

Visit to Cambridge University Library from 28 August to 7 September 2007

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Introduction

Strong connections between Göttingen State and University Library (SUB) and Cambridge University Library (CUL) have been existing for many years. Several members of staff already used the opportunity to learn something about how work is being done abroad. Whilst in former years mainly members of the divisions of reader services took a step across the Channel, a visit of an acquisition librarian from Cambridge took place in 2006 for the first time. Gotthelf Wiedermann, Head of English Collection Development at CUL, came to the SUB to spend two weeks in a variety of departments. I myself have been working in the Department of Monographs Acquisition and Cataloguing for fourteen years and was very interested in showing our workflow to a British colleague and in getting to know his own expertise. Due to Gotthelf's kind offer to organize a programme for me at CUL I was able to make a return visit to Cambridge in summer 2007.

Working at CUL

My main professional interests during my stay at Cambridge lay in the area that I am working in at Göttingen. Thus I put the stress on the Collection Development and Description Division on the one hand, and on System Administration and the handling of electronic resources on the other.

The Library System at Cambridge

There are three different levels of libraries within the Cambridge library system. First of all there are the colleges. They are independent institutions and many of them are wealthy. College libraries care for the needs of the undergraduates in all subjects. They hold textbook collections and are often accessible to members of the college 24 hours a day. Apart from this there exist faculty or departmental libraries. They offer more specialized collections for teaching needs, the opening hours are not that largely extended and they are funded by annual grants from the central university. The University Library holds collections for postgraduates and research, e.g. there is no textbook collection. Four dependent or branch libraries are connected with the university library. They cover the subjects law, medicine, mathematics and sciences. This structure is not easy to handle. There are about 115 libraries within the University, and as they are funded by different sources duplicate holdings and purchases have been rather the rule than the exception. It is only by now that even well equipped and funded libraries suffer from the extreme increases in prices, especially for journals, that some coordination projects concerning acquisition have been initiated.

Collection Development and Description

During the past decade many libraries worldwide have merged what have been separate divisions for a very long time: acquisition and cataloguing. At SUB Goettingen this integration took place relatively early: While acquisition and cataloguing of books were merged in the mid 90s, periodicals had already been handled that way already since the 70s.

At CUL this step was made in 2003 when the former Cataloguing Division and Accessions Department were transformed into one single division: the Collection Development and Description Division. In 2004, Legal Deposit was added and one year later Periodicals and Official Publications were also incorporated. The new division deals with all materials except Oriental languages and special collections. It consists of the following departments:

- English Collections and Cataloguing
 - Legal Deposit
 - Collection Development
 - Cataloguing

- European Collections and Cataloguing
- Materials Processing
- Periodicals
- Retrospective Conversion
- Central Support Services
 - Cataloguing Policy and Practice
 - Labelling
 - Data Control
 - Training

A real integration of acquisition and cataloguing has only been achieved in European Collections and Cataloguing. Due to special language skills of staff it seemed adequate and was relatively easy to integrate both parts of the necessary work. In English Collection and Cataloguing acquisition and cataloguing are still kept separately, the main reasons being the large number of material acquired by Legal Deposit, the growing cataloguing backlog as well as chronic understaffing in English cataloguing. It was although interesting to see that invoice processing (here called materials processing) does not form part of Collection Development but is a department of its own within the division, responsible for all material purchased except legal deposit and periodicals. So there still remain real experts for specialized duties in a number of areas, leaving many opportunities for job enrichment as yet to be realised.

Legal Deposit

Legal Deposit is a privilege as well as a challenge for CUL. The library has a duty and the privilege to receive one copy free of charge of each new title published in the UK and the Republic of Ireland within 12 months of publication. There are six libraries possessing the right of legal deposit:

- The British Library
- The National Library of Scotland at Edinburgh
- The National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth
- Cambridge University Library
- Oxford University Library
- The Library of Trinity College at Dublin

With the UK being the most important publishing country in the world it is a privilege for CUL to receive between 70,000 and 80,000 new volumes a year free of charge. On the other hand they have to handle these receipts and that means a lot of work in checking in, cataloguing, classifying and storing. Moreover, not only academic titles are submitted to the library. Legal Deposit also comprises popular literature of no or low academic interest, which have to be looked after, as they represent the cultural heritage of the nation. Some books now seeming to be worthless may become the subject of academic studies later on. For these reasons all the material received has to be evaluated and handled further on according to certain priorities. Not all books coming to the library in an endless stream of new publications can be catalogued at once. But each title is registered upon receipt and can be found very fast and treated as necessary when required by one of the readers.

