968 items requested but not in BLLD stock, purchases were made even if locations were



available in other United Kingdom libraries.

The categories of materials not being acquired under the July 1974 policy were very similar to those operated for many years by the Regional Schemes, and cause no great surprise, except perhaps for the inclusion in these categories of the so-called "lower-level" adult non-fiction books, the adjective being left undefined. Indeed, the Director-General would offer no definition of what it meant by "lower-level" material, as his predecessor Dr. Urquhart would similarly not define "worth-while" purchases for the NLLST. Audio-visual resource material was also excluded, and in the event of a future decision to purchase and lend such items, the Division will find itself involved in a costly retrospective purchasing exercise.

The same document \* suggested that, because of the Division's comprehensive coverage of serials, it was doubtful whether BUCOP would need to be maintained as a lending channel; its function as a bibliographical record was an entirely different matter. The development of a national data base of bibliographic records of serials, in machine-readable form and based upon ISSN (International Standard Serial Numbers) would be a matter for the Bibliographic Services Division of the British Library. Plans for the eventual successor to BUCOP were outlined in the July 1978 issue (no. 31) of the British Library News.

The Division would no longer need to be informed of accessions of post-1972 items acquired by other libraries and a selection of participating libraries would now notify their entries for pre-1973 titles acquired for stock. Additions to stock of foreign-language monographs would continue to be notified by a selection of university and large public libraries which had taken part in a two-stage selection

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\* Privately circulated to the Association of Editors, RLBx.

process, and the number of libraries notifying accessions in this way was expected to number about 60.

There were to be changes also in the acquisition of music scores for the Division, the intention of the July 1974 document being to extend purchasing to cover all significant currently published individual scores, as opposed to orchestral and chamber parts, and sets of choral and vocal works. The existing union list of music would be improved by the addition of records from selected libraries.

Interlending schemes, at national or regional level, should not be used to thwart the legitimate desires of music publishers to sell multiple copies of their publications for performance, and strong criticism of this practice has already been voiced within the area, but not within the jurisdiction, of the Wales Regional Library Scheme. Many of the difficulties in the provision of music have arisen because there are substantial collections of music in a relatively small number of libraries which have not been notified to the Regional union catalogues. Music, again, forms a specific category of publications where resistance to loan applications is pronounced and where the final decision on lending must remain with the holding library.

The difficulties which do arise in the provision of sets of orchestral parts and sets of choral scores had already been emphasised at a joint conference in April 1972, convened by the United Kingdom branch of IAMUL (the International Association of Music Libraries) and, (as it was then called) the Sound Recordings Group of the Library Association. There followed in October 1972 an open meeting of library representatives, officers or representatives of the RLBx and of what was to become the British Library. From the Working Party set up by this meeting came a suggestion that, for orchestral material, a national

union catalogue was feasible, and would be valuable not only in the area of well-known and popular titles, but in lesser known material which might be requested for very occasional demand. All libraries known to have holdings of orchestral music should be asked whether they would contribute to this catalogue and on what terms they might consider applications for loans.

A research assistant for this project, Sheila Cotton, was appointed by the Polytechnic of North London to work from January 1975 and 186 public, university and college libraries were asked to submit details of their holdings of orchestral music. The large majority of those invited did agree to take part, as did some professional orchestras. Meanwhile, during 1974 the Director-General of the Lending Division had indicated that assistance could be granted for such a project as a supplement to the Division's service in music provision. Although the Division was making certain provision in music, it could not consider the acquisition of orchestral sets and parts, but could provide assistance with finance for the production of a union catalogue, which could be subsequently updated.

The report submitted by the United Kingdom branch of IAMUL to the Library Association's own Annual Report for the year ending on December 31, 1976 stated that progress in recording the holdings of orchestral parts in public libraries had been good: the projected union catalogue was nearing completion and it was hoped to publish it during 1977. This would indeed reduce the dependence of the Regional Bureau editors on subscription agencies for the provision of music on loan, and add another most desperately needed tool to their armoury of union lists.

Before leaving the statement of the Lending Division's

acquisitions policy, we may note briefly the range of monograph records which was being planned by the Division in 1974, to comprise

- (i) an author-title list of pre-1972 English-language and pre-1974 foreign-language monographs, including items in the Division's own stock and items notified by other libraries:
- (ii) an author-title list of post-1973 foreign-language monographs, to be maintained in microform for the use of BLLD only:
- (iii) an author-title list of English-language post-1974 items added to BLLD stock, serving also as an index to the Regions' ISBN files:
- (iv) author-title records of Cyrillic items in science and technology and of Slavonic items in the humanities and social sciences:
- (v) a single combined file of the Regional ISBN lists, updated periodically but restricted to a maximum of ten library locations spread throughout the whole of the Regional network, but not being made available to individual libraries.

This latter combined listing came into circulation first in January 1977, providing the Bureaux with their first ever direct access to an overall national finding and location record, and confirming the technological value of micro-miniaturisation in making the union listings of other Regions conveniently, and selectively, accessible each to the other - a revolutionary departure from the elephantine card catalogue cabinets of NCL days.

#### 4.6.2 The End of Self-Sufficiency? Terminating the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme

Earlier in this study, at Section 3.3, an account was given of the establishment, the procedures and some of the imperfections of the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme, by which the Regions, from 1959 to 1973, attempted to achieve complete self-sufficiency, on a national basis, for loans of British non-fiction.

The Scheme was so ambitious and far-reaching that its comparatively early demise in 1973 requires some explanation. S.P.L. Filon (1977, 90) has claimed that the existence of the Scheme in some ways stunted the potential growth of the NCL by robbing it of a great deal of traffic in current British books and placing it at a disadvantage when compared with the rate of effectiveness of the NLLST, where such exclusions were not applied. Why, then, in Filon's own words, was the Scheme "finally dispensed with rather unceremoniously in 1973"?

The answer was provided by Stuart J. Ede (1975, 3-6) and had to do with the establishment within the British Library Lending Division of a comprehensive loan collection of all "worthwhile" English-language monographs published after 1971. In the hope that the great majority of British books requested would fall within the Division's fairly generous definition of "worthwhile", to have continued with the Subject Coverage Scheme would have resulted in considerable duplication of effort. This would become even more pronounced when the Lending Division had concluded agreements with the legal-deposit libraries to offer a "back-up" service if only for out-of-print books. With the approval of the British Library Organising Committee, an assurance was given on behalf of BLLD that loan access would be provided to all British

non-fiction monographs published after 1973, excluding items in print costing less than £1.25.

Incidentally, it should be noted in passing that the undertaking given was "to provide loan access", through the Lending Division, and not, as is sometimes falsely alleged, to undertake to purchase a copy of every individual monograph issued for sale or distribution.

While the likely increase in monograph demand upon the Lending Division was not expected to exceed 1%, there existed one potential problem area, namely current popular non-fiction, or "non-worthwhile" material costing £1.25 or more, which would not be purchased by the Division, and because it was still in print would neither be supplied by the legal-deposit "back-up" libraries. In order to establish whether this category of material would indeed pose problems, a survey was made of Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme requests which had post-1971 imprints, and three Regions - LASER, the East Midlands and the Northern RLB - took part in the analysis.

Without repeating the details already provided by S.J. Ede it is evident that the most significant conclusions were

- (i) that for a subset of requests for books carrying 1972-73 imprints, 79% were satisfiable from Lending Division stock, and
- (ii) after certain allowances had been made for overlapping requests and items in those Dewey classes for which LASER itself was the specialising Region, there remained an unsatisfied residue of 13% of the total requests scrutinised.

The success rate at stock, 79%, was noticeably lower than the rate achieved by the Lending Division for current "worthwhile" English-language monographs, namely 89%. Such conclusions, however, must

appear arbitrary and suspect until precise definitions are made of emotive and subjective terms such as "worthwhile" and "non-worthwhile".

An additional element in the survey was an assessment of the proportion of requests found to be out of print each year, as checked against British Books in Print. Not unexpectedly, as the imprint date moved further away from 1973, so did the proportion of out-of-print titles increase. For items less than two years old, the proportion was very low, but a sudden increase from 3% to 39% was noted for items between two and three years old, with a further jump from approximately 50% to 80% in the seven-to nine-year-old range.

Reliance on the contribution of the legal-deposit libraries for the older, out-of-print items was expected to add another 7% to the success rate, bringing the total to 94%, comparing favourably with the 93% achieved by the Subject Coverage Scheme. However, the important factor, as Ede claimed, was not so much the success rate alone, but the fact that a similar level of service could be maintained, while saving considerably on duplicated effort, both financial and administrative, in the Regions.

It is surprising to find that, despite the intricate planning of this sampling survey, the requests for books with 1972-73 imprints which were actually surveyed numbered only 211. This would indeed have been flimsy evidence upon which to base a decision to abandon the Scheme, had it not been for the other occasions on which members of the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation had expressed their concern and misgivings about the effectiveness of national coverage. Examples have already been quoted (see Section 3.3) of libraries within the Wales Region alone which found themselves heavily burdened with expenditure on the Scheme, and with hindsight it is easy to castigate the

Scheme for being so open-ended in its commitment as to be unrealistic and misconceived.

There is no evidence, in the view of the present writer, to suggest that the Scheme was designed as a "Regional" counter-blast to the early development of the NLLST, and if blame is to be apportioned at all for the creation of the national Coverage Scheme, it must be to the Vollans Report's recommendation that the Regional Schemes should become wholly self-sufficient, from an agreed date, in meeting requests for current, British non-fiction monographs. As the output of BNB-recorded items continued to increase, the maintenance of the Scheme imposed on the participating libraries an excessive burden of local expenditure on book purchases for a purpose which was more properly a national concern.

Accordingly, when the Lending Division indicated that the "last resort" and specialist purposes of the Scheme could henceforth be met either by centralised purchase or by an assurance of loan access, the National Committee formally agreed \* that the Scheme should be abandoned with effect from 31st December 1973. The decision did not prevent libraries which had already built substantial collections in their allocated specialisms from continuing to purchase, if they so wished, and these collections will continue to be exploited well into the foreseeable future, in order to meet inter-Regional loan requests.

While any reduction in wasteful duplication must be applauded, this vital decision could be interpreted as yet another reduction in the scope of "regionalisation", with a localised, area function in which some pride had been taken being now disbanded in favour of the appeal of the one central source. Many of the participating libraries, on the other hand, were surely glad to be relieved of this continuing undertaking

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\* Minute nos. 561(b), 566(c) and 572.



but must have been puzzled to see their efforts at lightening the load of one central agency, the NCL, now being readily assumed by another central agency, the BLLD.

It is equally idle to speculate whether or not the National Committee, in agreeing to abandon the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme, saw an opportunity of transferring an element of cost from local, regional shoulders to those of central government, perhaps as a prelude to a later appeal for the whole cost of inter-library lending services to be borne centrally. However that may be, it will be opportune, and less speculative, to consider in the next chapter, exactly how the central source, in the British Library Lending Division, visualised its own future role.

#### 4.6.3 BLLD's Own View of the Future

It is always dangerous to ascribe a collectivist view or opinion to any organisation or institution, since the "views" of the British Library Lending Division can only be gleaned from the public pronouncements of its senior staff, and particularly of its Director-General, Maurice B. Line. Fortunately, the Division is well aware of the value of good public relations and of effective communication and its staff at senior or middle management level take full advantage of their attendance at conferences, seminars and committees to acquaint the interlending world, and the library profession in general, with their views.

It is proposed, therefore, at this point to examine two statements by the Director-General which together offer a "scenario" of the ways in which the future of the Division, and of the national interloan system, might well develop.

Addressing the 48th ASLIB Annual Conference at Cambridge in September 1974, Maurice Line said (1975, 8-15): "At the present, the BLLD is the only source of inter-library loans for many items, the main source for most, and a possible source, direct or indirect, for all . . . We must expect continued growth, of demand, stock, staff and buildings. It is probable that we have already taken a good deal of demand off direct lending, and some off the regions. This process may or may not continue; the important thing is not that we should monopolize all demand, but that the country's libraries should receive the best possible service, in whatever way it is provided."

The very existence of the Lending Division, it was argued, should not be advanced as a reason, or an excuse, for starving other

libraries of their fair share of available funds. The Division's services had been developed and improved because other libraries had found their own resources becoming increasingly inadequate to meet growing needs. The denial of any ambition to control interlending in its entirety must have allayed the fears expressed from time to time by those who suspect over-concentration of power and financial backing at Boston Spa. Others, who still believe that the concept of "regionalisation" has something to offer, would have been pleased by the Director's observation that the Lending Division was always a supportive system, never an alternative to adequate local provision.

With the passage of time, some of the items which were forecast for the future have already come into being, such as the Combined ISBN Locations List issued to Regional headquarters, the arrangements with the legal-deposit libraries, with the Reference Division of the British Library for the photocopying of older serials, and the growth in the accessions of printed music by the acquisition of individual scores. Detailed planning, in conjunction with the Research and Development Department of the British Library, has also been undertaken on the forecast transport scheme for the carriage of inter-library loans. The threat of the imposition of more restrictive copyright regulations, referred to by Line in his Cambridge address, came a step nearer with the publication in 1977 of the Whitford Committee's Report on Copyright and Designs Law, and the very real concern felt at the Division about this potentially damaging development has already been made clear.

The desire to achieve the best possible service in the United Kingdom, in terms of cost, speed of supply, convenience and satisfaction level was the keynote of another statement \* which the

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\* Document dated 29 December 1975, circulated to the National Committee's Working Party.

Director-General laid before the National Committee's Working Party on the Future Pattern of Interlending. While the substantial central government funds invested in the Lending Division argued for utilising its stock to the maximum, there were still categories of publications where the Division could never provide a national service entirely from its own resources. These categories, however, could be handled equally as well by a national cooperative scheme as by the Regions. Excepting LASER, the Regional Schemes showed no evidence of increasing loan demand, while requests to the Lending Division were expected to show increases of between 200,000 and 250,000 annually. One essential requirement was more precise data on the number of requests which by-passed both the Regions and the BLLD. Was it true, for example, that the post-1974 public library authorities were more self-sufficient in bookstocks and depended less on the Regional Schemes?

On the basis of the National Libraries ADP Feasibility Study, Line claimed that, in the matter of the relative costings of the different inter-loan systems, a centralised service, such as that operated by BLLD, was cheaper in total national terms than forging links between libraries by means of union catalogues. Comparisons of levels of satisfaction of loan requests gave the Division a definite advantage in the provision of journal articles, report literature and conference proceedings, but for the supply of monographs, additional sources would always be required. It would never be possible for BLLD to acquire pre-1970 items on a comprehensive basis.

After comparing the relative speeds of supply in the national and regional systems and noting other factors which might affect the future levels of demand, the document concluded that the best pattern would appear to be a mixed system of local and national sources of supply. The local systems would be based on the 'extended conurbation',

the large cities which contained the great majority of libraries and users. Local union lists would provide access to journals, and for other materials, the options would be "intelligent speculation", the requesting from BLLD of local locations, or some form of successor to the Regional ISBN Lists which would note the holdings of public libraries.

The Regions, with one exception, appeared to be too large to arrange a "same-day" service easily and too small to be able to provide the access to resources which was offered by or through the Lending Division. If they had a continuing role as Regions, then that role needed to be more precisely defined.

In general terms it is difficult to find fault with this objective assessment, except to complain that "intelligent speculation" is not often effective as a method of locating loanable copies, and that some of the new listings in order to provide journal access, unless such union lists were already available, could result in delay and expenditure which the "local" systems could ill afford. The placing of a question mark against the future of the Regions at least caused the Working Party to define areas of library cooperation other than interlending and union cataloguing which were appropriate tasks for the current Regional Schemes (See Appendix XV).

The admission readily made that the Division, through no fault of its own, cannot meet all categories of requests poses important questions for the future of the total interlending system. As its role is supportive, and not all-consuming, this logically entails the continued availability of other sources of supply. In the unhappy event of economic pressures forcing the collapse of one or more, or even all, of the existing Regional Schemes, the extra work-load borne by the Division would indeed be<sup>c</sup> frightening, and channels of supply would have to remain

open for many English-language monographs of the pre-1970 period and for the "lower-level" or "insignificant" material not acquired for BLLD stock.

