

# The Bliss Classification Bulletin

c/o Commonwealth Institute, Kensington High Street, London, W.8

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## F O R E W O R D

The main interest of the reader of this Bulletin is likely to be the progress of the revision of the BC - the state of the classes, facilities for checking the draft schedules by users, arrangements for publication, etc. - and inevitably these constitute much of what follows.

Because the whole scheme is in the process of radical revision and because the final shape and context of many classes must wait on that of others (due to the overlapping of relationships and the sharing of common concepts) the last two issues of the Bulletin have not carried new schedules. Instead, members of the BCA have been requested to state those schedules the drafts of which they would like to see and perhaps comment on. However, the case of the Common Subdivisions is exceptional in that these are of interest to every user of the scheme, general or special. Therefore we include in this issue a draft revision of Schedule 1 and part of Schedule 2. The revision of Schedule 1 draws heavily on the CSD developed by the BIB and tested thoroughly over a decade and more and we should like to express here our debt to BIB for making this possible.

That part of Schedule 2 given here is completely new to BC: Unlike the CSD of Place in DC, UDC and Colon the CSD of Place in BC have been restricted mainly to politically defined areas. But literary warrant calls for the provision of a wide range of further concepts of place and this is what the new Schedule will provide.

We include also brief notes on the most notable features of full drafts so far circulated, so that those libraries which have not requested them may at least know what is happening in these areas.

We apologise for the delay in issuing this number of the Bulletin, which has been due to extreme pressure of work at the Polytechnic of North London (the old North-Western Polytechnic now having joined with the Northern Polytechnic to form one of the largest polytechnics in the country). A slight compensation for the delay is that it allows us to give firm dates regarding the publication of the new BC. It will be published by Butterworths some time in 1973 - probably by the Autumn. This is somewhat later than originally envisaged when the special revision programme was launched, but we hope BCA members will be indulgent on

this point. It has been (and continues to be) a massive undertaking and we hope the final work will justify the time taken (which, by the standards of the other major schemes, will still have been remarkably short). The new edition will be in 3 volumes, of which 2 volumes will be schedules (containing approximately 750 pages each) and the third volume, (of approximately 850 pages) will contain the A/Z index, Common Subdivisions (Schedules 1/4) and introductory matter (containing a selection of Bliss's original prefaces plus detailed guidance on how to use the scheme and on problems of reclassification (together, possibly, with instructions on how to reclassify - although it might be more convenient to publish these in a special issue of the Bulletin). A questionnaire sent to all members of BCA disclosed a very strong preference for a crown quarto size (approx. 9 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ ") and this is what it will be.

The Abridged Bliss Classification (School Library Association)

We have received the Information Circular No. 2 of the ABC which announces, inter alia, that in the four years since it was published it has been reprinted twice. The Circular also carries a note on BC in the French-speaking world and cites a paper by Monsieur A. Canonne (whose adoption of BC in the Bibliothèque Centrale de Hainaut, Belgium, we noted last year) of which readers of the Bulletin may be interested to hear:

La Classification Bibliographique de Henry Evelyn Bliss. A. Canonne. Bibliothèque, Document, Livre, Vol. 9-10 (n. 1-2) 1968-69, pp. 1-49. Also in Rencontres: Cahiers de l'Institut Provincial de l'Education et des Loisirs du Hainaut, n.3, Juillet-Sept., 1969. pp. 64-103.

Mr Clifford Freeman (Institute of Education Library, The University of Hull), the Editor of ABC, has asked me to insert the following note:

"Since the death of Mr H.P Young, the working party which produced ABC has lacked a member competent to deal with scientific subjects. It would be very helpful if someone would volunteer to act in this capacity. The question of a revised edition is not at present under consideration, but the editor needs someone to whom he can refer queries that come in from users of the scheme."

Classification in the 1970's is the title of an interesting symposium due in January and edited by the Hon. Treasurer of the BCA, which contains fairly full discussion (by the present writer) of the principles and practice of the revision of BC. Details for those interested are:

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Maltby, Arthur, ed. Classification in the 1970's: a discussion of developments and prospects for the major schemes. London, Bingley, 1972 (£4).