Titles of probable academic interest are checked on BNB. If a record can be found the book goes to the Cataloguing Department (75 % of all cases), if not it goes to the backlog. The six legal deposit libraries have set up a system of shared cataloguing. Most of the work is still done at the British Library but the other libraries are responsible for producing catalogue records of titles starting with specific letters. CUL is working on titles beginning with J, K and L on a higher priority. Nevertheless, it is sometimes not so easy to identify the beginning of a title.

Not every book which should be supplied to the library under legal deposit is necessarily sent by the publishers. On the whole about 115,000 volumes are currently registered a year. Missing titles are claimed at the Agency for the Legal Deposit Libraries (usually only called "The Agency") first. This organization, jointly funded by the six Legal Deposit Libraries (except the British Library), is in contact with the publishers in order to obtain as much material as possible. Some publishers prefer to send their legal deposit copies centrally to the Agency from where books are distributed to the libraries entitled to receive a publication under copyright law.

It is obvious that the libraries cannot succeed in obtaining all the copies they are entitled to, but 70,000 to 80,000 out of 115,000 is no bad number.

Items which are not submitted under legal deposit in spite of all efforts but would be valuable for the stock of the library are to be obtained by purchase. This is one of the duties of English Collection Development.

English Collection Development

English Collection Development is in charge of purchasing books and microforms written in English in all subjects apart from law, natural sciences and medicine (these subjects are covered by the respective dependent libraries). Only one copy of each title is bought with the exception of the Cam Collection (books relating to the University, city or region of Cambridge) and some reference books.

Hardcopy editions are preferred but paperback is also acceptable. If a paperback becomes borrowable it will be bound at the in-house bookbindery.

Selection of acquisitions is not done by subject specialists but on a language scheme. Gotthelf Wiedermann, Head of English Collection Development, for example has to select English books from such different subjects as theology, language, economics or criminology, although one member of his staff who is an American Studies specialist and other colleagues in the UL with appropriate background do recommend titles for acquisitions on a more or less regular basis. This is obviously quite a difficult task. Gotthelf is managing the funds for his acquisitions himself; he only needs a special permission for acquisitions above a threshold of £2,500 individually and for cancelling standing orders.

Apart from this there exists an Accessions Committee at CUL which deals with proposals for expensive acquisitions or standing order cancellations. This is a transparent system: New proposals are entered on a database which colleagues from the whole division can access and comment on.

There also is a certain number of reader recommendations (written or electronically) reaching the department. 1,100 titles have been asked for by readers last year, 55 % of them had already been received but were still uncatalogued.

Countries of origin cover mainly the US and Europe (there is a stress on Dutch, German and Scandinavian publishers, but also in Hungary and the Czech Republic more and more titles are being published in English), but replacement or missing copyright books from the UK also play an important role. Overseas acquisitions are mostly purchased from India, Singapore, Hong Kong, Australia and South America.

The main suppliers for books in English are Coutts for North America, Harrassowitz for the Continent and Houtschild for Dutch standing orders. Dawson is also among the larger suppliers. It is important for CUL to receive MARC records from their suppliers as there is not such a system as the Union Catalogue of the Gemeinsamer Bibliotheksverbund (GBV) in North-Eastern Germany which provides a huge number of remote data usable for producing catalogue records. Especially with Coutts, Harrassowitz, Touzot and Casalini a system has been set up which works very efficiently. CUL can order online in the supplier's system, adding local data (e.g. their fund code, internal notes, instructions to the supplier etc.) to the bibliographical data. Then a list of MARC records is created by the supplier who enters all relevant order details in designated MARC fields. This list is downloaded and imported into the local library system at CUL (Voyager) thus automatically generating complete purchase orders. So the acquisition librarians are enabled to produce order records and to use these data for all further handling of their orders.