Contingencies of this nature were exemplified in the survey which took place in conjunction with the West Midlands RLB, whose Working Party in the summer of 1975 resolved that an assessment was necessary to decide whether functions then being carried out by the Bureau could be undertaken by the Lending Division. The study, during a four-week period early in 1976, was carried out by the Lending Division's research section on behalf of the Council of the West Midlands RLB, and the detailed findings by M.D. Smith were issued in January 1977 as Research and Development Report 5319, entitled A Comparative Study of the Interlibrary Lending Services Provided by the West Midlands Regional Library System and the British Library Lending Division.

The methods and objectives of the survey, which was based primarily on the passing to BLLD of "dummy" copies of requests already monitored by the West Midlands Bureau, have been fully described by M.D. Smith, and need not be repeated here. Reservations about the costings shown in the Report were noted by the Regional Council in a statement printed in the publication and an Appendix was also included to show alternative costings of the interlending options open to member libraries of the West Midlands System. As a postscript to the assessment, it was agreed at a meeting of the Council on 12 November 1976 that, from January 1, 1977, member libraries should be asked to send all their requests direct to BLLD in the first instance, on the understanding that where books could not be supplied immediately from the shelves, the application forms giving the locations recorded at BLLD should be passed to the West Midlands Bureau for further action.

Dependent upon the manner in which these arrangements worked out, a final decision would be made by 31 May 1977 as to whether or not the interlending functions of the Bureau should be transferred to the Lending Division. \*

Despite the reservations expressed by the West Midlands Regional Council and certain "pessimistic" assumptions contained in the Report, the value of such a survey is that, in the atmosphere of the "regional versus national" debate, it applies the yardstick of statistics, rather than emotion, to the data obtained. In its comparison of the services offered by the WMRLB and by the Lending Division, the survey showed that BLLD could supply 54% of the publications requested from stock, including 4% which could not be satisfied in the WMRLB. Nearly 90% of the requests from stock were despatched by the end of the second day after the form had entered the system. Requests satisfied through the Bureau tended to take longer.

The WMRLB system was able to meet requests for 7 items which could not be satisfied from BLLD, but including the 4% referred to above, BLLD was able to take some action on 122 requests which the WMRLB could not supply. There were 5 requests which neither source could satisfy.

Special attention was devoted to a total of 718 post-1970 English-language monographs, the long-standing problem area of BLLD supply. Surprisingly, 566 were found to be in the BLLD collections, and locations could be provided for nearly all the remainder. The Bureau system was marginally better for 1960-1969 imprints than for the most recent publications. The subject-matter of the requested titles was also a significant factor in the rate of success of both the WMRLB and BLLD.

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\* No decision to transfer had been made by late 1978.

With the latter, 68% of the scientific requests could be supplied from stock, but only a rather disappointing 47% in the humanities. In the WMRLB, the humanities success rate was 84%, with the science requests reaching a commendable 89%.

Setting aside some of the mixed options which were offered, the main conclusion to be drawn is that both the central and regional systems need each other's support, and both display advantages and limitations. For items actually in stock at BLLD, the speed of response would be significantly <sup>quicker</sup> ~~less~~ than in the regional procedures and would be similar for other types of material. Bureau functions which the Lending Division could not undertake included the receipt of telephone requests and enquiries for bibliographic information. Nor could the Division handle the numerous requests made by telex to the Bureau, asking for locations only, while it would also be unable to satisfy requests in those categories of material which are outside its scope in any case, such as fiction, play sets, subject enquiries and sets of music for performance.

The experiment certainly showed that the overall satisfaction rates of BLLD and the Regional System were very similar, presumably because of BLLD's good stock of post-1970 imprints. If a regional scheme decided to transfer the whole of its interlending function to the Lending Division, and was accepted, member libraries would economise on their subscriptions, if not on actual loan transaction costs. But if any cooperative function remained at all in the area of the scheme, such as the collection of union catalogue data, the maintenance of cooperative purchase or regional subject allocation schemes, <sup>or</sup> the compilation of union serials listings, then these activities would still need to be financed, presumably by the same members of the Regional System.



The survey, as described by Malcolm D. Smith, provides a good example of the value of joint approaches, by the central and regional agencies, to a common problem of the <sup>need to satisfy the</sup> desire to provide the best possible level of service, with economy of cost and efficiency of procedure. It augurs well for the future of the interlending framework in the United Kingdom that the central agency is prepared in this way to cooperate closely in exploratory investigations, and the Regions in turn would do well to examine dispassionately some of their long-held, but perhaps no longer tenable, beliefs. Systems cannot be improved except by regular monitoring of their effectiveness, and the following chapter, dealing with the compilation of meaningful statistics of interlending, will again emphasise the value of the joint national/regional approach.

Statistics of Interlending : Monitoring the Service

One of the major problems highlighted by the changing relationship between the Regions and the central lending agency since the formation of the British Library Lending Division has been the inadequacy of the varied methods of compiling reliable statistics of interlending transactions. The need for this information becomes more pressing as various factors conspire together to change the traditional interloan procedures : the circulation of microform listings of locations of loan copies encourages direct applications between libraries, which have in any case altered many of their routine "housekeeping" methods since the reorganisation of local authority areas in England, Wales and Scotland, and the growing incidence of telex installations in libraries often over-rides the traditional dependence on loan application forms, and their retention in office files.

An attempt was therefore made in July 1975 by the Lending Division, in agreement with the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation, to recruit the assistance of all libraries in membership of the Regional Schemes to provide statistics for the six-month period from October 1975 to March 1976, and a schedule of the categories of loans to be counted will be found as Appendix IV to this study. The experiment was planned as a trial run, in the hope that a scheme of annual data collection could begin in April 1976. In the event, this attempt was abandoned because of the establishment of the National Committee's Working Party on the Future Pattern of Interlending, which at its first meeting allocated a high priority to the need for accurate quantitative data on interlending before it could make recommendations for future strategy at the national or regional level.

During June 1976 a sample survey did take place in 20 libraries, although the sampling was not representative of the whole span of the country and the object of the survey, conducted by the Lending Division, was merely to pin-point the kind of data which could be produced.

The unrepresentative nature of the returns \* was emphasised by the fact that only 43% of the demand shown was for serials, compared with about 65% in the country as estimated from other data. A failure rate for unsatisfied requests was shown as 4%, whereas the true overall failure rate is nearer to 7%. This distortion was due mainly to the fact that special libraries, and to a lesser extent academic libraries, were under-represented.

The most significant results which emerged from the sample survey were as follows:-

- (i) Of 1,351 items analysed by the category of material requested, 51% were for monographs, 43% for serials, 4% for other book categories, and only 1% for non-book media:
- (ii) The same total analysed by the type of library from which the item was received showed that 59% of the requests were met by the Lending Division, 19% by public libraries, 11% by academic libraries, 7% by other libraries, and 4% were unsatisfied:
- (iii) Analysed by the form in which the item was supplied, the same total of 1,351 showed that 57% were loans, 38% were photocopies and in the case of about 4%, the criterion was not applicable:
- (iv) A total of 1,293 items were analysed by the channel through which the request was satisfied. 65% were supplied by the Lending

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\* As circulated to the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation, on 20 July 1976.

Division, 17% by a Regional Scheme, 5% as a result of microform ISBN lists and 13% were direct applications, library to library:

- (v) The total of 1,351 items analysed according to the number of different channels tried before the request was satisfied showed that 88% were met at the first attempt, 9% at the second, and 2% at the third. (Only 4 items of the total of 1,351 needed to go beyond the third channel attempt).

The results of the pilot study in the twenty libraries proved to be the introduction to a wider-ranging exercise during February 1977. On July 1, 1976 the National Committee "agreed that arrangements should be made to carry out a full-scale study (of statistical returns) based on the experience gained in the pilot project". \* Unfortunately, the Committee itself had no funds with which to meet the cost of the full-scale study, which inevitably had to be borne by the Lending Division, to the tune of some £5,000. The purpose of the study was to collect the maximum amount of data with minimal effort, in the hope that the whole national effort of collecting library statistics could be put on a more rational basis, releasing libraries from the task of compiling statistics in varying formats to meet the requirements of the British Library, the Department of Education and Science and the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

The proposed list of analyses of the returns from this survey, with samples of the forms submitted to libraries and their coding instructions, are shown as Appendices V - VII.

Can the expenditure of staff time and salary costs be justified in such statistical exercises? It might be argued that

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\* Minutes no. 642 of the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation.

time could be spent more profitably in better bibliographical verification of loan applications or in providing more rapid access to information sources, or even in pursuing more energetically the "difficult" applications which tend to be pushed aside. Even so, there are certain requirements which do make statistical compilation both necessary and desirable, such as, for example:-

- (i) the need to discover in which areas of the country the demand for certain categories of material falls most heavily;
- (ii) how the satisfaction rate varies for different types of material between different loan channels;
- (iii) what proportion of requests are made direct from library to library, by-passing the Bureau, on the basis of cooperative listings or the ISBN microform location lists, and
- (iv) whether in fact certain libraries are having to meet a disproportionate demand - a complaint most frequently voiced on behalf of the university libraries.

A national formula for the gathering of interlending statistics appears to be long overdue, but is unlikely to be achieved until the Regions themselves standardise their present uncorrelated methods. The collection of statistics is influenced in turn by the type of service organised by the Regions. Some supply locations of loanable copies to some or all of their members either from the Bureau or by means of ISBN lists and subject specialisation schemes, while others still arrange the majority of loans on behalf of their members.

The problems are further exacerbated by the inability of certain libraries, because of their "housekeeping" routines, to differentiate between books borrowed as a result of ISBN location lists, loans arranged by Regional Bureaux and the use of specialisation schemes. Some libraries make little or no attempt to record loans arranged by telephone or telex.

Practices can be seen to vary considerably from Region to Region. The practice hitherto in Wales has been for the member libraries to supply, every six months, totals of

- (i) the number of volumes borrowed from Regional members;
- (ii) the number borrowed from outside Wales via the Lending Division and the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme, and
- (iii) the number of volumes lent to Regional members and also to extra-Regional requesters.

In the West Midlands Region, the Bureau keeps a daily record of the number of applications received from each library and the totals of items lent by each member library are noted on a form such as that shown in Appendix VIII.

In the South Western Region, statistics are compiled from two sources:

- (a) the applications received at the Regional Bureau by form, telex and telephone, and
- (b) the applications satisfied by member libraries to other members of the Region, regardless of how the request was received.

South Western members are also asked to provide totals of all loans made to libraries outside the Region, in whatever form the request was first made. Examples of the forms used in a number of Regions appear as Appendices IX - X.

The inadequacy of these differing procedures was emphasised in a report presented to the National Committee by its sub-group on statistics, following the group's meeting on April 9, 1976. \* At the very time when accurate statistics are needed to determine the cost-effectiveness of borrowing and lending, the variation in the methods of compiling data is so great that the results can hardly be used for

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\* Private, unpublished document.

purposes of national planning. Reliable quantitative data are needed which will establish the relative efficiency of the channels used for routing requests. When economic stringency bears hard on library services, it is essential that the most economical arrangement for interlending procedures should be based on credible and genuine statistical data.

The Group also identified other more specific needs and reasons for collecting data on inter-library loans. Potential transport arrangements would depend heavily on accurate projections of the numbers of parcels to be transferred between requesting and supplying libraries, while the Lending Division itself requires accurate data as a basis for its own policy and management decisions. The future maintenance of the British Union Catalogue of Periodicals is partly dependent upon the use made of it as a location tool for inter-library lending of serials, while on a broader canvas, the planning of a potential national library network model would also need reliable data to assist policy planning.

Returns of statistics of this sort should present no real difficulty to most public and academic libraries, but the preponderance of special libraries in membership of the Lending Division, - there are more than 4,000 of them - could present a problem. In the Wales Regional area, for example, there are some 90 registered Lending Division users who are not at the same time members of the Bureau, and no systematic attempt has ever been made to ascertain the true amount of their inter-loan traffic. Moreover, many of these borrowers are infrequent users of the interloan network, their libraries are inadequately staffed and the amount of time which the single-handed assistant or information officer can devote to statistics is severely limited. Even so, a determined effort to ascertain this true level of traffic will have to be undertaken by the Regional Schemes before they can venture to enter into the contractual

arrangements necessary between themselves and the Lending Division in preparation for a co-ordinated, national transport scheme for the carriage of loans.

During the summer of 1977, the Lending Division prepared and offered to the Regional Schemes a set of forms which would provide a relatively simple method of compiling statistics to an agreed pattern on a nationwide basis, in the hope that April 1978 could be set as a target date for the implementation of the scheme. A description of the methods of compilation and samples of the forms to be used will be found as Appendices  $\frac{XI-XII}{/}$  to this study.

While it is a facile occupation to decry the compilation of statistical data and to suggest that the paperwork associated with certain library functions sometimes assumes a greater importance than the function itself, nevertheless the acceptance of a scheme of coordinated statistical returns throughout the country would at least produce data never before available and analysis of the returns would answer questions such as :-

- (a) Which channels of supply produce the fastest response for English-language monographs?
- (b) Is public library demand being transferred from the Regional Schemes to the Lending Division?
- (c) Are requests from special libraries being sent direct to other libraries?

These and other similar questions would then go a great deal of the way towards determining the nature of the future pattern of interlending and would offer comparisons between local, regional and national cooperative systems in terms of cost, speed of response and likelihood of satisfaction. Such a collection of data would also form a substantive part of the more general collection of library statistics



which from time to time engages the attention of the Department of Education and Science, the Library Association, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and the local authority organisations. More significantly, it is on the proper evaluation of such data that major decisions as to the viability of some of the present Regional Schemes might ultimately depend.

## CHAPTER V : POINTERS TO THE FUTURE

The final chapter of this study attempts to indicate some of the ways in which the pattern of inter-library lending in the United Kingdom might reasonably be expected to develop in the foreseeable future. In spite of many of the inherent inadequacies which have been alleged in the foregoing chapters, the pattern of co-ordinated national, regional and local interloan agencies which has developed during the last sixty years or so can be seen as a vitally important facet of that more fundamental problem of access to resources.

The use of automated data processing techniques, applied to the storage and retrieval of bibliographic information, has evolved with such rapidity that it forms a subject for a further study in its own right. The future of inter-library cooperation does not, of course, relate exclusively to computer techniques, and more humble, pedestrian problems - such as the cheapest and most efficient way of getting books, periodicals and non-book materials from point A to point B - are still engaging the attention of the committees and officers who are charged with the organisation of loan schemes.

Prompted in particular by the far-sighted policies of the London and South Eastern Library Region, the interlending agencies have already, in varying degrees, taken advantage of the potential, and indeed the proven, benefits of computer-assisted techniques. There are additional possibilities already under scrutiny, such as the extent to which the operation of the British Library Lending Division can be further enhanced by automation, and how it might be possible eventually to avoid transferring physical objects from point A to point B at all by the use of facsimile transmission and visual display.

Again, if "Regional" union catalogues are needed for the future - they could well be supplanted by a national data base - then consideration should be given to the question of whether the creation of such catalogues could best be undertaken by the automation cooperatives, such as BLCMP, SCOLCAP and SWALCAP, for those areas of which they form the focal point. The perpetuation of union catalogues, whatever form they might take, could prove in any case to be of secondary importance compared with the damaging effects of reductions, for economic reasons, in the financial backing for both local authority and educational libraries.

Rather than speculate further, it will be more advantageous to erect the first pointer to the future by outlining the successes already achieved, primarily by LASER, in adapting ADP techniques to some of the procedures of inter-library lending.

## 5.1

### LASER and Its Role In Automation

The failure of manually-maintained Regional union catalogues, their lack of currency and of completeness and the laborious routines required to service them have frequently been alleged during the course of this study. Accordingly, it was logical and reasonable that, with the advent of computer technology in its application to libraries, the interlending agencies should look to automation for a solution to these long-standing problems.

The pioneer Region in these innovatory techniques was certainly the South Eastern Regional Library System (SERLS), which cooperated in 1968/69 with ASLIB in a joint study, supported by the Office for Scientific and Technical Information, into the feasibility of compiling the Regional union catalogue of loan copies held by the member libraries in a completely new format. Rather than author/title data, the catalogue record would comprise only a string of digits representing a Standard Book Number, later to be developed for the English-language group of publishers into an International SBN, prefixed by 0 and comprising nine following digits.