December 1970 Bulletin

We apologize for an error in the last issue of the Bulletin which numbered it as Vol. IV, No. 3 instead of Vol. IV No. 4.

J. Mills  
Hon. Editor

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BLISS CLASSIFICATION ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting  
held on Friday November 19th 1971  
at Library Association

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Present: Mr J Mills (Chairman/Editor)  
Mr A Maltby (Treasurer)

and 17 other members

In the absence of the Secretary, the Treasurer recorded the minutes of the meeting.

1. The minutes of the last Annual General Meeting were approved and signed. It was suggested by Dr. Campbell and agreed by the meeting that minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting should, in future, be distributed at the annual meeting to save reference to them in the pages of the BC Bulletin.

2. Matters arising

All matters arising were dealt with under the following items in the agenda.

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman circulated a document showing the current state of BC revision and one giving details of the 'Wessex' project on information retrieval in the medical sciences.

A report was made on the revision progress of individual BC classes. Some are well advanced; others - especially those where helpful schedules can be obtained from other sources - are as yet relatively undisturbed.

The situation with regard to Butterworth as publisher was discussed and it is probable that this company will agree to publish. Cost would be £45 (3 volumes at £15 each). 600 or so copies would be published at first to gauge the market for a revised edition. Bliss users have voted strongly for a crown quarto format of 10" by 7½". Mr. Geoghegan asked if the volumes could be bought separately; this would seem unlikely as the introduction, index and common schedules would be in one volume. The loose-leaf idea was discussed but seems impractical.

The use of BC class-marks on MARC tapes has been considered, but the BNB editor has given an adverse report

in terms of cost to the Bibliography and delays in its production. There was some discussion on the difficulties of converting DC numbers to BC and the conversion via PRECIS INDEXING. Mr J Digger pointed out the problems currently met with by BNB in converting to Dewey and Library of Congress.

Miss Dean expressed fears about the speed of revision and about notational conflicts between symbols such as 1 and l. With regard to the latter point, several members agreed that a "house style" recommended by the B.C.A. would be an asset. The question of progress in revision led to considerable discussion about how much of the new scheme can be adopted. Mr Best, Mr. Geoghegan and Mr. Freeman argued that the adoption of the drastically revised version in tota would be impossible in many established libraries and partial re-classification and ways of painlessly injecting a new scheme into a library system were considered. The sending of drafts of particular classes to appropriate subscribing libraries in advance of publication of the new edition is contemplated. Dr Campbell suggested that the secretary could circulate members asking which classes they needed most urgently. This was agreed.

#### 4. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented the financial statement. This showed a healthy working balance, although account must be taken of the fact that payments from this are being made to assist the cost of revision of BC at the Polytechnic of North London.

#### 5. Election of Committee for 1971/72

The final item of business concerned the election of the Committee. Mr Horne had resigned on taking up a post in Toronto and sent his good wishes to those present. Mr Mills expressed the Association's thanks for Mr Horne's work as secretary. Mr G G H Geoghegan (Reading University) was nominated to fill the resulting vacancy on the Committee, but had left the meeting at the time of the nomination. Mr R A Bangs (Brighton Library School) volunteered to serve if Mr Geoghegan was unable to do so. The other members of the Committee were re-elected. Dr Campbell was then elected Secretary by the Committee in place of Mr Horne.

NOTE FROM THE TREASURERFinancial statement for year ended 31 July 1971

	£	p	£	p
<u>INCOME</u>				
Membership subscription				
Personal	13.18			
Primary/Secondary Schools	5.00			
Other institutions	208.45			
	<hr/>			
TOTAL SUBSCRIPTIONS			£226.63	
Sales of Bliss Classification Bulletin			13.50	
Donations to revision fund			535.00	
Interest on current account at bank			3.22	
			<hr/>	
TOTAL INCOME			£778.35	
			<hr/>	
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>				
Bliss Classification Bulletin - materials, printing, distribution			13.09	
Committee			17.75	
Stationery			1.60	
Postages			5.32	
Bank charges			1.00	
			<hr/>	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			£38.76	
			<hr/>	
<u>Working balance 1970/71.</u>			£739.59	
			<hr/>	
Payments made to Polytechnic of North London towards revision of Bliss Classification			£900.00	
			<hr/>	
<u>Cash in bank at 30 September 1971</u>				
	Current Account		£375.98	
	Deposit Account		£610.00	
			<hr/>	
	TOTAL		£985.98	