Coutts sends weekly lists of new titles and offers. It has to be checked if a title already forms part of the stock, is already ordered or can be expected under copyright law. Titles that are to be ordered get their special fund code and are processed as described above. Titles which are expected to arrive under legal deposit remain on the list. Each list is re-evaluated about 8 months later to give publishers time to deposit. Titles still not received will be claimed via the Legal Deposit Agency. It was interesting to hear that there are also many non-UK publishers delivering under copyright law. A list of them is kept current at the department.

Online ordering is also common with other suppliers, e.g. Bennett for Australia, but purchase orders have to be created manually in the Voyager system additionally.

Cataloguing

Cataloguing rules have changed at Cambridge over the years as they probably did in any library worldwide. Homemade cataloguing rules were applied till the late 70s. A book catalogue was in use into which printed slips containing catalogue records were pasted. A distinction had already been made between academic and secondary material at that time and so two different catalogues were maintained. In 1978 a move towards international standards was made, basically to AACR1. Computerized cataloguing was introduced; the catalogue output was on microforms. Only one year later the next change took place: AACR2 replaced AACR1 causing difficulties as any system change does and contributing to an increasing backlog of uncatalogued material (legal deposit) even already in those times.

Production of a first OPAC was attempted in 1982, the aim was a union catalogue for the Cambridge campus but due to the independence of the colleges no common rules could be established. This is a problem which is still current today.

During the 80s and 90s CUL used an in-house cataloguing system comprising in-house authority control for personal and corporate authors. It was only in 2002 that an integrated library system (Voyager, see below) was established. The cataloguing format moved to MARC21, causing much work in converting data from the 80s and the 90s which were originally produced in UKMARC. Retrospective conversion programmes have been carried out, having just been finished for academic materials some months ago, whereas secondary material still has to be converted.

Nowadays cataloguing is shared with the British Library and other Legal Deposit Libraries but there are still problems concerning the integrity of the database under quality aspects. After all, an upgrade from CIP records to a higher level is now possible automatically and no control or additions are done for data provided by the British Library (except obvious and substantial mistakes). This has led to a better cataloguing rate and is important because purchases are rising and more and more material has to be catalogued.

Cataloguing is now part of Collection Development and Description but there are still some special areas in which experts are producing records, e.g. rare books, maps and music. Some of them are cataloguing in a separate Voyager database out of which a special user's view in Newton (the Cambridge OPAC) is generated.

After having merged the Cataloguing Department and the Acquisitions Department a real integration of the workflow has mainly been achieved for European languages (not for English), the main reason being making use of special language knowledge of members of staff. Concerning English titles there are still enough employees specialized in cataloguing, a fact which allows CUL to postpone further steps of integration.

Cataloguers are working in teams and they are rotating every three weeks. During the first rotation period they have to look after material which has to be catalogued completely by themselves without remote data available including cataloguing legal deposit titles beginning with J, K or L for the British Library Shared Cataloguing Project and in the second period they have to handle titles for which data from external sources are available, e.g. MARC record provided by suppliers.

Formal cataloguing is done by intermediate cataloguers, subject cataloguing belongs to the responsibilities of senior cataloguers. This includes the defining of placements and class marks. Junior cataloguers have to deal with the search for data in external sources (CURL, containing BNB and LOC data, National Libraries' catalogues, Australian and Canadian data, OCLC WorldCat ...). Newton records consist of bibliographical records and holding records. Remote data can be imported easily and working screens showing MARC records are used. There is no other mode of presentation (no ISBD). A list of valid class mark groups is available in the system, but size and sequential number have to be added later. Newly catalogued material is only visible in the OPAC after the complete class mark has been given to it.

Each item gets a catalogue record of its own, e.g. each part of a multi-volume publication has a unique barcode and class mark. Authority data are produced and linked for all persons included in a catalogue record. This is quite amazing regarding the cataloguing backlog because the production of each catalogue records takes much more time this way than it would if CUL abandoned this option. But CUL is taking part in the nation-wide authority file called NACO (Name Authority Co-Operation) and has to fulfill its commitments.