This basically simple method of linking unique book numbers with library location symbols eventually made its way through the whole of the interlending system of the British Isles, persuading even Yorkshire, - in the guise of the post-1974 reorganised Yorkshire and Humberside Joint Service - to capitulate to national pressure and agree to compile a microfilm finding list. In 1969 the London Union Catalogue and SERLS were amalgamated to form LASER, their respective catalogues being combined by the same methods. The success of the computer-based techniques prompted LASER to explore even further the advantages which miniaturisation and rapid copying seemed to offer, and in 1970 a direct interlending system

was introduced into the Region, based on microfilm location lists of new library accessions from 1970 onwards.

The LASER/BNB or LASER/MARC projects are of great significance, not only in their intrinsic operational details but also as indicators of what the future might hold for regional, or indeed national, union cataloguing. The Director of LASER, Miss J.M. Plaister, has described (1974, 3-4) how the success of the original limited project noted above led to an extended study of the feasibility of converting the complete catalogue of the Region into machine-readable form and using it as a basis for local catalogue conversion. The aims of this OSTI-supported study, which was reported in detail in OSTI Report no. 5164 of 1973, were to convert a section of the LASER catalogue into machine-readable form in order to compare different methods of data preparation for cost, accuracy and efficiency and also to achieve compatibility with MARC standards, and at the same time to examine the possibility of using the LASER file as a basis for local cataloguing and for checking the central records as against local records. A batch of some 6,000 entries from CASP to CHAMBERS in the LASER file was chosen for the experiment.

The most important findings which emerged were that, although the cataloguing information in LASER's catalogue was rather less than that carried on the BNB MARC tapes, this did not affect the successful production of a MARC compatible tape, the data on which could be interfiled with full MARC entries. Moreover, about 87% of the entries which a public library would require would be obtainable from a fully converted LASER file. Checks carried out against three county library authorities' catalogues outside LASER showed an even higher overlap of 91%. Although, as the Director points out, there were economic factors which prevented proceeding immediately along the lines indicated in the

Feasibility Study, there was no doubt about the practicability of the suggestion and a new dimension was added to the whole concept of bibliographical compilation and the local/national interaction of library cooperation.

LASER's bold plans were further assisted by the decision of the British National Bibliography to convert its own files back to 1950 into machine-readable form, making these files freely available to LASER in exchange for assistance in preparing the entries for computer output. This "quid pro quo" meant that LASER, in return for its participation in the editing of the BNB records before input and the subsequent proof-reading of entries, was granted the use within its Region of the resulting MARC tapes without the levying of an access fee. Other libraries requiring such access would face the payment of a "copyright" fee of £250 per annum (later to be raised to £500 to include the Library of Congress MARC in addition) for their use of the MARC tapes. The decision of the British National Bibliography to extend its MARC coverage back to 1950 had also freed LASER from the cost of converting an estimated one-third of its total file. When the necessary matching processes had been completed, the outcome would be an alphabetical listing of B.N.B. and MARC material to serve both as a full Regional Union Catalogue and as a basis for sub-set catalogues for individual library systems within the Region.

The LASER Director described the operation of the full-scale implementation as an "active typewriter terminal" form based on up to twelve terminals attached to an Interdata 74 mini-computer. The output of the on-line system would eventually be magnetic tape, but originally structured paper tape organised on a batch processing computer to allow for correction of errors, selective editing and COM production. BNB-MARC standard formats were applied.

The aims and the procedures of the LASER/BNB conversions were outlined at a series of meetings during 1973 addressed by Miss J.M. Plaister and Mr. A.J. Wells, then Director of The British National Bibliography. At a Manchester meeting on August 1, 1973, the Directors stressed that the prospect of a large data base in machine-readable form would be most attractive to the larger public library authorities facing the task of catalogue amalgamation in April 1974. It was expected that the whole data base at B.N.B., extending back to 1950, would hold about one-and-a-half million entries, among which it was thought a library would find about 90% of its holdings. A 1950-73 file of BNB could be sold for £2,500 to an individual library, but extra costs would result if local data needed to be added to the basic record.

One of the threats posed to the Regional Bureaux by the April 1974 reorganisation of the public library authorities in England and Wales was, of course, the possibility that substantial holdings of books and periodicals could be re-located, thus rendering the Regional Union Catalogues even less effective. The two Directors at the Manchester meeting warned of the immense problem of checking existing stocks in amalgamating libraries - a problem which in 1978 still remains unsolved in some of the constituent libraries of the Wales Regional Scheme. The BNB retrospective file would be available for Regional Bureaux which contemplated converting their back files of union catalogues into machine-readable form.

LASER's Project Coordinator at the time, Alan Bevan, has fully described the working of the conversion and highlighted some of the problems encountered (1974, 1, 4 and 5). The immediate object, as he points out, was to provide a more flexible basis for LASER's own interlending activities and to assist in the conversion of local catalogues into machine-readable format, this latter function again adding another

new dimension to the range of activities other than interlending which Regions should be actively encouraging. It was anticipated that the reduction in the amount of time necessary for the up-keep of a catalogue with an estimated one-and-a-half million entries would result in higher bibliographical standards and improved interlending facilities. The computer-based system also allowed for the production of sub-sets of the catalogue sorted by data<sup>e</sup> or by language, and of classes of material such as music scores. The standardisation of catalogue entries and of the machine format would encourage other developments in inter-library cooperation.

The remarkable leap ahead which LASER achieved in these projects needs to be seen in the wider context of the development of MARC-based bibliographical services in the United Kingdom. Developments in the application of automated techniques to library routines have gathered momentum considerably since LASER set the scene, and it is not over-fanciful to suggest that the ultimate pattern could be a centralised service of quick-response locations through strategically placed terminals, all connected in an on-line mode to a national data bank. The LASER projects certainly showed the way towards this sort of concept, although care must be taken to ensure that any centrally-operated bank should be receptive and flexible enough to admit locally-generated data and provide sub-catalogues to meet local demands.

The other Regional Systems will probably look with envy, and with some despondency too, at LASER's progressive initiative, but it should be remembered that it possesses certain advantages over the other Schemes. Firstly, its physical proximity to the national centre in the Bibliographic Services Division of the British Library leads to a build-up of expertise between the respective organisations; holding two substantial catalogues, the LUC and the SERLS catalogue, LASER was well placed to



offer a large enough record worthy of an OSTI-supported Feasibility Study, and a record on which computer analysts could exercise their skills; and finally, the very large population served by the Region and the consequent potential for raising the necessary revenue to fund such developments place LASER well ahead of the other Regions in these respects.

One brief note of caution, however, which should be appended is that the intake of new accessions into Regional union location lists, whatever their format, is not exclusively MARC-recorded titles. Alan Bevan (ibid., 1) estimated that the scope of the BNB/MARC records would cover 75% of a public library's holdings of monographic material. To prevent unnecessary duplication, it is important that "EMMA" - the extra-MARC material - should be trapped in libraries and enticed into the rapidly expanding bibliographic banks.

LASER's rapid advance in the application of computer techniques to its cataloguing routines did not, however, blind it to the more traditional or conventional needs of an inter-loan system, and in 1976 work began on the compilation of an outline manual of bibliographical checking routines for interlending staff members. The reasons for producing the manual included a general concern that standards of checking had fallen considerably, the importance of such checking in relation to the speed of supply of requested items and the fact that the Lending Division's 2,000,000 requests a year made it impossible for its staff to undertake very detailed bibliographical checking on every request.

After outlining some general principles of catalogue checking, the draft outline noted the differences between national and trade bibliographies and the importance of positive identification of monographs, serials, official publications, reports and conference proceedings. Differences between a "regional" Form 50 (Books) as a loan application form and a BILD loan/photocopy application were highlighted by showing a

completed model of each. Similar modules of instruction were then provided for the verification of serial requests, government publications and conference proceedings.

Another section offered guidance on the policies of the Metropolitan and Provincial Joint Fiction Reserves, on how best to approach requests in subject areas such as history, literature, the social sciences, music and the fine arts and on the use of foreign bibliographies. Worked examples are then provided which try to anticipate problems likely to be encountered from the stage at which the reader places, or tries to place, his particular request through to the Regional headquarters and finally to central loan stocks.

While applauding the skill applied to the production of LASER's outline manual, it can only be regretted that one of the motives for its preparation was the woefully low level of bibliographical verification which is applied to many loan application forms, because of the absence from many of the smaller service points of even the basic trade bibliographies.

## 5.2 Automation in the Wales Regional Library Scheme

The outstanding progress made by LASER in promoting the use of automated data processing techniques prompted the Wales Region, along with other interlending systems, to consider what similar steps could be taken. In 1969, one of the most influential members of the original Aberystwyth Bureau, the Flintshire County Library, had automated its cataloguing procedures, supplying classified and author/title catalogues to its service points in cassetted microfilm, and in due course these records became available as a location list for use by the Wales Region. This association was continued upon the reorganisation in April 1974 of the local authority libraries in north-east Wales to form the area of the Clwyd County Library.

Within the same geographical area, the Kelsterton College of Technology maintained a Computer Studies Unit, both for teaching purposes and for undertaking outside commercial work in data processing, and a link was forged between the Unit and the Regional Scheme. Data preparation facilities available at the College were offered to the Regional Bureau, which gladly accepted the offer when the Bibliographic Services Division of the British Library undertook to oversee the production, on behalf of the Regions, of the ISBN-style microfilm location lists. Experimentally, the College also accepted UK/MARC magnetic tapes to assist with cataloguing procedures for its own library, which is in any case a participating member of the Regional Scheme. The output from the tapes, however, in a relatively small college library system is insufficient to justify continuing expenditure on subscribing to the tape service, but the availability of the "hardware" at the College, in an ICL configuration which is to be substantially up-graded in 1978, offers the possibility of a networking arrangement which could achieve a great deal more than mere data preparation for location lists.

International Standard Book Numbers submitted to the Regional Bureau by member libraries, representing new accessions to their stocks of non-fiction titles, are forwarded to the College at two-monthly intervals for key-punching on to 80-column cards for later transfer to the Bibliographic Services Division. The production of magnetic tape, of course, would be more economical in time and human effort, but the insistence by the BSD on one consolidated tape only from each Region is causing some difficulty. Certain member libraries of the Region which have already automated their cataloguing routines are in a position to "dump" their ISBN's from tape to tape, providing a record already in machine-readable form which could by-pass the Region and be incorporated into the national system. The inability of the BSD to accept such a submission is already causing wasted expenditure in the Region in re-processing some thousands of ISBN's into key-punched card formats.

The merging of the previously autonomous Welsh Bureaux in April 1973 presented a problem which can be solved more economically than was at first envisaged. The unified Regional Bureau inherited fragmented BNB-based union catalogues arranged in conflicting numerical and author orders. Within the Aberystwyth Bureau area, location symbols were set against the alphabetical author/title sequences of the annual bound volumes of BNB, while in the Glamorgan and Monmouthshire Bureau, the symbols to denote the holding libraries were set against the classified subject sequences of the BNB weekly lists. Rather than adopt a tedious manual amalgamation of these disparate records, the Region has decided to convert the data into one unified finding-list, using BNB serial numbers as control numbers, for the period from 1954 - 1973. Items held within the Region but not listed in BNB for that period will remain in their current, parallel form in a 5" x 3" card catalogue.

The assistance derived from LASER's conversion projects is

here gratefully acknowledged, and the computer programme used at that time will hopefully be made available to the Wales Region by the British Library for a similar task. It is estimated that some 320,000 records will need to be prepared; the total BNB product (i.e. serial numbers) from 1954 to 1973 is approximately 470,000 items, but reductions can be allowed for fiction, about 15% perhaps, and another 20% for titles not purchased by any library in the Region. Allowing for a reasonable rate charged for key-punching at, say, £15 for 1,000 cards, it is calculated that a sum of £4,800 will be required to prepare the data, and this will be provided by the "parent" National Library of Wales. The Region will, however, look to the British Library itself to meet the computer running costs, as part of its policy of assistance at the national level, although these questions have yet to be resolved.

The amalgamated catalogue, or rather finding-list, will take the form of BNB serial numbers, representing author/title entries, followed by library locations in coded form, e.g.

59 - 10697      017      029      124      etc.

Seventeen three-digit library locations can be provided as a maximum, for each serial number, and deletion facilities can also be included in the computer programme, to enable the Region at last to come to terms with a long-standing backlog of discarding of locations from the union catalogue. The final Computer Output Microfilm in cassette form will be sold to member libraries, and amalgamated, post-April 1974 public libraries will be able to specify sub-sets of the location list if records are still required of the adult non-fiction holdings of the formerly autonomous areas of the library authority. (The specification used already by LASER and to be used by the Wales Region for the key-punching of the conversion data will be found at Appendix XIII.)

The daunting task of re-processing 320,000 catalogue

records did at one time prompt the thought that an alternative method might be to draw, from the retrospective UK/MARC files, an abbreviated entry for each of the Region's union catalogue entries and to add to this entry the appropriate library location symbol. It did appear, however, that any individual library which subsequently took advantage of the resulting output to produce a sub-set catalogue of its own might face the need to pay the "copyright" access fee to the MARC data-base, and the Region felt that this was an imposition which it would not wish to place upon the member libraries. The alternative would indeed have been preferable in the sense that the member libraries would eventually receive an author/title catalogue, albeit in abbreviated form, rather than the ENB-serial order finding list which it is planned to produce.

On the foundation of these admittedly modest achievements and plans, the Region would next wish to examine the possibility of using the BLAISE (British Library Automated Information Services) data-base to record locations and produce finding-lists, and the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation, at its meeting on July 5, 1978, was alerted to this possibility. \* There seems to be no technical obstacle to submitting International Standard Book Numbers gathered by the Bureaux into the BLAISE system by means of Visual Display Unit terminals, adding the appropriate location symbols for the holding libraries. When the data-base then came to be interrogated for the retrieval of the location information, the response rate would hopefully be a matter of seconds, rather than the fortnight or three weeks which conventional searches can often take. The methods of arranging the desired loans would then be a matter for internal settlement within the Regional Scheme.

The possession of a BLAISE terminal by the National Library of Wales has already opened the way for the Welsh Region to consider very

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\* NCRLC Minutes, no. 697

seriously whether such a proposition could be successful. The maintenance of a rapidly growing data-bank within a large system such as BLAISE would certainly not be a cheap undertaking and in the eyes of the participating members of the Regional Scheme would certainly compare unfavourably with the present fairly inexpensive circulation of cassetted microfilms. Access to BLAISE for interrogation purposes in an on-line mode would need to be very strictly disciplined, in order to economise on the "connect-time" charges through a G.P.O. line. Nor would it be a sensible idea for one Region to embark alone on a costly venture without some guarantee that a co-ordinated policy might emerge later at inter-regional level. Even so, it is not too fanciful to suggest that Donald Davinson's claim (1959, 65-66) that Telex should be installed in every Regional Bureau can now be greatly revised : in the not too distant future, it is quite possible to contemplate, the Bureau which did not have access by on-line terminals to the national bibliographic centre would be disadvantaged indeed.

### 5.3 "A Matter of Seconds" : Links to a National Centre

It stands to the credit of the Regional Library Schemes that they have always shown a readiness to take full advantage of the national bibliographical service as an aid to their control over very substantial "banks" of library locations for interlending purposes. The British National Bibliography, when administered by its own Council, was recommended during the formative years of the Regional Schemes as a suitable recording device for library location symbols, and in later years its service of printed catalogue cards and sheaf-binder slips formed the basis of most Regional union catalogues.

Again, the Bibliography served as the ground-plan of subject allocation schemes in some of the Regions, and in the national context from 1959 as the map for the distribution of allocations, as we have seen, in the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme. Another aspect of Regional dependence upon the central bibliographic service can be illustrated by a 1977 decision in the Wales RLS to ask member libraries to provide notifications of new music accessions in a more systematic manner, the form of entry to be based on the style of the British Catalogue of Music.

With the passing of the British Library Act, national bibliographical output became a major function of the central source in the Bibliographic Services Division of the new Library, and if the Regional Schemes were to maintain their long-standing association with the source of centralised cataloguing, it was clear that their procedures must in turn reflect the mechanisation of the "banks" of information held, currently and retrospectively, by the central provider.