October 1971

A. Maltby  
Honorary Treasurer

Revision of the BC: progress and problems

1 State of the revision, December 1971

The following is a copy of a paper circulated at the AGM. All members of BCA should have received also a questionnaire giving the same list of relatively discrete subject areas and asking them to indicate for which areas they would like to receive full draft revisions. Any members who have not yet returned their questionnaire are requested to do so as soon as possible.

Note:

- \* = Not yet begun  
(1) = Draft 1 Preliminary draft: general structure determined  
(2) = Draft 2 Second draft: vocabulary developed in full  
(3) = Draft 3 Advanced draft: awaiting final editing for notating, duplicating and distributing  
(4) = Draft 4 Finished except for minor editing  
(1) & (2) = Some parts of the class are in a more advanced state than others
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Schedules

1/4 Common subdivisions (2) & (3)

Classes

1/9 Generalia (2)

General activity and organization

Organization: Systems theory, Cybernetics (2)

Communication (1)

Information bearing records (3)

Library and information science (3)

A/AK Philosophy \*

AL/AX Logic and mathematics (1)

AY Statistics (3)

Physics

BA/BD Mathematical physics; Mechanics (2)

BE/BF Particle physics: nuclear, atomic, molecular (2)

BG Properties and states of matter (2)

BH/BL Heat, Light, Electromagnetism (1)

BM/BO Electric, Electronic and communication engineering (2)

BP Acoustics (1)

BQ/BT Fluid mechanics and associated technology (2)

C/CF Chemistry, general and physical (1)

CG Analytical chemistry (2)

CH Mineralogy

CI/CR Inorganic and organic chemistry (1)

CT/CY Chemical technologies (1) & (2)

D/DF Astronomy (1)

DG/DP Geology (2) & (3)

DD/DT Geography and Meteorology (2)

DW	Microscopy *
E	Biology (2) & (3)
F	Botany (1)
G	Zoology (2)
HA/HC	Physical anthropology (1)
HD/HZ	Health sciences (2) & (3) (HK Sports and games moved to V)
I	Psychology and Psychiatry (1) & (2)
J	Education (2) & (3)
K/KH	Sociology & Ethnology *
KI/KM	Folklore (1)
KO/KS	Ethnography (1) & (3)
KT/KY	Human geography (1) & (3)
LA/LP	History : ancillary studies (Archaeology, Numismatics,
LI/LW	History : Ancient (1) & (2) etc.) (1) & (2)
M/N	" : Modern - Europe, America (2)
O	" " - Australia, Asia, Africa (2)
P	Religion (3)
Q/QW	Social welfare (4)
QX/QW	Social-political movements (1)
R	Political science (2)
S	Law (4)
T	Economics & Business (1) & (2) & (3)
UA/UC	Agriculture & Animal industries (2)
UD	Mining engineering (1)
UE/UJ	Construction industries (Civil engineering, Building)
UJ/UL	Transport engineering (2) (2) & (3)
UO/UR	Mechanical engineering (2)
US/UV	Other industries (2) & (3)
UW	Household technology (2)
VA/VD	Architecture (2) & (3)
VE/VH	Plastic arts, Ceramics, Painting (2)
VO/VT	Graphic arts (2) & (3)
VU	Textile arts (2) & (3)
VV/VX	Music (4)
VY	Recreative arts (2)
W/YW	Language & literature *
YV	Journalism (2)
XX/YY	Performing arts (2) & (3)
Z	Bibliography, Documentation, Libraries (3)