Senior cataloguers decide whether a book will be placed on the open shelves or not. Only hardback editions go on open shelves, multiple textbooks can not be found there because CUL mainly provides information for postgraduates. Some paperbacks which are not to be bound do not receive any subject classification but only a formal class mark and can thus be handled faster. Paperbacks which are to be bound (to prevent them from damage) get laminated and can become borrowable but are nonetheless kept on closed stacks. A very large number of paperbacks receive full cloth binding and go on open access.

After binding books return to the Cataloguing Department and receive their final class mark. Shelf marks consist of classification (196:3), size (.C), date of publication (.200) and sequential number (.23), leading to 196:3.c.200.241 for this example. There are still handwritten shelf lists maintained in which the cataloguers have to look up the next sequential number which is available in a shelf or classification group. I was really astonished to learn that such a system is still in use. When this procedure is finished a barcode and a label for the book can be produced.

As I have already mentioned the cataloguing backlog presents the most urgent problem for the Department. Cataloguing of purchased material is only some months behind, but legal deposit titles and secondary material have to be kept on backlog even for some years. However, each item is registered on receipt and can be found and handled quickly if required.

The Library System: Voyager

During the 80s and the 90s CUL had been using an in-house library system which covered cataloguing needs in the first place. First attempts of automating acquisitions and journals processing were made in the 90s but it was only in 2002 that a commercial library system was introduced at CUL. The preferred choice fell on Endeavor's Voyager system. The system is running on SUN machines and consists of a cataloguing module, an acquisition module, a circulation module and a reporter tool which mainly deals with OPAC call slips, system administration and reporting needs.

Circulation at CUL was described to me as a challenge due to many exceptions concerning certain users and lending conditions. Work is not made easier by the fact that Voyager's circulation module was originally designed for the lending scheme of the US National Library of Medicine.

The cataloguing module offers more comfort and a better record validation than the old in-house system, it matches international standards (MARC21 is now used as cataloguing format). The acquisition module is a real progress for the staff but periodicals processing does not fit like a glove as the old in-house system did. This is an experience very common for libraries which had to give up their own self-developed system after the introduction of an integrated commercial one. SUB Goettingen suffered the same losses in the 90s.

The acquisition module offers a comfortable system administration. Many functions are available online and can be used directly by members of the Collection Development Department or for example by the staff of the Medical Library. Either SQL or SQLPlus on the server via MS Access is used for statistics and database queries which go beyond, this is the work of the Library Management System Department. They are also handling acquisition's roll over (Jahresübergang) at the end of the financial year.

The Cambridge OPAC is called Newton (<http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/newton/>). It consists of the catalogues of CUL, the dependent libraries, most faculty libraries and college libraries. There are eight separate Newton catalogues and one universal or union catalogue (covering holdings of all the eight separate catalogues) available. Union catalogue thus does not mean "Verbundkatalog" as the GVK at GBV. It is only a united catalogue of holdings in Cambridge. Due to different cataloguing rules, different standards and different databases used for cataloguing the union catalogue is a very inconsistent and patchy tool, containing even more duplicate entries than the GVK. Cambridge librarians are aiming at reducing the number of catalogues to one CUL database, one database for departmental libraries and one college database or even less. In the first place the creation of a meta search platform is intended.

CUL does not use Voyager's module for interlibrary loan but is working with a system developed at the University of Lancaster as many British libraries do.

Endeavor has been taken over by Exlibris some months ago, so it seems possible that a change will be coming up for CUL once again. At present there are no plans to move from Voyager to Aleph as Exlibris has assured further support and even further enhancement of Voyager (there are a large number of clients who insist on further availability of their well-known and well working system). Nevertheless, Exlibris is planning to develop a Universal Resource Management System (URMS) as a follow-up product of the next generation for both systems. This system will also comprise electronic resource management. So it should be expected that their product line will be reduced in the future but this may still take several years.