Progress in these directions was significant, and both



the technical expertise and financial backing of the Bibliographic Services Division were made available to the Regions for the creation of the ISBN-style microform location lists. The input of data for these lists is a constant process, and although they can be cumulated at five-yearly intervals, there must come a time when consideration will have to be given to the question of the sheer bulk of indefinite cumulations. Indeed, the more compact and easily distributed microfiche has begun to take over from cassetted 16mm. film in providing this service.

It should at this point be noted that in 1975 the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation and the Birmingham Libraries' Cooperative Mechanisation Project (BLCMP) did submit a proposal to the Research and Development Department of the British Library for a pilot study to assess the relative effectiveness of author/title data as against ISBN listings in the Regional context. The application, however, did not succeed and subsequently an entirely new dimension of operations presented itself with the establishment of on-line access to BLAISE.

Albeit with numerous reservations, M.B. Line \* has suggested that an on-line national union catalogue would be a possibility, with only the Bibliographic Services Division finding itself in a strong enough position to be able to maintain such a large and constantly expanding data base. The attraction, of course, is the speed of response which should theoretically be possible when library staffs or keyboard operators, using the minimum identifiable details, key in their requests for loan copies.

This response, said Line, would not guarantee that the requested item was available, although the supply of items could be improved or accelerated if requests were switched automatically to

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\* In his document of 29 December 1975 to the National Committee's Working Party on the Future Pattern of Interlending.

libraries shown as holding the titles in question. This criticism is indeed valid, but could equally well be directed towards the present system of circulating printed loan application forms on a rota of holding libraries. The on-line response, even if a negative one, would be received in a matter of seconds, rather than in a matter of weeks from the seventh or ninth library on a long rota of conventional locations.

In her contribution to one of the Library Association's 1977 Centenary publications, Jean M. Plaister (1977, 211) also refers to this theme. "It is attractive", she says, "to envisage an automated network with each local or regional centre - and BLLD as a special centre - having a local data handling system to maintain lists of holdings . . . linked to a national centre. For technical and economic reasons a totally integrated system is unrealistic certainly for many years to come, but a national index to material, based on a national data base, pointing to centres holding each title is a more practical possibility and could link into the proposed British Library on-line data base . . . These developments are not likely to take place next week, but current trends and the present state of technology indicate these are perfectly feasible".

To some extent, the "local or regional" centres already exist in the automation consortia of BLCMP, SWALCAP and SCOLCAP, all three Projects being based in cities which also house the headquarters of three interlending agencies, respectively at Birmingham, Bristol and Edinburgh. The primary function of the consortia is not to construct union catalogues for interlending purposes, but rather to offer a choice of automated book-ordering, accessioning and circulation control systems in their customers' libraries, with a range of catalogue output based on MARC centralised services.

The consortia already have their access links to BLAISE, and any other consortium in the future, let us say in Wales or the North of England, would establish similar links as nodal points for library systems in their areas. The access links to an on-line national data base could then be used for adding local data, such as symbols to denote the holding libraries, to the central "bank", and similar submissions from all the "Regions" would of themselves construct the total interlending resource. This record, with the appropriate "password" safeguards, could then be interrogated by the requesting library in an on-line mode.

Fears have already been expressed, in particular by members of the National Committee, that developments of this sort pose a threat to the privacy of a library's records in a national data base, and that easy direct access could result in some abuse of the procedures. Certainly one would sympathise with a library which, by some strange mischance, found itself to be the only location record throughout the country for a valuable monograph in considerable demand. It is also feared that direct applications for loan copies would increase at such a rate that control would pass out of the hands of the RLBx, which could be by-passed entirely by a large measure of demand which crossed Regional boundaries of its own accord.

In the opinion of the present writer, some of these fears are exaggerated, and if they persist, could well hamper the development of a particularly exciting technological advance. Nor would these loan requests be the first to cross Regional boundaries; the Inter-Regional Subject Coverage Scheme and the Provincial Joint Fiction Reserves were planned as schemes which allowed of direct applications from libraries in one Region to libraries in another. The ultimate refinement of the on-line access procedure would mean that, by a

nationwide linking of visual display units, the use of a key-board for the submission of requests through a nodal centre could make unnecessary the production and distribution of filmed location lists. The comparative costs of the alternative systems, it must be admitted, would show very great differences.

We have so far been concerned with those options in computer-assisted techniques which are most likely to benefit the Regional Schemes. At the same time, we should not disregard the numerous applications of ADP techniques at the British Library Lending Division, particularly as described by A.J. Harley in a paper submitted in May 1978 to the members of the Advisory Committee on Lending Services (Paper ACL/46).

After noting the early involvement of the DSIR Lending Library Unit, and subsequently the NLLST, with data processing techniques, for serials ordering files, on-order action cards, survey analysis and searching the MEDLARS file, Dr. Harley described the impressive range of installations available to the Division to handle a variety of tasks, and also the Division's use of certain "out-house" or commercial bureau agencies such as Comshare Ltd. and FASB Ltd.

One of the most exciting pointers to the future, however, and of most relevance to inter-library loans, is the very extensive use which the Division expects to make of the on-line bibliographic systems of BLAISE. "It is anticipated", says Dr. Harley, "that the computer/telex request service will grow rapidly as computer information retrieval services begin to provide automatic document request services to their users. From the user's point of view, a search of a database can be followed by an automatically generated request for the document by a simple procedure . . . Plans are already well advanced with BLAISE,

there have been discussions with INFOLINE and ESA, and the whole problem is being discussed in the context of EURONET".

The automation of union cataloguing by the use of BLAISE is a clear pointer to a new era of significant and exciting development. The MARC database holds substantial files of bibliographic data relating to monographs, which in principle could be used instead of existing record systems. Dr. Harley indicated that, by annotating MARC records on the BLAISE data base, to show which titles are held at BLLD and at other libraries, a new kind of union catalogue could be created. Records for older material, or for any current material not added to MARC, could be retained in the Division's existing Union Catalogue of Books. The new-style catalogue would be more flexible and powerful and at the same time would enhance the national value of the MARC file.

Much of the early history of inter-library lending, as we have frequently noted, had to do with creating and maintaining union lists, and it is intriguing to note, that as we approach the end of this sixty-year time span, our concern appears to be how best we can eliminate them. But such advance is inevitable in an age of relentless technological change, and library cooperation must also reflect that change.

The same note was struck by David Russon, of the Lending Division, in his document submitted in November 1978 to the Advisory Committee (Paper ACL/50). "The increasing mechanization of bibliographic records and the advent of on-line services such as BLAISE offer the possibility of moving away from a card catalogue to a machine-readable catalogue which can be output in a variety of forms, be accessible in a number of ways and which can be consulted from different physical locations. Because of these potential advantages the Division is considering, in

cooperation with other parts of the British Library, what scope exists for mechanizing its bibliographical records. However, the problems associated with automating the Division's records . . . are not insignificant and the cost-effectiveness of such automation has yet to be assessed".

#### 5.4 A Transport System for Inter-Library Loans

In her assessment of the likely future trends in library development and cooperation, Jean M. Plaister (1977, 202-215) identified two major aspects of library functions, namely (a) the Bibliographic Resource System, answering the question as to what is in theory available, and (b) the Material Management System, answering the question how in practice the resource can be made accessible. It is to this second function, the practical and actual movement of material for inter-library loans, that the concept of a transport system properly belongs.

Cooperating libraries in the United Kingdom have traditionally depended upon postal services for the carriage of inter-loan items, and refunds of the charges incurred by the supplying library were a built-in feature of certain Regional schemes. Some ad hoc arrangements were also to be found in the areas of certain public library authorities, which could use internal transport for transferring items within their own boundaries. On the basis of similar arrangements existing between neighbouring London boroughs, the Association of London Chief Librarians established a working party in 1976 to examine whether additional benefits might be possible, particularly in cost savings, and in establishing links with county authorities.

Academic libraries and government departments also provided examples of van delivery systems, such as the London University Depository Library Van Service, and the Interdepartmental Despatch Service for government departments and other related offices in the Greater London and South East England areas. Accordingly a number of precedents existed for the concept of a road transport system for

conveying inter-library loans, and the growing dissatisfaction felt by the interlending agencies because of the decline in speed and reliability of postal services gave an added impetus to this trend.

It was in April 1974 that the Yorkshire and Humberside Joint Libraries Committee inaugurated its transport system to cover the areas of Humberside, North, South and West Yorkshire. Other Regions were not slow to emulate the Yorkshire initiative, and by April 1978, van schemes were being operated by all but one of the English regional library systems and by the Wales Regional Library Scheme. The Library Cooperation Committee of the National Library of Scotland had also by then established a Working Party to consider the feasibility of a scheme to cover part of Scotland. The natural and over-riding motive was a desire to reduce the costs of inter-library lending, an objective which had been set before the Regional Schemes since as long ago as the Vollans Report.

The schemes which sprang from these localised initiatives were autonomous and unco-ordinated and naturally varied in their practices. Charging levels, the frequency of calls upon member libraries and the categories of membership served could vary considerably from scheme to scheme, and doubts whether such schemes would make the most economic use of resources prompted the British Library to take an active part in the matter. The background to the Library's involvement, through its Research and Development Department, may be illustrated by the following quotations from its April 1978 Draft Report entitled Transport Schemes for Inter-Library Loans : Report of a Study Group:-

"During the last four years", says the Introduction to the principal issues studied in the Report, "there has been a steady increase in the number of libraries throughout the United Kingdom



adopting road transport schemes for carriage of inter-library loans. The impetus of this trend away from the use of postal services raised a number of policy issues , . . which culminated in sponsorship by the British Library of a study of the operation and economic aspects of a nationwide transport scheme for inter-library loans. The consultants' report indicated that such arrangements would have a firm financial basis and recommended that pilot studies should be carried out to assess the viability of transport schemes and to supplement data which were found to be inadequate for planning purposes. A Study Group was set up to examine the results of two pilot studies [in the LASER area and the North West], to analyse their implications and to recommend how a transport scheme should be organized, financed and administered."

Basic to the work of the Study Group, which met six times between December 1976 and January 1978, were the reports already prepared by A.G. Houghton and M. Nixon and published by the Local Government Operational Research Unit in 1976 and 1977. \* These investigations had already laid the ground-work for a study of a national loans transport system and for a scheme in the North-west. As one of the joint authors, A.G. Houghton, also served on the Study Group, a valuable fund of experience was already available to the other Group members, representing some of the major interests in inter-lending and the geographical distribution of United Kingdom libraries.

Although neither Ulster nor the Republic of Ireland was represented on the Study Group, both territories have shown an interest in planning a transport system which would serve the whole of Ireland, and discussions are expected to take place with BLLD during 1979.

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\* See Bibliography.

The draft final report contains descriptions of the pilot studies conducted in the North West and in the LASER area, their transport arrangements and pricing policies. The options available for the organization of transport schemes are outlined, including ways in which the entrepreneurial function could be devolved, to the British Library, to a regional library system, to a commercial organization or to an ad hoc consortium of scheme users. Other aspects which receive detailed consideration include the legal aspects of the projected transport system, to ensure that the Post Office's statutory privilege relating to the conveyance of letters is not infringed, together with the monitoring of the service, its relationship with users, and the assessment of BLLD use of libraries in different regions.

Although hotly debated at the sessions of the Study Group, the contention must remain valid that large areas such as the remoter districts of Scotland and Wales cannot economically be served by a cost-effective transport system. The Wales Region has operated a successful service, in conjunction with the non-statutory Welsh Books Council, since November 1975, but the interloan traffic conveyed, compiled by quarterly assessment, has not consistently reached the expected level. The service in Wales is provided to all members of the Region, but its current defect is that it does not make any direct contact with the large flow of BLLD loans into the area. The effectiveness of a coordinated national scheme would depend to a very large measure on bringing the substantial Boston Spa traffic into conjunction, at agreed nodes, with Regional traffic, and also with the achievement of standards within the Regions to match the first-class post response of BLLD.

The variations in levels of traffic generated in the Regions, and the varying amounts of BLLD traffic into those Regions,

will of necessity result in a series of contractual discussions between the Division and the Regional Executive Committees, as there is no likelihood of one overall agreed system proving suitable for all needs. The Northern Regional Library System \* indeed claimed that the British Library must give regional library systems the opportunity to manage the scheme in their regions. It also stressed that it favoured a confederation of autonomous regional transport schemes, with the possibility of national co-ordination being considered at a later stage.

The deliberations of the Study Group were so wide-ranging, and the eventual outcome could so influence the practical day-to-day management of interlending, that a brief summary of the most significant recommendations should be made at this point. They were as follows.-

- (1) The Study Group concluded that transport schemes offer a viable alternative to the postal service for the carriage of the majority of inter-library loans in the United Kingdom.
- (2) The schemes should be "co-ordinated" in that they would provide services of agreed standards and frequency to all their users, who would be charged a uniform price for each item provided by BLLD. The prices for regional items should reflect local costs.
- (3) Each scheme should, as far as was economically possible, serve all the libraries in the geographical area currently covered by one of the regional library systems, whose present boundaries should be retained:
- (4) The schemes should run in parallel with existing transport services carrying loans:
- (5) The speeds of delivery achieved in the pilot studies should be the minimum standards for future schemes, and that periodic checks be

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\* In its document circulated May 1978 to the British Library (R & D Dept.) and to the other Regional Schemes.

made on the standards offered by individual schemes:

- (6) The choice of entrepreneur, and the possibility of introducing a scheme in each region, should be discussed between the appropriate regional library system and the British Library:
- (7) Each scheme should recover its costs fully from income, and that when schemes were introduced, the British Library should continue to offer its lending services at a uniform price to users, and finally,
- (8) When more schemes were established, trials should be made of carrying inter-regional items,
  - (a) by using BLLD as a central routing point and
  - (b) by linking vans belonging to different schemes.

## 5.5 The Whitford Report

The recommendations of the Study Group on Transport for Inter-Library Loans, outlined in the previous chapter, offered optimistic grounds for believing that an economical and effective scheme could be established, with the British Library Lending Division and the Regional Schemes working together on a contractual basis. While the Group was conducting its sessions, however, there was in preparation a Report which, if implemented in the form of legislation, could have extremely serious implications for the future of interlending, at least for that area of interlending which depends heavily for its success upon document copying by reprographic means.

The Committee set up under the chairmanship of Sir John Whitford to consider the law on copyright and designs issued its Report in March 1977, and for the purposes of this study, its chapter on 'Reprography' is of most immediate concern. As a review in The Library Association Record \* pointed out, reaction by librarians to the Report has been "generally hostile" and both the Lending Division and the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation have commented unfavourably on those sections of it which could, if implemented, have far-reaching effects.

In recommending the repeal of both Section 6 and Section 7 of the Copyright Act of 1956, the Whitford Committee struck at the very basis of the legal dispositions under which photocopying is permitted in libraries and educational institutions, and sought to replace these by a system of 'blanket licensing' under which all libraries would

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\* LAR 79 (4), 1977, 172, article signed "R.M.W."

negotiate, through some recognised collecting agencies, photocopying rights with the owners of copyright material. The proposal can be seen as an application of the concept of 'Public Lending Right', and of the claims of the Performing Rights Society, to the world of reprography and its objective clearly was to apply restrictions to the indiscriminate and uncontrolled copying which is alleged to take place in libraries and educational establishments of all sorts.

The repeal of both Sections of the 1956 Act noted above would abolish the freedom granted at present to produce a single copy of a journal article, provided that no other copy has been produced elsewhere for the same applicant, and also the right to acquire a copy for the purposes of "fair dealing" in research or private study. The likely effect of such restrictions on libraries are obvious; the effect on the work of the Lending Division would be so much more acute, since such a high percentage of its supply to other libraries rests on document copying rather than lending original publications. These effects would in turn find their way particularly to the academic and special libraries, which make the heaviest demands on the Lending Division.

The "blanket licence", once obtained, would presumably allow unlimited copying, and as the author of the Library Association Record's article noted, this could benefit teachers. Unfortunately, the precise details of the proposed licensing arrangements were not fully described, nor is any indication given in the Report of the scale of fees which the copyright owners would be empowered to levy. No indication was given of how the revenue derived from licensing arrangements would be distributed equitably to the copyright holders.