2 Period classification of older material

A request was received from Jeremy Weston, Librarian of the Royal Institution, regarding BC policy for collections in which the basic arrangement consists of parallel sequences covering different periods of production of the literature. It is well known that it is often very difficult, if not impossible, to classify satisfactorily the literature of an earlier period by a classification reflecting the structure of the subject as conceived during a later period. A notable article on the subject was written by John J. Lund and Mortimer Taube ("A non-expansive classification system:



introduction to period classification". Lib. Quarterly Vol. 7, No. 3, July 1937, p. 373-394). Bliss provided in his Anterior Numeral Classes only the bare and empty class 9 (Antiquated books) to meet the problem. Below is a suggested procedure for libraries wishing to distribute the older material under the main class concerned. Those libraries wishing to keep together all the earlier material, irrespective of subject, may still do so, of course; but because of the proposed change of use of the anterior numeral classes (see Bulletin, December 1970) Class 9 is no longer available and a private notational symbol would be needed to indicate the special collection.

1. The sequence desired is as follows

The works on a subject (e.g. Chemistry) written prior to the present century file before those of the present century. Works written during this century about the subject in the earlier period file with current materials.

2. The only difficulty notationally is that, assuming some books are marked with the plain class number for current general works on the subject (e.g. 'C' for Chemistry) a symbol is needed which files in front of it.
3. The following solution (taking Chemistry as an example) makes maximum use of available resources in Bliss - i.e., Schedule 3 for Periods, and a hyphen as a general linking device.

C - [Works on Chemistry written before 1900]  
\* see also C7 for works about a given period, but written in the 20th century.

C - A Works written in Ancient period  
- B Medieval period  
- D Renaissance period  
- J 17th - 18th centuries  
- N 19th century  
- NB Physical chemistry  
- NE Electrochemistry

C Contemporary (20th century) work on Chemistry  
in general

C1 Encyclopedia

C7B History of chemistry - Medieval  
\* see also C-B for medieval works on Chemistry

CB Physical chemistry

4. The filing value of the hyphen (which is already in use) is lower than letters or numbers and so files as above.

5. The Period divisions of Table 3 are generous enough to allow flexibility in assigning periods according to the needs of the subject. For example, C - C could be used for Alchemy (in chemistry) as a special historical system.
6. The number of distinct periods to be recognized is really a matter for the librarian to choose, having regard for the nature of his collection.
7. The only clash possible is the theoretical one where the hyphen has been used as a general phase relation (e.g. Chemistry - relation to Meteorology C-DS). However, this will be replaced in the new edition by a definite number for phase relations (6 or 7).
8. If the hyphen is thought to be insufficiently emphatic, an asterisk might be preferred.

### 3 Alphabeting marks

A common arrangement within relatively specific classes is an alphabetical one - especially when individual persons, organisations or other things with proper names constitute the subclasses.

It would be a considerable advantage if BC contained a standard table of alphabeting marks, to be used whenever the occasion arose (e.g. SAY Individual (legal) theorists, A/Z; SEN M English local by-laws, by county A/Z). Usually A/Z device represents the last-cited principle and so terminates a class-number; but this is not always the case and there is an urgent need for a precise and unique symbol to represent any unique name. In the new Music schedules, composer is a major facet and is cited before other facets; there, we have referred users to the special table of alphabeting numbers devised for composers by the British Catalogue of Music (e.g. VV9 SF Schubert). We should be grateful if any users of BC having experience of the use of alphabeting marks (e.g. Cutter-Sanborn marks) and thereby having a definite opinion as to the utility or convenience of a particular table providing them would let us know.

### 4 Schedule 2 and Classes H/O (note by Valerie Lang)

\* This note refers almost exclusively to concepts of 'political' place; the addition to Schedule 2 of other concepts of place (Place by latitude, by altitude, by economic characteristics, etc.) has already been mentioned and is demonstrated in the new schedules on p.24 of this Bulletin.