Electronic Resources

Tools

Endeavor is also offering an Electronic Resources Management System (ERMS) called Meridian which has been in use at CUL for about two years. Much information is being stored at the package level and can be inherited to the single titles. Information on license agreements is not stored in Meridian and CUL experts think it is not a very comfortable system because it is running quite slowly due to architectural problems. Titles are linked via the Voyager-ID to the local library system but the real title matching is made via ISSN, which does not work because e-journal records are only linked with the print version this way. For these and some other reasons Meridian will be discontinued and a move to Exlibris' Verde is planned for 2008. The colleagues dealing with e-resources are expecting a real benefit from this move: better package handling, visible and creatable workflows and multi-user access are promised. Budget calculation or a division of invoice amounts on several titles is neither available in Meridian nor in Verde.

Another step will be the introduction of SFX as a link resolver. There is no link resolver in use right now, but ProQuest's product SerialsSolutions, which is an ERMS, offers some features: packages are identified, their contents are updated within 24 hours and an A-Z-list for the readers is produced (upload into the Voyager OPAC). Each month new MARC records for amendments and cancellations of packages are provided ("360 MARC updates"). Cambridge librarians are satisfied with the quality of these records. Moreover SerialsSolutions is offering a good COUNTER usage statistics but the product seems to base very much on US publications although European-orientated additions are slightly put in.

Management of electronic resources is in one hand: selection, negotiation, licensing, payment, access for the public are handled by the same team. Staff mostly consists of librarians who have been acquiring IT-skills over the years. The Periodicals Department and the IT Department are sharing responsibility for electronic resources.

E-books

Integrating finances within Cambridge University is a difficult task, as there are self-governing colleges, the faculties and the central library, all of them administering budgets of their own. But constantly increasing prices for literature are making it necessary to bundle the activities. For this reason a pilot project has started 2006: ebooks@cambridge (Website: <http://www.sel.cam.ac.uk/ebooks@cambridge/>). Six colleges and CUL joined to licence e-books, starting with 180 titles from NetLibrary. Borrowing records of the colleges were analyzed and negotiations with the publisher for an e-book solution took place. One year later 300 e-books are available covering those print titles which are most used by undergraduate students. Apart from the NetLibrary books mentioned above, some MyiLibrary titles (Coutts) and a special collection of 25 Cambridge University Press titles are also forming part of this service. The e-books provide online versions of complete texts. Print and downloading sections of works are also allowed. Other features such as dictionary checking and citation export are offered. Simultaneous logins are possible, varying according to the providers' conditions.

This seems to be an interesting alternative to the usual practice of licensing complete packages. CUL is also offering ECCO (Eighteenth Century Collections Online) and Cambridge Companions Online as well as other publisher collections. E-books can be found both within the Voyager OPAC (Newton) and from the suppliers' websites.

E-journals

Periodicals librarians have been suffering even more from price increases (or may be price explosions) than monographs acquisition librarians. As legal deposit copies of journals do not qualify for electronic access, a reviewing of subscribed journals took place as a measure to coordinate activities at Cambridge libraries four years ago for the first time: the e-journals coordination project. A joint fund for journals was established, starting for the subjects of technology, astronomy, geography and mathematics. After the cancellation of duplicate subscriptions (with one copy left plus additional e-access for the campus) faculties were asked at a poll to indicate which journals were essential, which ones were "only" useful or which ones were obsolete. 32% of the forms were returned and afterwards lists of titles not explicitly wanted any more were produced by the project coordinators. These lists were sent back to the librarians and in the end about 100 titles to which no positive reply was received were cancelled. At the same stage new titles were proposed for subscription.

Each year subscriptions and licences have to be cut due to further price increases. So it happens that independent colleges are cancelling their subscriptions and the project has to bear the fees for breaching licence agreements.

A proposal of such coordination for all schools has been made but up to now arts and humanities did not yet approve. Negotiations are continuing.

Miscellaneous

Apart from the subjects mentioned above on which I put a special accent I also had the possibility to talk to some librarians from dependent libraries (Betty and Gordon Moore Library, Squire Law Library) and to visit some colleges (Trinity, St John's). A visit to the Cambridge library scene would be incomplete without having a look at these aspects and it was very informative to see and hear from the colleagues about the developments taking place in these libraries.

And last but not least I spent a joyful afternoon at the Reference Department and learned something about their daily work.

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