Underlying the Committee's opinions was the assumption that uncontrolled photocopying is rampant in libraries of all types. So far as the experience of the present writer is relevant, this

contention can be strongly denied. The loan/photocopy application form of the BLLD is the main medium, but not exclusively so, of interlending transactions in the British Isles, and the form carries the signed obligatory declarations in the terms of the 1956 Act. Application forms used internally in academic libraries also require the same signed declarations before photocopying can be undertaken, and the legal-deposit libraries in particular are stringent in their application of these rules. After all, the legal-deposit libraries have too much at stake in their relationship with publishers to risk antagonism by indiscriminate reproduction of their works. Libraries acting as "back-ups" to BLLD are also extremely careful in ensuring that the regulations are observed.

If the Committee's recommendations are enacted and eventually become law, it is inevitable that the cost of inter-library loans will increase, and the extra costs will have to be borne either by the requesting library, the supplying library, or eventually the user. Unless, however, some measures are taken to amend the terms of the 1964 Public Libraries and Museums Act, public libraries will certainly not be able to pass increased charges, or any charges at all, for inter-library loans services on to their users. The Act made it clear that a postal notification to a reader that a book or other item was awaiting collection at a library could be charged for; an interlending request, as part of that library's normal services, could not.

What would be the effects on the interlending services of legislation along the lines of the Whitford Report? M.B. Line \* made the following points to the National Committee at its meeting on 7 December, 1977:

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\* Document to the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation dated 25 November 1977

". . . the inevitable result is that inter-library loans will be dearer. In theory it will be possible to lend instead of photocopying, but the difference between the costs of supplying photocopies and sending original loans is now so great that copying fees would have to be very high to make lending more economic, and in either case the effect would be to increase the cost of inter-library loans.

Requesting libraries would be faced with the choice of passing on the cost to their users, which would almost certainly reduce the volume of inter-library loan demand; or they could try and reduce inter-library loan demand in other ways; or they could pay for the extra costs by reducing the number of journals they purchased. This last solution, which would appear to defeat the aim of publishers to extract more money out of libraries, seems the most likely in academic and special libraries; the amount of journal articles requested by public libraries is so small, both absolutely and relative to their total issues, that the effect on them might not be very great."

By late 1978, no further official government action had been taken on the recommendation contained in the Whitford Report, although an association of interested parties, - the Publishers' Association, the Songwriters' Guild of Great Britain and others - did establish a working party to consider details of a possible licensing scheme in the United Kingdom. The new United States copyright law came into force in January 1978 and a Copyright Clearance Center will act as a collecting agency on behalf of publishers for the receipt and distribution of copyright fees. Publishers of journals will, it is expected, indicate in their periodical issues the scale of fees payable for the reproduction of articles from each issue.

Clearly, similar pressures will be applied here in the



United Kingdom, and indeed are being applied in advance of formal legislation. The whole matter is rightly one of extreme concern. Librarians are well aware that they, as the Report says, "owe their very existence to authors and publishers and ought accordingly to be mindful of their interests". At the same time, the inevitable result of implementing these recommendations would be to erect additional barriers along the road to the dissemination of knowledge, by making even more costly the access to the national, informational resource.

## 5.6 Conclusions

"Every public library should be not only a storehouse in itself, but a gateway to the full resources of the region and of the country". This eloquent extract from paragraph 14 of the Bourdillon Report (1962), to which earlier references have been made, can be said to summarise the whole *raison d'être* of inter-library cooperation, provided of course that its scope is extended to include libraries other than public libraries, in a shared, inter-related service.

This study has attempted to trace, in retrospect, the manner in which cooperative schemes for the interloan of library materials developed at national, regional and to a lesser extent local levels, and in prospect has sought to indicate how that pattern might develop anew into the foreseeable future, while noting the powerful changes effected by the passing of the British Library Act of 1972 and its subsequent influence on the re-grouping and enhancement of several of our national institutions.

The Parry Report (1967, paragraph 79) noted that, since it was government finance which provided most of the university, other academic and public library bookstocks (the latter through the Rate Support Grant), all library stocks in an area should be regarded as a pooled resource. The mechanisms of the interlending systems, taken to their logical conclusion, extend that pooled resource to global proportions through international loans.

It now remains only to note briefly some of the topics which will predictably engage the attention of the interlending organisations and their controlling bodies in the near future:

- (1) As the Working Party on the Future Pattern of Interlending indicated (Appendix XV), there is unlikely to be a major re-shaping of the pattern of the Regional Schemes in the near future: any subsequent trend towards the creation of new "Regions" might perhaps unite the West and East Midlands Systems, and the Northern Region with the Yorkshire and Humberside Joint Services.
- (2) Irrespective of the outcome of the Devolution referenda in Scotland and in Wales, it is likely that the National Libraries of both countries will assume more and more of an "apex" function to which other libraries will look for guidance and leadership. In Wales, for certain, the library profession will look to the Welsh Education Office for a more dynamic role in its "library advisory" capacity.
- (3) If economic pressures bear heavily on the contemporary schemes and major-scale interlending breaks down, then libraries might well turn to minor-scale systems and concentrate on local cooperative schemes. In this context, the work done by T.D. Wilson (1975) and W.A.J. Masterson during the Sheffield project funded by the Department of Education and Science has shown important pointers towards the arrangement of effective cooperation within a locality.
- (4) Despite the difficulties caused by political controversies in Ulster, it is probable that a new measure of cooperation will result from the re-constituting of the Committee on Library Co-operation in Ireland, among whose functions will be the co-ordination of cooperative activities and ensuring compatibility between libraries in Northern Ireland and in the Republic.
- (5) As searchers after information become progressively less willing to tolerate long delays, more positive action will be needed in

the sphere of technological aids, such as closed-circuit television for facsimile transmission, by which the researcher can turn the pages of a book or consult a microform by remote control.

- (6) As its stocks continue to grow and its strengths become even better known, the Lending Division's very profitable overseas traffic will continue to increase, although its photocopying services to United Kingdom users could face severe restrictions if sweeping changes are made in the terms of the Copyright Act of 1956.
- (7) An agreed policy will certainly be needed for the inter-lending of non-book materials such as cassetted tapes, slide transparencies, locally-created films and perhaps also in due course for videotapes of televised programmes if these become available for commercial use and purchase by libraries. This is a territory in which problems of copyright ownership will abound, and in which it is feared the reluctance to lend will be only too apparent.
- (8) As more libraries automate their cataloguing and acquisition procedures, notifying new accessions to interlending bureaux, or perhaps to one national data centre, will form part of the future pattern. Libraries in the Wales Region which have joined SWALCAP (the South Western Academic Libraries Cooperative Automation Project) are already taking advantage of this facility.
- (9) Finally, there will be a clear need for continued research and investigation, sponsored as it must be by central government funds, to keep in sight the unchanged objective since the earliest days, namely the creation of the most efficient means of access to library resources not immediately to hand. As Jean M. Plaister has noted (1977, 214): "British initiative

in library cooperation and in the promotion of bibliographic standards has been recognised and copied throughout the world". The pattern, however, is changing constantly and if the objective is to be realised for the next sixty years to the same degree as we have witnessed since the early days of the Central Library for Students in 1916, then the same initiative and dedication will still be our real needs.

APPENDIX I : Comparative Chart of Revenue-Raising Methods in  
the Regional Schemes (February 1974)

The following chart illustrates the methods used by the English Regions and the Scottish Central Library, as constituted in 1974, to finance their work by levying subscriptions and other charges on member libraries. It should be clearly noted that the scale relate to the situation as it was in 1974 and are always liable to be changed. In particular the National Library of Scotland Lending Services, in part the successor of the Scottish Central Library, levy no subscriptions at all, and the charges for the North Western Region were those agreed for the next immediate financial year.

The chart does not include the rates for the Wales Region, which for the 1974-75 financial year were as follows :-  
Public libraries : £1.25 per 1,000 of population; University Colleges and Polytechnics £25 per annum; Local Authority Supported Institutions £15; Special Libraries £10.

| REGION                   | PUBLIC LIBRARIES   | UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES, SPECIAL LIBS.   | OTHER EXTRA CHARGES                                       | COMPARISON per 10,000 population |
|--------------------------|--|---|---|----------------------------------|
| EAST MIDLANDS            | 60p. for 1000 population                                 | £6 per annum, + 5p. for each application in previous year                       | -   | £6 . 00                          |
| LASER                    | £5.30 per 1,000 population                               | £75 p.a.  | -   | £53 . 00                         |
| NORTHERN                 | Basic charge £60 + £1.76 per 1000 population             | £70 p.a. for univ. and polytech. Others by vols. borrowed, e.g. 81-100 + £18.00 | -   | £77 . 60                         |
| NORTH-WESTERN            | (1974-75) £1.60 per 1,000 population                     | £30   | Unit charge, 10p. per borrowing                           | £16 . 00                         |
| SOUTH WEST               | £50 basic + sliding scale, e.g. £1 per 1000 up to 50,000 | £60 (univ. and polyt. others from £5.25 to £21.00)                              | 45p. levied against each vol. supplied from within Region | £60 . 00                         |
| WEST MIDLANDS            | £6 per 5000 population (max. £300)                       | Range from £20 (univ.) to £10 (small special libs.)                             | 50p. per vol. for borrowings within Region                | £12 . 00                         |
| YORKSHIRE                | £33.25 up to 10,000 :<br>20,000 -<br>25,000 =<br>£38.50  | £14   | 20p. per applic. form                                     | £33 . 25                         |
| SCOTTISH CENTRAL LIBRARY | Examples: Aberdeen £391 Fife County £491                 | Voluntary contributions varying from £5 to £100                                 | Not a genuine comparison: 75% Treasury 25% Subs.          | No formula available             |

APPENDIX II

WALES REGIONAL LIBRARY SCHEME :

SUBJECT SPECIALISATION : Questionnaire  
to Non-public Libraries

Survey of availability of new British (BNB-listed) works  
in academic libraries in Wales

1. Does your Library purchase a substantial number of new British (US) publications, as listed in BNB, with any DC classification?  
Yes .... No ....
2. If yes, state DC classes covered and/or subjects:
3. Indicate extent of coverage quantitatively if possible (by deletion):  
100% - 75%; 75% - 50%; 50% - 25%; 25% or less
4. State any exclusions by category, eg., juvenile, government publications, new editions, etc.:
5. List special collections of current British publications:
6. Do you dispose of stock which is still physically useable?  
Yes .... No ....
7. If yes, how: by sale: .... by gift to other libraries: ....  
to off-site bookstore: .... other: ....
8. Would your library wish to be allocated with a subject or DC class appropriate to your institution?  
Yes .... No ....
9. If yes, would you suggest such a subject/subjects or DC class/classes?
10. Any comments:



APPENDIX III

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN LIBRARY REGION  
(LASER)

SCHEDULE A FOR THE REVISED LASER SUBJECT SPECIALISATION  
SCHEME COMMENCING JANUARY 1st 1976

LIBRARIES RESPONSIBLE FOR  
MATERIAL WITHIN THE SCHEME  
APPEARING IN BNB FROM JANUARY  
1st 1976

LIBRARIES RESPONSIBLE FOR  
MATERIAL WITHIN THE SCHEME  
APPEARING IN BNB UNTIL THE  
END OF 1975

|           |                |                                      |                |
|-----------|----------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| 001-009   | Southwark      | 001-099                              | Southwark      |
| 010-015 ) | LASER H.Q.     | (excluding periodicals at            |                |
| 017-019 ) |                | 050, 071-079 a special Bibliography) |                |
| 020-079   |                | Barking                              |                |
| 080-099   | Kingston       |                                      |                |
| 100-199   | Camden         | 100-199 (excluding 133-135)          | Camden         |
|           |                | 133-135                              | Wandsworth     |
| 200-229   | Hammersmith    | 200-219                              | Hammersmith    |
| 230-259   | Lewisham       | 220-259                              | Lewisham       |
| 260-289   | Hammersmith    | 260-289                              | Hammersmith    |
| 290-299   | Kent           | 290-299                              | Westminster    |
| 300-309   | Barnet         | 300-329                              | Hammersmith    |
| 310-319   | East Sussex    |                                      |                |
| 320-326   | East Sussex    |                                      |                |
| 327-329   | Hounslow       |                                      |                |
| 330-331   | Croydon        | 330-339                              | City of London |
| 332-336   | City of London |                                      |                |
| 337-338   | Berkshire      |                                      |                |
| 339       | Merton         |                                      |                |
| 340-349   | Bucks Co.      | 340-354                              | Hammersmith    |
| 350-359   | East Sussex    | 355-379                              | Westminster    |
| 360-369   | Redbridge      |                                      |                |
| 370-379   | Essex          |                                      |                |
| 380-389   | Herts          | 380-389                              | Camden         |
| 390-399   | W. Sussex      | 390-499                              | Kensington     |
| 400-499   | Enfield        |                                      |                |
| 500-509   | Kingston       | 500-529                              | Southwark      |
| 510-519   | Brent          |                                      |                |
| 520-529   | Sutton         |                                      |                |
| 530-535   | Hillingdon     | 530-549                              | Islington      |
| 536       | Richmond       |                                      |                |
| 537-539   | Islington      |                                      |                |
| 540-549   | Essex          |                                      |                |
| 550-559   | Herts Co.      | 550-559                              | Southwark      |
| 560-569   | Havering       | 560-569                              | Kensington     |
| 570-579   | Lewisham       | 570-579                              | Lewisham       |

LIBRARIES RESPONSIBLE FOR  
MATERIAL WITHIN THE SCHEME  
APPEARING IN BNB FROM JANUARY  
1st 1976

|         |                   |
|---------|-------------------|
| 580-589 | Havering          |
| 590-599 | W. Sussex         |
| 600-609 | Kent              |
| 610-614 | Surrey            |
| 615     | Newham            |
| 616     | Kent              |
| 617     | Westminster       |
| 618-619 | W. Sussex         |
| 620-621 | Ealing            |
| 622-628 | Haringey          |
| 629     | Bedfordshire      |
| 630-639 | Bedfordshire      |
| 640-649 | Waltham Forest    |
| 650-659 | Hertfordshire Co. |
| 660-679 | Lambeth           |
| 680-689 | Hackney           |
| 690-699 | Harrow            |
| 700-709 | W. Sussex         |
| 710-719 | Richmond          |
| 720-729 | Harrow            |
| 730-769 | Essex             |
| 770-779 | Islington         |
| 780-789 | Kent              |
| 790-792 | Kent              |
| 793-799 | Greenwich         |
| 800-819 | Tower Hamlets     |
| 820-821 | Kent              |
| 822-823 | East Sussex       |
| 824-829 | Kent              |

LIBRARIES RESPONSIBLE FOR  
MATERIAL WITHIN THE SCHEME  
APPEARING IN BNB UNTIL THE  
END OF 1975

|                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| 580-589                 | Kensington     |
| 590-599                 | Southwark      |
| 600-609                 | Greenwich      |
| 610-618                 | Westminster    |
| 619                     | Camden         |
| 620-628                 | Greenwich      |
| 629                     | Hackney        |
| 630-649                 | Camden         |
| 650-659                 | City of London |
| 660-679 (excluding 675) | Lambeth        |
| 675                     | Southwark      |
| 680-689                 | Hackney        |
| 690-699                 | Wandsworth     |
| 700-709                 | Westminster    |
| 710-729 (excluding 712) | Wandsworth     |
| 712                     | Camden         |
| 730-769                 | Westminster    |
| 770-779                 | Islington      |
| 780-789                 | Westminster    |
| 790                     | Greenwich      |
| 791-2                   | Westminster    |
| 793-799                 | Greenwich      |
| 800-819                 | Tower Hamlets  |
| 820-829                 | Westminster    |

LIBRARIES RESPONSIBLE FOR  
MATERIAL WITHIN THE SCHEME  
APPEARING IN BNB FROM JANUARY  
1st 1976

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|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| 830-849     | Tower Hamlets                                   |
| 850-868     | Westminster                                     |
| 869         | Tower Hamlets                                   |
| 870-889     | Kent  |
| 890-899     | Richmond  |
| 900-909     | Merton  |
| 910-912     | Wandsworth                                      |
| 913         | Bexley  |
| 914-914.2   | Surrey (London coll.<br>dup. by City of London) |
| 914.3-914.9 | Wandsworth                                      |
| 915-919     | Bromley   |