When work was started on Geography, which, as BC users will know only too well, is scattered among a number of classes, it very soon became apparent that one of the first parts

which should be brought into order was Schedule 2. The idea was that if this was in good order, then this one sequence could be used whenever schedules were needed to be divided by country. At the moment, although Schedule 2 is a common table, classes M/O (amongst others) have their own geographical divisions, and the orders in which countries are arranged differ between 2 and M/O; e.g. in Sched. 2 one has: e, British Isles; f, France; g, Spain, and gp, Portugal; while in class M it is MQN, Kingdoms and Provinces of Spain; MQW, Provinces (of Portugal); MF, Counties, etc. of France; and MW, British Isles. One can appreciate that there are reasons for different orders for geographical and historical sequences. What did surprise me however was to find that in some cases the parts of countries (regions, provinces, counties, etc.) were given in opposite orders. In Schedule 2, Ireland is set out with the Irish Republican states first, followed by the Northern Irish provinces, while MYD, Northern Ireland comes before MYI, Republic of Ireland. In other cases Bliss had changed his mind about what was included in, or excluded from, a region, for instance, in Schedule 2 'Wessex' is equated with 'Southern England as a whole', while MWK, although still given as 'Southern England' it is listed after London, the Home Counties, and the South East generally, all these having followed the general heading in Schedule 2. This has made it impossible to integrate the two sequences without changing the order of one of them. In the event, the new Schedule 2 as it currently stands, includes virtually all places given in the relevant parts of M/O, but the M/O order has had to be abandoned. In future it is intended that each country, although remaining where it is in the M/O sequence, will be divided internally by Schedule 2.

Unfortunately, I am unable to guarantee that every term in the original Schedule 2 has retained its old notation, for a number of reasons. Firstly, Bliss's habit of placing the names of provinces or towns in the A/Z index but not in the schedules, was probably justified on the grounds of saving space, and the fact that the classifier would be searching for a specific name. When, as a reviser, one is interested only in seeing how many towns, provinces, etc. are given, the system is very inconvenient. It is impossible to guess, or even to discover, how many places Bliss might have notated, and hidden in the A/Z index. I have traced provinces and states which fill in obvious gaps in the schedules, for instance in the schedules for USA one has under Northeastern U.S.: bai, Maine, while in the index there are, ban, New Hampshire, and bav, Vermont. This is straightforward enough, but there is no telling what towns might have been selected for notation.

Secondly, there is the problem of order within countries. Wherever possible I have sought to maintain Schedule 2 as no classifier welcomes the thought of altering endless

books, for little obvious gain. However, Bliss very definitely had his own ideas about how things should be listed. His favourite method was to move around a country in increasingly large circles. Although possibly idiosyncratic, this was a method that had its advantages. It is unfortunate that it was pursued with least success in Great Britain. The resulting order was one of: Southern as a whole, Southeast, East, South-central, South coast, Southwest, Wales (thus hardly distinguishable from England), West, Midlands, North, etc. If this is traced on a map, it begins to look very unhelpful, and while the reasoning can be seen, it would appear to have been constructed without the aid of an atlas. As I said, it is unfortunate that this should have occurred in Great Britain, i.e. in a heavily used section. Since I was unable to produce a rational order with a minimum amount of tinkering, I have suggested fairly radical changes.

Whatever the revision it is hoped that advantage will be taken of the occasion to incorporate provision for the new counties, as they will appear when the Boundary Commission's work has come into force.

Generally, I have given at least as much depth in coverage as is found in DC, with the exception of that provided for U.S.A. This was a case of an American scheme providing for the maximum possible American need. BC 2 is after all a British scheme, and it seemed unnecessary to provide quite so much depth in that area. On the other hand the coverage for Britain and parts of Europe is slightly better than that found in DC 17. For Western Europe we have tried to be fairly uniform, going down to County or District level in most cases. I have inserted towns mentioned by BC into their county or district. At this point (i.e. level of towns) order becomes alphabetical. Unfortunately, due to lack of space, towns may well have to be omitted from the finished schedule. In Asia and Africa, coverage is less detailed, although local expansion should be possible at any time.

The method used has been to place countries and their subdivisions as far as possible in map order. That is to say that places are set down in order so that those contiguous to one another follow on. Of course, a map cannot satisfactorily be reduced to linear order, so that the resulting schedule is simply a series of compromises, but it does have the advantage that counties, etc., are grouped within larger areas or regions, which themselves tend to be sought terms.