LIBRARIES RESPONSIBLE FOR  
MATERIAL WITHIN THE SCHEME  
APPEARING IN BNB UNTIL THE  
END OF 1975

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|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 830-849   | (excluding Sub-divisions<br>listed below<br>Tower Hamlets     |
| 839.2     | Westminster   |
| 839.3     | Westminster   |
| 839.31    | Westminster   |
| 839.32    | Westminster   |
| 839.36    | Westminster   |
| 839.5     | Wandsworth  |
| 839.6     | Wandsworth  |
| 839.7     | Wandsworth  |
| 839.81    | Kensington  |
| 839.82    | Southwark   |
| 849.9-858 | Westminster   |
| 859       | Hackney   |
| 860-868   | Westminster   |
| 869       | Tower Hamlets   |
| 870-888   | Southwark   |
| 889       | Camden  |
| 890-895   | (excluding the sub-<br>divisions listed below)<br>Hammersmith |
| 891.85    | Kensington  |
| 891.86    | Camden  |
| 892.49    | Tower Hamlets   |
| 894.541   | Southwark   |
| 896-899   | Kensington  |
| 900-913   | (excluding the sub-<br>divisions listed below)<br>Wandsworth  |
| 913.3     | Southwark   |
| 913.41    | Lewisham  |
| 913.42    | Lewisham  |
| 914-919   | (see 940-999)   |

LIBRARIES RESPONSIBLE FOR  
MATERIAL WITHIN THE SCHEME  
APPEARING IN BNB FROM JANUARY  
1st 1976

---

920-929           Kensington  
          (929 duplicated by Sutton)  
930-939           Bexley  
940-942           Surrey (London coll.  
                  dup. by City of London)  
  
943-949           Wandsworth  
950-999           Bromley

LIBRARIES RESPONSIBLE FOR  
MATERIAL WITHIN THE SCHEME  
APPEARING IN BNB UNTIL THE  
END OF 1975

---

920-929           Kensington  
  
930-939           Southwark  
940                )   Wandsworth  
941-942           )   Lewisham  
942.1             )   City of London  
943-949           )   Wandsworth  
950-999           )   Hackney  
                  (with corresponding classes  
                  of 914-919)

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN LIBRARY REGION  
(LASER)

SCHEDULE B FOR THE REVISED LASER SUBJECT SPECIALISATION  
SCHEME COMMENCING JANUARY 1st 1976

| LIBRARY AUTHORITY | SUBJECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR BOOKS APPEARING IN BNB FROM JANUARY 1st 1976            | SUBJECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR BOOKS APPEARING IN BNB UNTIL THE END OF 1975 |
|-------------------|--|---|
| BARKING           | 020-079  |   |
| BARNET            | 300-309  |   |
| BEDFORDSHIRE      | 629 (duplicated at Hackney)<br>630-639   |   |
| BERKSHIRE         | 337-338  |   |
| BEXLEY            | 913<br>930-939   |   |
| BRENT             | 510-519  |   |
| BROMLEY           | 915-919<br>950-999   |   |
| BUCKINGHAMSHIRE   | 340-349  |   |
| CAMDEN            | 100-199  | 100-199<br>380-389<br>619<br>630-649<br>712<br>889<br>891.86            |
| CITY OF LONDON    | 332-336<br>London collection<br>(914.21 & 942.1)                                   | 330-339<br>650-659<br>914.21; 942.1                                     |
| CROYDON           | 330-331  |   |
| EALING            | 620-621  |   |
| EAST SUSSEX       | 310-319<br>320-326<br>350-359<br>(355-359 duplicated at<br>westminster)<br>822-823 |   |
| ENFIELD           | 400-499  |   |

| LIBRARY<br>AUTHORITY | SUBJECT RESPONSIBILITY<br>FOR BOOKS APPEARING IN BNB<br>FROM JANUARY 1st 1976   | SUBJECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR<br>BOOKS APPEARING IN BNB<br>UNTIL THE END OF 1975 |
|----------------------|---|---|
| ESSEX                | 370-379 (duplicated at<br>Westminster)<br>540-549<br>730-769 (duplicated at<br>Westminster)   |   |
| GREENWICH            | 793-799   | 600-609<br>620-628<br>790<br>793-799  |
| HACKNEY              | 629 (duplicated at<br>Bedfordshire)<br>680-689  | 629<br>680-689<br>859<br>915-919<br>950-999                                   |
| HAMMERSMITH          | 200-229<br>260-289  | 200-219<br>260-289<br>300-329<br>340-354<br>890-895                           |
| HARINGEY             | 622-628   |   |
| HARROW               | 690-699<br>720-729  |   |
| HAVERING             | 560-569<br>580-589  |   |
| HERTFORDSHIRE        | 380-389<br>550-559<br>650-659   |   |
| HILLINGDON           | 530-535   |   |
| HOUNSLOW             | 327-329   |   |
| ISLINGTON            | 537-539<br>770-779  | 530-549<br>770-779  |
| KENSINGTON           | 920-929 (929 duplicated<br>at Sutton)   | 390-499<br>560-569<br>580-589<br>839.81; 891.85;<br>896-899<br>920-929        |
| KENT                 | 290-299<br>600-609<br>616 (duplicated at Westminster)<br>780-789 ( " " " " )<br>790-792 (791-792 duplicated<br>at Westminster)<br>820-821<br>824-829<br>870-889 |   |

| LIBRARY AUTHORITY | SUBJECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR BOOKS APPEARING IN BNB FROM JANUARY 1st 1976                                       | SUBJECT RESPONSIBILITY FOR BOOKS APPEARING IN BNB UNTIL THE END OF 1975   |
|-------------------|---|---|
| KINGSTON          | 080-099<br>500-509  |   |
| LAMBETH           | 660-679   | 660-679 (excluding 675)   |
| LASER H.Q.        | 010-015<br>017-019  |   |
| LEWISHAM          | 230-259<br>570-579  | 220-259<br>570-579<br>913.431 - 913.432<br>914.1 - 914.2 (excl. 914.21)<br>941-942 (excluding 942.1)                |
| MERTON            | 339<br>900-909  |   |
| NEWHAM            | 615 (duplicated at Westminster)   |   |
| REDBRIDGE         | 360-369   |   |
| RICHMOND          | 536<br>710-719<br>890-899   |   |
| SOUTHWARK         | 001-009   | 001-099 (excluding 016)<br>500-529<br>550-559<br>590-599<br>675<br>839.82<br>870-888<br>894.541<br>913.3<br>930.939 |
| SURREY            | 610-614 (duplicated at Westminster)<br>914-914.2 (London<br>940-942 collections duplicated at City of London) |   |
| SUTTON            | 520-529<br>929 (duplicated at Kensington)   |   |
| TOWER HAMLETS     | 800-819<br>830-849<br>869   | 800-819<br>830-849 (with minor exceptions)<br>869<br>892.49   |
| WALTHAM FOREST    | 640-649   |   |

| LIBRARY<br>AUTHORITY | SUBJECT RESPONSIBILITY<br>FOR BOOKS APPEARING IN BNB<br>FROM JANUARY 1st 1976  | SUBJECT RESPONSIBILITY<br>FOR BOOKS APPEARING IN BNB<br>UNTIL THE END OF 1975  |
|----------------------|--|--|
| WANDSWORTH           | 910-912<br>914.3-914.9<br>943-949  | 133-135<br>690-699<br>710-729 (excluding 712)<br>839.5-839.7<br>900-913 (with minor<br>exceptions)<br>914; 914.3-914.9<br>940; 943-949 |
| WEST SUSSEX          | 390-399<br>590-599<br>618-619<br>700-709 (duplicated at<br>Westminster)  |  |
| WESTMINSTER          | 617<br>850-868<br>(Westminster has indicated<br>that it will continue to<br>maintain its collections at<br>355-379, 610-618,<br>700-709, 730-769,<br>780-789 and 791-792 | 290-299<br>355-379<br>610-618<br>700-709<br>730-769<br>780-789<br>791-792<br>820-829<br>839.2; 839.3<br>849.9 - 858<br>860-868         |



APPENDIX IV

Suggested categories for compilation of ILL  
Statistics October 1975 - March 1976

Name of library:

Region:

NB. 'Loan' includes photocopies.

1. OUTGOING INTERLIBRARY LOAN REQUESTS

| A. <u>Sent to</u>   | No. of requests |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Bureau   |                 |
| 2. BLLD   |                 |
| Direct to another library:  |                 |
| 3. Using location supplied by Bureau  |                 |
| 4. " " " " BLLD   |                 |
| 5. " ISBN list  |                 |
| 6. " other union lists  |                 |
| 7. other libraries - using catalogues or other information (London Library, etc.) |                 |
| 8. other libraries - speculative  |                 |

| B. <u>Supplied by</u>       | Items received |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| 1. BLLD                     |                |
| 2. Libraries within region  |                |
| 3. Libraries outside region |                |
| 4. Library abroad           |                |

2. INCOMING INTERLIBRARY LOANS REQUESTS

|                                 | Requests received | Items Supplied |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Received from within region  |                   |                |
| 2. Received from outside region |                   |                |

APPENDIX V

NATIONAL COLLECTION OF ILL STATISTICS

Proposed list of analyses:

- |    |                    |   |                         |   |
|----|--------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| 1. | Category           | X | Requesting Library      |   |
| 2. | "                  |   | Successful Channel      |   |
| 3. | "                  |   | Source                  |   |
| 4. | "                  |   | Form of supply          |   |
| 5. | "                  |   | No of applications made |   |
| 6. | "                  |   | Failed channels         | ←   |
| 7. | "                  |   | Time taken              | ←   |
| 8. | Requesting Library | X | Successful Channel      |   |
| 9. | "                  | " | Source                  |   |
| 0. | "                  | " | Failed channels         | ←   |
| 1. | Time taken         | X | Successful Channel      | ✓ for requests successful first time only |
| 2. | "                  | " | No of applications made |   |
| 3. | Successful channel | X | Source                  |   |
| 4. | "                  | " | Failed channels         |   |
| 5. | Channel used       | X | Success/Failure         |   |

Calculations would also be made of mean time taken per request and mean number of applications necessary per request (and hence mean time taken per application).

### III. STATISTICS FORM - CODES TO BE USED

#### Categories

- 1 = Monograph (incl. pamphlets)
- 2 = Serial
- 3 = Other Printed - ie all 'hard copy' printed material which cannot be classed as monograph or serial - eg reports, govt. pubs., music scores, theses.
- 4 = Non print material - eg records, tape-slides, films, microform.

#### Channel via which request was satisfied

- 1 = British Library
- 2 = Regional Bureaux
- 3 = Direct - excluding locations supplied by BLLD (coded 1) and use of ISBN or similar list (coded 4)
- 4 = ISBN list - including other regionally produced union lists available for direct borrowing eg BNB lists, LASER'S 1950-catalogue.
- 5 = Unsatisfied

#### Source from which received

- 1 = British Library (BLLD or BLRD including SRL)
- 2 = Public Library
- 3 = Academic Library
- 4 = Other
- 5 = Unsatisfied

#### Form of Supply

- 1 = Loan - including loan of a Xerox copy or microform
- 2 = Copy for retention
- 3 = Unsatisfied

#### Failed Channels

Insert '1' in each channel tried unsuccessfully - even if the channel was later tried successfully - eg 2 direct applications.

#### Date, Date Requested

Code in the format .11.01.77 (say) for Jan 11th 1977. Please insert date on every line filled in.

#### Applications made

Insert number of times request was sent to a library for satisfying. Do not include checks in ISBN list. Trying the same library twice = 2 applications.

(15)

to line to be used for each item, to be filled in when (and not before) the item is received or when the request is abandoned as unsatisfied. (A multi-volume work is considered as one item).

Name of Library \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Library (see note 1 overleaf). \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Library (see note 2 overleaf). \_\_\_\_\_

Does the Library belong to a regional library system? \_\_\_\_\_

1-Yes  
2-No

| Category | Date requested | Channel via which request was satisfied | Source from which received | Form of supply | Total number of applications made | 'Failed channels |        |        |      |
|----------|----------------|---|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|--------|--------|------|
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   | BL               | Region | Direct | ISBN |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |
|          |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                  |        |        |      |

0 BE USED  
1-Monograph  
2-Serial  
3-Other printed  
4-Non print Media

1-BL  
2-Region  
3-Direct  
4-ISBN  
5-Unsatisfied

1-BL  
2-Public  
3-Academic  
4-Other  
5-Unsatisfied

1-Loan  
2-Copy for retention  
3-Unsatisfied

Insert number of times request was sent to a library

Insert "1" in each channel tried unsuccessfully, even if the channel was subsequently tried successfully

INTERLIBRARY LOANS STATISTICS FORM

FORM (B)

line to be used for each item, to be filled in when (and not before) the item is received or when the request is abandoned as unsatisfied. (A multi-volume work is considered as one item).

COMPLETED  
S.M.P.L.C.

Name of Library Public Library

Type of Library (see note 1 overleaf).  2

Location of Library (see note 2 overleaf).  0

Is the Library a member of a regional library system?  1

1-Yes  
2-No

| Category   | Date requested | Channel via which request was satisfied | Source from which received | Form of supply | Total number of applications made | Failed channels |        |        |      |
|--|----------------|---|----------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--------|--------|------|
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   | EL              | Region | Direct | ISBN |
| 1<br>- Monograph supplied first time from EL as loan   | 26/1/77        | 1                                       | 1                          | 1              | 1                                 |                 |        |        |      |
| 2<br>- Serial requested from EL but supplied by a back-up library as a loan                  | 19/1/77        | 1                                       | 3                          | 1              | 2                                 |                 |        |        |      |
| 1<br>- Monograph requested directly from 4 separate libraries, then abandoned as unsatisfied | 5/1/77         | 5                                       | 5                          | 3              | 4                                 |                 |        | 1      |      |
| 1<br>- Monograph tried in ISBN list, failed, and then requested from EL and sent as a loan   | 1/2/77         | 1                                       | 1                          | 1              | 1                                 |                 |        |        | 1    |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |
|  |                |   |                            |                |                                   |                 |        |        |      |

- 1-Monograph
- 2-Serial
- 3-Other printed
- 4-Non print Media
- 1-BL
- 2-Region
- 3-Direct
- 4-ISBN
- 5-Unsatisfied
- 1-BL
- 2-Public
- 3-Academic
- 4-Other
- 5-Unsatisfied
- 1-Loan
- 2-Copy for retention
- 3-Unsatisfied
- Insert number "1" in each channel tried of times re-unsuccesfully, even if the channel request was subsequently tried successfully sent to a library

Codes as under 'Source from which received'

2 Location of Library

|          |                           |             |    |                     |
|----------|---------------------------|-------------|----|---------------------|
| England: | 1 = Avon                  |             | 39 | West Sussex         |
|          | 2 Bedfordshire            |             | 40 | Tyne and Wear       |
|          | 3 Berkshire               |             | 41 | Warwickshire        |
|          | 4 Buckinghamshire         |             | 42 | West Midlands       |
|          | 5 Cambridgeshire          |             | 43 | Wiltshire           |
|          | 6 Cheshire                |             | 44 | North Yorkshire     |
|          | 7 Cleveland               |             | 45 | South Yorkshire     |
|          | 8 Cornwall & Scilly Isles |             | 46 | West Yorkshire      |
|          | 9 Cumbria                 |             |    |                     |
|          | 10 Derbyshire             | Wales:      | 47 | Clwyd               |
|          | 11 Devon                  |             | 48 | Dyfed               |
|          | 12 Dorset                 |             | 49 | Mid Glamorgan       |
|          | 13 Durham                 |             | 50 | South Glamorgan     |
|          | 14 Essex                  |             | 51 | West Glamorgan      |
|          | 15 Gloucestershire        |             | 52 | Gwent               |
|          | 16 Greater Manchester     |             | 53 | Gwynedd             |
|          | 17 Hampshire              |             | 54 | Powys               |
|          | 18 Hereford & Worcester   |             |    |                     |
|          | 19 Hertfordshire          | Scotland:   | 55 | Borders             |
|          | 20 Humberside             |             | 56 | Central             |
|          | 21 Isle of Wight          |             | 57 | Dumfries & Galloway |
|          | 22 Kent                   |             | 58 | Fife                |
|          | 23 Lancashire             |             | 59 | Grampian            |
|          | 24 Leicestershire         |             | 60 | Highland            |
|          | 25 Lincolnshire           |             | 61 | Lothian             |
|          | 26 London                 |             | 62 | Orkney              |
|          | 27 Merseyside             |             | 63 | Shetland            |
|          | 28 Norfolk                |             | 64 | Strathclyde         |
|          | 29 Northamptonshire       |             | 65 | Tayside             |
|          | 30 Northumberland         |             | 66 | Western Isles       |
|          | 31 Nottinghamshire        |             |    |                     |
|          | 32 Oxfordshire            | N. Ireland: | 67 | Antrim              |
|          | 33 Salop                  |             | 68 | Armagh              |
|          | 34 Somerset               |             | 69 | Down                |
|          | 35 Staffordshire          |             | 70 | Formanagh           |
|          | 36 Suffolk                |             | 71 | Londonderry         |
|          | 37 Surrey                 |             | 72 | Tyrone              |
|          | 38 East Sussex            |             |    |                     |

APPENDIX VIII : WEST MIDLANDS RLB : Statistical returns, 1976-77

.....(Name of Library)

WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL LIBRARY BUREAU

Record of items lent to other libraries, 1976-77

| <u>LIBRARY</u>                          | <u>NUMBER OF ITEMS LENT</u> (Please put a ✓ each time you send a work on loan) |
|---|--|
| Birmingham                              |  |
| Coventry                                |  |
| Dudley                                  |  |
| Sandwell                                |  |
| Solihull                                |  |
| Walsall                                 |  |
| Wolverhampton                           |  |
| Hereford & Worcester                    |  |
| Salop                                   |  |
| Staffordshire                           |  |
| Warwickshire                            |  |
| Aluminium Federation                    |  |
| Aston University                        |  |
| Birmingham Polytechnic                  |  |
| British Cast Iron Res. Ass.             |  |
| Birmingham Library<br>(Margaret Street) |  |
| Birmingham University                   |  |
| Bilston C of F.E.                       |  |
| Cadbury Schweppes,                      |  |

Coventry Technical Coll.  
 Dudley C of E.  
 Dudley Technical Coll.  
 East Warwickshire C of FE  
 G.K.N.  
 Hereford Coll. of Ed.  
 I.M.I.  
 Lucas Research  
 Keele University  
 Lanchester Polytechnic  
 CEGB (Midlands Projects)  
 N. Warwickshire Coll.  
 Nat. Veg. Res. Station  
 Redditch C of F.E.  
 Redditch Dev. Corp.  
 SEC Turbines Gen. Ltd.  
 Shakespeare's Birthpl.  
 Shenstone College,  
 North Staffs, Polytechnic  
 Staffordshire C of F.E.  
 Selby Oak Colleges,  
 St. Peter's Coll. Salt.  
 Shrewsbury Tech. Coll  
 Worcester C of E.  
 West Midlands C of E.  
 Wolverhampton Polytech.  
 Wlv. Teacher's Coll.  
 Warwick University  
 West Bromwich C of C & T  
 Wlfrun C of F.E.  
 Libraries outside the  
 West Midlands,



APPENDICES IX - X : STATISTICAL RETURNS, OTHER REGIONS, 1976:  
LASER, SOUTH WESTERN, NORTHERN, NORTH WESTERN

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN LIBRARY REGION  
(LASER)

Please return one copy to the Director

INTER-LIBRARY LENDING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1976.

Report from..LONDON. BOROUGH. OF. EALING, LIBRARY. SERVICE.....

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS LENT

- I. to other libraries in the Region (including BBC and non-public library subscribers)
- (a) Non-fiction loans within LASER (loans arranged via LASER and direct) .....
  - (b) Fiction (Joint Fiction Reserve etc.) .....
- II. to all other libraries
- (a) Non-fiction .....
  - (b) Fiction (Joint Fiction Reserve etc.) .....

BOOKS AND PERIODICALS BORROWED

- I. From other libraries in the Region:
- (a) Non-fiction
    - (i) via LASER .....
    - (ii) direct, using microfilm catalogue computer print-out etc. ....
  - (b) Fiction (Joint Fiction Reserve, etc.) .....
- II. from all other libraries
- (a) Non-fiction ).....
  - (b) Fiction (National Fiction Reserve etc.).....

NOTE Please note that photocopies supplied in response to a request should be counted as a loan.

Date.....

Signed.....

SOUTH WESTERN REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

RETURN OF APPLICATIONS SATISFIED

LIBRARY.....CODE.....MONTH.....19....

| Index        | Library                            | Satisfied |          | Code No. | Library                           | Satisfied  |          |
|--------------|------------------------------------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------------------------------|--|----------|
|              |                                    | by Loan   | by Xerox |          |                                   | by Loan  | by Xerox |
| 7            | Avon County Library                |           |          |          | Brought fwd..                     |  |          |
| 3            | Cornwall County Library            |           |          | 96       | St.Paul's Coll., Cheltenham       |  |          |
| 4            | Devon County Library               |           |          | 89       | W.Glos.Coll.Further Education     |  |          |
| 5            | Dorset County Library              |           |          | 106      | Analytical Labs.Ltd., Corsham     |  |          |
| 0            | Gloucestershire County Library     |           |          | 83       | Atomic Energy Est., Winfrith      |  |          |
| 2            | Hampshire County Library           |           |          | 97       | St.Luke's Coll., Exeter           |  |          |
| 3            | Isle of Wight County Library       |           |          | 17       | Exeter University                 |  |          |
| 0            | Oxfordshire County Library         |           |          | 102      | Filton Tech. Coll.                |  |          |
| 8            | Somerset County Library            |           |          | 65       | Dowty Rotol Ltd., Gloucester      |  |          |
| 6            | Wiltshire County Library           |           |          | 104      | Glos.City Coll. of Tech.          |  |          |
| 1            | N.Devon Athenaeum                  |           |          | 98       | Glos.Coll.Educ., Gloucester       |  |          |
| 5            | Basingstoke Tech.Coll.             |           |          | 114      | Fire Service Tech.Coll.           |  |          |
| 3            | Police Coll., Basingstoke          |           |          | 66       | Oxford Polytechnic                |  |          |
| 1            | Bath Coll.Educ.(Home Economics)    |           |          | 118      | Plymouth Coll. Further Educ.      |  |          |
| 2            | Bath University                    |           |          | 111      | Plymouth Polytechnic              |  |          |
| 7            | Bath Tech.Coll                     |           |          | 90       | C.E.G.B., Portishead              |  |          |
| 1            | Newton Park Coll., Bath            |           |          | 86       | Admiralty Surface Weapons Est.    |  |          |
| 2            | C.E.G.B., Berkeley                 |           |          | 82       | Highbury Tech.Coll., Portsmouth   |  |          |
| 7            | Bournemouth Coll.of Tech.          |           |          | 10       | Portsmouth Polytechnic            |  |          |
| 4            | C.E.G.B., Bristol                  |           |          | 76       | Cornwall Tech.Coll., Redruth      |  |          |
| 3            | Coll.of St.Matthias, Bristol       |           |          | 99       | Coll.Sarum St.Michael, Salisbury  |  |          |
|              | Coombe Lodge Staff Coll., Bristol  |           |          | 78       | C.E.G.B., Marchwood               |  |          |
|              | Imperial Tobacco Co.Ltd., Bristol  |           |          | 81       | Coll. of Air Training, Hamble     |  |          |
|              | Bristol Poly. (Aslcy Down)         |           |          | 69       | Esso Petroleum Company            |  |          |
|              | Bristol Poly. (Unity St.)          |           |          | 105      | Ordnance Survey                   |  |          |
|              | Bristol Poly. (Fac.Art & Design)   |           |          | 40       | Southampton University            |  |          |
|              | Mander, Raikes & Marshall, Bristol |           |          | 119      | Mid-Glos. Tech.Coll., Stroud      |  |          |
|              | Redland College, Bristol           |           |          | 91       | The College, Swindon              |  |          |
|              | St.Anne's Board Mili, Bristol      |           |          | 110      | Somerset Coll. Arts & Tech.       |  |          |
|              | Soundwell Tech.Coll., Bristol      |           |          | 108      | Redac Software Ltd., Tewkesbury   |  |          |
|              | Bristol University                 |           |          | 100      | Coll. of Education, Weymouth      |  |          |
|              | Bristol Univ. School of Educ.      |           |          | 79       | S.Dorset Tech.Coll., Weymouth     |  |          |
|              | Bristol Univ. Long Ashton R.S.     |           |          | 109      | King Alfred's College, Winchester |  |          |
|              | RAC Guided Weapons Div., Bristol   |           |          |          |                                   |  |          |
|              | Glos. Coll. Art, Cheltenham        |           |          |          |                                   |  |          |
|              | Glos.Tech.Inf.Service, Cheltenham  |           |          |          |                                   |  |          |
|              | N.Glos.Coll.Tech., Cheltenham      |           |          |          |                                   |  |          |
|              | National Coal Board Cheltenham     |           |          |          |                                   |  |          |
|              | St. Mary's Coll., Cheltenham       |           |          |          |                                   |  |          |
|              | Carried fwd..                      |           |          |          |                                   |  |          |
| Totals ..... |                                    |           |          |          |                                   |  |          |
|              |                                    |           |          |          |                                   | Total number of applications satisfied on behalf of other Libraries (via BLLD, etc.) |          |

N O R T H E R N   R E G I O N A L   L I B R A R Y   S Y S T E M

Library \_\_\_\_\_

STATISTICAL RETURN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 1976

Number of items (i.e. volumes and photocopies) borrowed within the Region through application to NRLB \_\_\_\_\_

Number of items borrowed within the Region from locations on the ISBN Index (ONLY APPLIES TO LIBRARIES SUBSCRIBING TO THE ISBN INDEX) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of items borrowed through NRLB from BLLD and other libraries outside the Region \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS BORROWED \_\_\_\_\_

Number of items lent within the Region \_\_\_\_\_

Number of items lent to BLLD and other libraries outside the Region \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NUMBER OF ITEMS LENT \_\_\_\_\_

Joint Fiction Reserves

Number of books borrowed through Provincial J.F.R. \_\_\_\_\_

Number of books borrowed through Inner London J.F.R. \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL NUMBER OF BOOKS BORROWED \_\_\_\_\_

Number of books lent (APPLIES TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES ONLY) \_\_\_\_\_

Approximate number of books held on 31st March 1976 (APPLIES TO PUBLIC LIBRARIES ONLY) \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form to the Bureau by April 15th:

N.R.L.B.,  
Central Library,  
Newcastle upon Tyne,  
NE99 1MC.

NORTH WESTERN REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

INTERLIBRARY LOAN STATISTICS

NAME OF LIBRARY.....Six months ended.....

1. BORROWED

Number of items borrowed

|   | <u>Vols</u> | <u>Photocopies</u> |
|---|-------------|--------------------|
| a) From libraries within the Region<br>(If your library subscribes to the ISBN location index, please say how many of these were borrowed through the use of the index) | .....       | .....              |
| b) from BLLD stock  | .....       | .....              |
| c) from other libraries outside the Region  | .....       | .....              |
| d) from libraries abroad  | .....       | .....              |

2. LENT

Number of items lent

|                                    |       |       |
|------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| a) to libraries within the Region  | ..... | ..... |
| b) to libraries outside the Region | ..... | ..... |
| c) to libraries abroad             | ..... | ..... |

3. JOINT FICTION RESERVES

a) ✓ Provincial Joint Fiction Reserve

Number of vols. borrowed by your library

.....

Number of vols. lent by your library

.....

b) ✓ Metropolitan Joint Fiction Reserve

Number of volumes borrowed by your library

.....

4. RECORDED SOUND SCHEME

a) Number of items borrowed within the Region

Gramophone records.....

Cassettes.....

b) Number of items lent within the Region

Gramophone records.....

Cassettes.....

5. SETS OF VOCAL SCORES (NWRLS scheme for co-operative provision)

a) Number of sets borrowed

.....

b) Number of sets lent

.....

It is requested that this statement be returned to the Editor, North Western Regional Library Bureau, Central Library, Manchester, M2 5PD no later than the 20th October or 10th April as appropriate.

## APPENDIX XI

### A POSSIBLE SCHEME FOR THE COLLECTION OF REGIONAL ILL STATISTICS

The basic ideas behind this suggestion are :-

- i. The routine collection of statistics should be at member libraries and regional headquarters using simple forms to record daily totals under a variety of headings. Similar forms could be used at headquarters to collate and total the figures for the production of annual statistical summaries.
- ii. After detailed study of each region's requirements and procedures, a minimal set of exhaustive and mutually exclusive headings under which to record transactions can be drawn up. Some of the headings would not be relevant to certain regions (eg, references to a regional stock of books) and regions would also be at liberty to further subdivide these headings for their own purpose if they wish (eg they may wish to distinguish loans from photocopies).
- iii. There should be an agreed format for the presentation of annual statistical summaries. Again, there will be a minimal set of headings under which the data should be presented, but some headings can be omitted as irrelevant, or further subdivided as appropriate.

Figures 1 and 2 represent the type of daily record sheets that each library would complete. Figure 1 refers to ILL requests made by the library completing the form, figure 2 to those sent to that library. The headings can be taken as a draft "minimal set" for the national scheme, although they may not include all possibilities. If they are, in places, too detailed for a national scheme, appropriate amalgamations could be made. Note that in figure 1, a request satisfied by BLLD could be counted in one of two places, depending on whether the request was made via regional headquarters (as happens in some regions) or

direct from the requesting library to BLLD. In practice probably only one or the other would be used in a particular region.

Either the headquarters or the member library would transfer the monthly totals from figures 1 and 2 to similar sheets and obtain annual totals. The annual totals from all members would then be totalled to provide annual summaries for the region.

A framework for the annual summary is provided by figures 3, 4, and 5. Figure 3 contains the totals for all member libraries, under the headings for figure 1, and figure 4 contains similar totals from figure 2. Annual totals from both figures 1 and 2 for each member are combined to present the table in figure 5.

The tables are broadly similar to, though generally rather more detailed than, the type of analysis already presented by the regions. They should be supplemented by a summary of statistics relating to the work of the headquarters. Here there may well be more variation from region to region, though it may still be possible to produce a national framework within which regional variations can be allowed for. Areas that could be covered include:

Cataloguing Statistics

Statistics of requests received

Numbers of locations provided

Numbers of forms sent on rota, etc.

R J STEEMSON

Research Section, BLLD

August 1977

APPENDIX  
XII

NAME OF LIBRARY .....

MONTH .....

YEAR .....

DAILY TOTALS OF I.L.L. TRANSACTIONS COMPLETED

| DATE:                              | 1                      | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | TOTAL FOR MONTH |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----------------|
| NON-FICTION                        |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| A. SATISFIED VIA REGIONAL SYSTEM   |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| application via Bureau:            | From Regional Stock    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
|                                    | From Members of Region |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
|                                    | From BLLD              |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
|                                    | From other Libraries   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| direct application                 | Microfilm Catalogue    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
|                                    | Specialization Scheme  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
|                                    |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| B. SATISFIED VIA BLLD.             |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| From BLLD stock                    |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| From Members of Region             |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| From other libraries.              |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| C. SATISFIED VIA OTHER CHANNELS    |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| D. UNSATISFIED REQUESTS ABANDONED  |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| FICTION                            |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| Supplied by Members of Region      |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| Supplied by other libraries        |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| Unsatisfied Requests Abandoned     |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| OTHER CATEGORIES:<br>(As required) |                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |

Fig 2

NAME OF LIBRARY .....

MONTH .....

YEAR .....

DAILY TOTALS OF ITEMS SUPPLIED ON I.L.L.

| DATE:                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | TOTAL FOR MONTH |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----------------|
| NON FICTION                             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| ITEMS SUPPLIED TO MEMBER LIBRARIES      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| ITEMS SUPPLIED TO OTHER LIBRARIES       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| ILL REQUESTS RECEIVED BUT NOT SATISFIED |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| FICTION                                 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| ITEMS SUPPLIED TO MEMBER LIBRARIES      |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| ITEMS SUPPLIED TO OTHER LIBRARIES       |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| ILL REQUESTS RECEIVED BUT NOT SATISFIED |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |
| OTHER CATEGORIES                        |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |                 |



APPENDIX XII : BLLD's suggested scheme (1977) for the national compilation of interlending statistics.

I.L.L. REQUESTS MADE

(i) Non-Fiction

A SATISFIED VIA REGIONAL SYSTEM

Via Bureau: Supplied from Regional Stock  
 Supplied by Members of Region  
 Supplied by BLLD  
 Supplied by Other Libraries

Direct: Microfilm catalogue location  
 Regional Specialization Schemes

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

B SATISFIED VIA BLLD

Supplied from BLLD stock  
 Supplied by Members of Region  
 Supplied by other libraries

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

C SATISFIED VIA OTHER CHANNELS

D UNSATISFIED REQUESTS

TOTAL Non-Fiction Requests \_\_\_\_\_

(ii) Fiction

Supplied by Members of Region  
 Supplied by Other Libraries  
 Unsatisfied Requests

TOTAL Fiction Requests \_\_\_\_\_

(iii) Any other categories recorded

(i.e. playsets, music scores, etc.)

I.L.L. ITEMS SUPPLIED BY REGION

|       |                          |                                     |       |
|-------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| (1)   | <u>Non-Fiction</u>       |                                     |       |
|       | <u>Regional Stock:</u>   | Items supplied to members of region |       |
|       |                          | Items supplied to other libraries   |       |
|       |                          | Unsatisfied applications received   | _____ |
|       |                          | TOTAL                               |       |
|       | <u>Member Libraries:</u> | Items supplied to members of region |       |
|       |                          | Items supplied to other libraries   |       |
|       |                          | Unsatisfied applications received   | _____ |
|       |                          | TOTAL                               |       |
| (ii)  | <u>Fiction</u>           | Items supplied to members of region |       |
|       |                          | Items supplied to other libraries   |       |
|       |                          | Unsatisfied applications received   | _____ |
|       |                          | TOTAL                               |       |
| (iii) | <u>Other Categories</u>  |                                     |       |

I.L.L. STATISTICS OF MEMBERS

FIG. 5

| NAME OF LIBRARY | I.L.L. REQUESTS MADE              |                                       |                           |                     | I.L.L. REQUESTS RECEIVED      |                             |                             |       |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|
|                 | SUPPLIED THROUGH REGIONAL CHANNEL | SUPPLIED THROUGH NON-REGIONAL CHANNEL | I.L.L. REQUESTS ABANDONED | TOTAL REQUESTS MADE | SUPPLIED TO MEMBERS OF REGION | SUPPLIED TO OTHER LIBRARIES | I.L.L. REQUESTS UNSATISFIED | TOTAL |
|                 |                                   |                                       |                           |                     |                               |                             |                             |       |
| <b>TOTALS</b>   |                                   |                                       |                           |                     |                               |                             |                             |       |
|                 |                                   |                                       |                           |                     |                               |                             |                             |       |
|                 |                                   |                                       |                           |                     |                               |                             |                             |       |

APPENDIX XIII: Specification for conversion of union catalogue data to 80-column punched cards, LASER/BNB and Wales Regional Library Schemes.

| LASER / BNB |        |      | FORMAT : CARDS | RECSIZE : 80 | BLOCKSIZE :     |
|-------------|--------|------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|
| COLUMN      | LENGTH | CODE | CONTENT        | EXAMPLE      | NOTES           |
| 1           | 8      |      | BNB Number     | 61 - 12345   |                 |
| 9           | 1      |      | Blank          |              |                 |
| 10          | 3      |      | Library code   | 003          |                 |
| 13          | 1      |      | Blank or D     |              | D = Delete      |
| 14          | 3      |      | Library code   | 019          |                 |
| 17          | 1      |      | Blank or D     | D            | "If the library |
| 18          | 4      |      | As Cols 14-17  |              | code is left    |
|             |        |      |                |              | blank at any    |
|             |        |      |                |              | point the       |
|             |        |      |                |              | remainder of    |
| 74          | 3      |      | Library code   | 127          | the card is     |
| 77          | 1      |      | Blank or D     |              | ignored"        |
| 78          | 3      |      | Blanks         |              |                 |

BLLD success rate study: sample of requests analysed by category of material and request status

| Category of material                 | Sample composition % | Total requests received | Requests referred back to requestor | Total valid requests | Valid requests satisfied |           |                    |          |                           |          |             |          |                                 |           |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|-------------|----------|---------------------------------|-----------|
|                                      |                      |                         |                                     |                      | Supplied from BLLD stock |           | Locations supplied |          | Sent to back-up libraries |          | Sent abroad |          | Total satisfactorily dealt with |           |
|                                      |                      |                         |                                     |                      | n                        | %         | n                  | %        | n                         | %        | n           | %        | n                               | %         |
| Monographs                           | 22.7                 | 3,065                   | 415                                 | 2,650                | 1,615                    | 61        | 688                | 26       | 133                       | 5        | 39          | 1        | 2,475                           | 93        |
| English language                     | 20.6                 | 2,790                   | 381                                 | 2,409                | 1,552                    | 64        | 610                | 25       | 93                        | 4        | 16          | 1        | 2,271                           | 94        |
| Foreign language                     | 2.0                  | 275                     | 34                                  | 241                  | 63                       | 26        | 78                 | 32       | 40                        | 17       | 23          | 10       | 204                             | 85        |
| Serials                              | 66.8                 | 9,008                   | 659                                 | 8,349                | 7,630                    | 91        | 95                 | 1        | 255                       | 3        | 39          | <0.5     | 8,019                           | 96        |
| English language                     | 55.8                 | 7,527                   | 537                                 | 6,990                | 6,480                    | 93        | 77                 | 1        | 170                       | 2        | 26          | <0.5     | 6,753                           | 97        |
| Foreign language                     | 11.0                 | 1,481                   | 122                                 | 1,359                | 1,150                    | 85        | 18                 | 1        | 85                        | 6        | 13          | 1        | 1,266                           | 93        |
| Conference proceedings               | 5.8                  | 785                     | 133                                 | 652                  | 530                      | 81        | 33                 | 5        | 5                         | 1        | 3           | <0.5     | 571                             | 88        |
| Reports, Official publications, etc. | 4.0                  | 535                     | 75                                  | 460                  | 385                      | 84        | 19                 | 4        | 3                         | 1        | 4           | 1        | 411                             | 89        |
| Dissertations                        | 0.7                  | 95                      | 21                                  | 74                   | 54                       | 73        | 1                  | 1        | 0                         |          | 10          | 14       | 65                              | 88        |
| <b>ALL CATEGORIES</b>                | <b>100</b>           | <b>13,488</b>           | <b>1,303</b>                        | <b>12,185</b>        | <b>10,224</b>            | <b>84</b> | <b>836</b>         | <b>7</b> | <b>396</b>                | <b>3</b> | <b>95</b>   | <b>1</b> | <b>11,551</b>                   | <b>95</b> |

## APPENDIX XV

### THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON REGIONAL LIBRARY COOPERATION : Report of the Working Party on the Future Pattern of Interlending.

Being aware of the considerable changes occurring in the pattern of inter-library lending in the United Kingdom at the present time, the National Committee on Regional Library Cooperation on 12 December 1975 decided to set up a Working Party to examine the likely future pattern in order to see whether any consistent trends could be detected and objectives set for the future. In particular it seemed important to try to see how the regional systems might interact with the British Library Lending Division to give the best possible service to libraries.

The Working Party, consisting of representatives from the regional schemes, the British Library, the Irish Library Council and the Department of Education and Science met five times between February 1976 and October 1977. A sub-group was also established to explore what statistical information was required for planning purposes.

The following is the text of the main summary of discussions and recommendations presented by the Working Party to the National Committee in December 1977.

"At its first meeting, the Working Party had before it three discussion papers prepared by:

- (a) The Chairman and Hon. Secretary;
- (b) The Director General of British Library Lending Division;
- (c) The Chairman, Hon. Secretary and Assistant Secretary of the Wales Region.

The Working Party from its outset recognised that significant differences exist between the English regional library schemes and those in Scotland

and Wales. Alongside the 1972 British Library Act and in the light of the Dainton Report on the national library service, parallel developments had occurred in both Scotland and Wales which had given the National Libraries in both countries a more meaningful role in the promotion of library cooperation. In Scotland the work of the former Scottish Central Library had merged into the National Library of Scotland to form the Scottish Lending Services, while the former separate Bureaux in Wales had combined in 1973 to form the Wales Regional Library Scheme, with considerable assistance, in staffing and financial support, from the National Library of Wales.

The consequent variations in the funding, staffing and financial accountability of the Scottish and Welsh services had been noted frequently in the Working Party's discussions, together with the additional functions performed by both the National Libraries as "back-ups" to the British Library Lending Division. The attention of the Working Party was also directed to changes in the governmental pattern which could take place if devolution proposals were enacted to set up assemblies in Scotland and Wales.

The members of the Working Party representing Scotland and Wales made it clear that these differences in the basic organisation of their schemes should not in any way restrict the ready cooperation which already exists between their areas and the other agencies of cooperation, at national and English-regional level. Nor did they consider it appropriate for the Scottish and Welsh systems to proffer suggestions for merging, or re-drafting the boundaries of, the present English regional systems.

Further papers on the collection of statistics; different categories of material; Central provision vs national vs regional vs local union lists; and Future co-operation between the Regions and the

British Library Lending Division were produced by the Director General of the Lending Division, and were considered by the sub-group and the Working Party. arising from the discussions of the sub-group the Lending Division carried out a National Inter-library Lending Survey in February 1977 and the national tables and the report on this Survey were discussed by the Working Party.

The Working Party also considered reports and papers on the British Library Research & Development pilot transport projects in the North West and London and on the transport schemes in operation in the Northern, South Western and West Midlands Regions and within Wales.

At the request of the Working Party the Regions produced notes on :

- (a) the adequacy of their areas as units for co-operation
- (b) viable areas for co-operation generally
- (c) other co-operative schemes within their areas
- (d) co-operative schemes for play-sets, sets of music scores, serials, audio-visual and other fringe materials.

The Working Party also considered the report of two experiments carried out between the West Midlands Regional Library Bureau and the British Library Lending Division on performance in interlending, and a report on the future of the West Midlands Regional Library Bureau.

Wide ranging discussions have taken place within the Working Party and a number of issues have been identified and to some extent clarified. These include :

1. Types of interlending

Four types of interlending have been identified:

- (a) informal - library to library based on personal knowledge of



library resources and the use of published bibliographies and directories of resources.

- (b) direct - library to library using ISBN and BNB serial number lists with locations produced by the Regions and subject specialisation schemes developed by the Regions,
- (c) regional - requests channelled through a regional centre,
- (d) British Library Lending Division - loans from and via the Lending Division.

The Working Party is of the opinion that these four types of interlending need to co-exist and that close co-operation is needed to avoid unnecessary overlap.

## 2. Regional boundaries

The regional systems are generally satisfied with their existing boundaries and do not see any need for immediate change. Local government reorganisation might alter the situation as it did in the South East of England, but it was felt that the work involved in changing systems would not be justified at present.

## 3. Other forms of co-operation provided by the regional systems

In addition to the conventional interlending services the regional systems provide other forms of co-operation. Not all forms of co-operation are provided in each region, but a review of the situation has identified the following activities which are being carried out at regional level:

- Subject specialisation schemes for the collection and preservation of non-fiction generally.
- Schemes for the co-operative purchase of sets of plays, music scores, foreign language fiction, audio-visual material.
- Lists of items and collections of interest within the area, i.e.

- local history and archive collections, family histories, etc.
- Union lists of serials used for referral and stock selection/revision purposes in addition to interlending.
  - Bibliographic research and identification.
  - Subject access and referral services.
  - Meetings of specialist librarians within the area, i.e. music, reference.
  - Training of library staff in the techniques of interlending and of library resources in the area.
  - Organisation of seminars which bring together British Library Lending Division and Regional members.
  - Liaison with local technical co-operative organisations.
  - Organisation of regional transport schemes.
  - Inter and intra-regional co-operation and sharing of experience on the re-use of machine-readable records. Advice service to member libraries on the use of these records for interlending and retrospective catalogue conversion purposes. The opportunity for online computer access to regional records for stock selection and revision as well as interlending purposes.
  - Stock pool for both general and specialised categories of material, i.e. sets of music scores.
  - Provision of a forum where librarians in an area can discuss library co-operation and the sharing of resources.

The Working Party is of the opinion that these activities are of value and that there should be a regular exchange of ideas between the regional organisations on developments in co-operation within each area.

4. Division of responsibilities between the British Library Lending Division and the regional systems

To a certain extent the Lending Division and the regional systems

have different functions but there is some overlap of activities in the interlending field. It is wasteful to duplicate effort, but each element has certain strength which the Working Party agreed it would be wise to develop and exploit.

The Lending Division has extensive holdings of:

Serials

Report literature

Conference proceedings

Official publications

The Working Party agreed that there was little point in an extensive regional involvement with most of this material. However, serials, particularly in urban areas, are used extensively for reference purposes, and additional means of access to the holdings of neighbouring libraries are necessary, whether these be organised locally or for a larger area.

In addition to its own resources, the Lending Division holds the main national union catalogues of foreign language and older English language and monographs, and also has access to the extensive and often unique holdings of several major libraries - including all the legal deposit libraries - with which it has made special back-up arrangements.

The Lending Division does not deal with some categories of material at all:

1. Sets of orchestral scores
2. Multiple copies of vocal scores
3. Non-book materials (including maps)
4. Fiction (except in rare cases, e.g. editions of classics)
5. 'Low-level' English language monographs  
(except in some cases on demand)
6. Play sets

7. Collections of material for ethnic minority groups.

It should, however, be noted that British books, including fiction and 'low-level' monographs, that cannot be obtained on loan through other channels can often be supplied through the Lending Division from the legal deposit back-up libraries. In one area, it has extensive holdings, but needs support.

8. Recent English language monographs of a 'moderate' or 'high' level.

With some of these areas all the regions are already dealing effectively; notably 8, recent English language monographs, where it is clear that both the Lending Division and the ISBN lists are needed. The same may be true of individual music scores, because of the frequent need for extended loan. 4 (Fiction) and 5 ('low-level' English language monographs) also appear to be adequately provided for by the regions. This division of labour between the regional systems and the Lending Division was borne out by the National Interlibrary Lending Survey carried out by the Lending Division in February 1977 at the request of the Working Party.

Some regions deal with categories 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7 and others do not. The Working Party agreed that there should be some national policy on these. The main questions are:-

Should provision be organised on a national basis, with all members contributing to national rather than regional union lists? (This depends largely on total demand and the amount of inter-regional traffic which might be avoided by a national system).

If the basis should be regional, can standard reporting and recording systems be used to make integration into national lists easier if required later?

The Working Party is of the opinion that studies should be carried out to ascertain potential demand and the possible introduction of standard reporting and recording systems in order that a national policy can be worked out for the provision of this material for interlending purposes.

5. Transport schemes for inter-library loans

The effect of non-postal Transport Schemes on the pattern of interlending may be significant, but it is impossible at the present time to say precisely what the effect will be, and in any case it is likely to be some time before a national pattern will emerge.

6. Effect of computerisation on interlibrary lending

The development of BLAISE (British Library Automated Information Service) and of other co-operative organisations for shared cataloguing, etc., such as BLCMP, SWALCAP (South West Academic Libraries Co-operative Automation Project) and SCOLCAP (Scottish Libraries Co-operative Automation Project) are likely to have a far-reaching effect on library co-operation. The production in machine-readable form of the National Union Catalogue of Orchestral Scores is an example of what could be achieved, and the use of Library of Congress CONSER and/or BLCMP serial records by LASER to create its regional serials file within its own minicomputer system are indications of the co-operative development which could occur in the future.

7. Future of the Working Party

The Working Party is of the opinion that its work is finished with the production of this report. It believes, however, that there is a need to monitor future developments and it recommends that the standing committee allowed for in the National Committee Constitution should meet as required to undertake this task.

H.E. RADFORD, CHAIRMAN

November, 1977.

J.M. PLAISTER, Hon. Secretary

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