This advantage would be lost if we had the alternative system, used by LC. This consists simply of providing for areas of different size/importance, e.g. Countries or provinces, Cities or towns, to be grouped together and notated A/Z. Or, two or three parallel sequences (e.g. Geographical features, A/Z; States, Provinces, Counties, A/Z; Cities, towns, villages, A/Z)

are provided. This is simple to understand, use, and is infinitely hospitable. It also saves a considerable amount of schedule space. Topographical features may be dealt with in the same way. However, it means that for example, the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland would be widely separated from one another, and from 'The Lake District' if indeed such areas were allowed for at all. 'Kendal' too would be far removed from Westmorland. My geographer advisers feel strongly that from their point of view it is useful to have works classified within regions and their constituent parts. It would be helpful to have other BC users' views. It should of course be possible to provide alternative methods. The restricting factor on the amount of enumeration possible, is of course, space.

5 Class E/G Biology

A comprehensive draft schedule for Biology (exclusive of Taxonomic Botany and Zoology) has been developed by Srta. Jandira de Assuncao of the Institute of Biological Studies, Belo Horizonte, Brazil, whilst working at the Polytechnic of North London on her M.Sc., under the supervision of the Hon. Editor. This schedule, which will be adapted to form the new Class E in BC, is nearing completion. But the problem of the great enumerated taxonomies in systematic Botany and Zoology has not yet been tackled. We would welcome the opinion of users of these classes in BC as to the degree of revision and expansion they would like to see. The history of bibliographic classification in DC and UDC has shown the dangers of assuming too readily that a given taxonomy has served its time, with a consequent premature revision of a basically sound system. We would not like to repeat this error.

6 Class H. Physical anthropology and the health sciences  
(Note by Ruth Daniel)

\* Ruth Daniel is a researcher at the Polytechnic of North London who has produced and installed a new classification of Audiology for the Royal National Institute for the Deaf, and has worked on problems of retrieval languages in information science including the production (for an OSTI-funded experiment) of an Intermediate Lexicon for use as a switching language between different information centres in our subject, and is now engaged on producing a comprehensive classification and thesaurus in the Health Sciences for the Wessex Regional Hospital Board (under a grant from BMA). The Wessex system will draw on the comprehensive revision of Class H in BC which Ruth Daniel began last year.

CLASS H: draft of proposed revised version

Summary

ANTHROPOLOGY  
Physical

Existing BC

HB



is regarded as the best possible shelf order; the associated scope notes suggest the ideal citation order. However it does generate several problems:

1. The citation order does not follow 'standard' order or PMEST -  
e.g.  
Surgery : Organ (Operation : Operand)  
whereas Operation or Action is usually subordinate to Operand -  
the recipient of the action.
2. The citation order is not consistent (i.e. it varies throughout  
the scheme):  
e.g. Organ : Local disease (Thing : Process)  
Viral disease : Organ (Process : Thing)
3. Citation strings are arrived at by building retroactively at  
times, and forward at times  
e.g. Organ : Anatomy  
Organ : Local disease

Solutions to these, and other problems are not finalised,. But it already seems likely that the scheme, when used pre-coordinately, will not be suited by an alphabetical chain index, and that either sophisticated notational devices, or tables, will be essential in order to maintain consistency in filing of compound subjects. If these problems are satisfactorily resolved, the Wessex scheme will be breaking new ground in the way it adapts faceting techniques, and may eventually result in far greater flexibility in future faceted schemes.

## 7 Class P Religion (note by Valerie Lang)

This proved to be no more straightforward than any other class!

In an attempt to bring it down to manageable proportions, I concentrated on producing a classification of Christianity before going on to deal with other religions. This had the advantages of providing a field where at least some of the concepts were familiar, and being the area where most detail was required. It was intended that other Religions would not be treated in quite the same depth, but that basic concepts (and, sometimes, terms) could be borrowed from Christianity.

It is recognised that this brings with it the danger that other Religions will be given a Christianised slant, but it is hoped that since this pitfall is known to exist, it can be avoided.

Christianity could have been organised in a number of different ways. For instance, it could all have been treated historically. In the event it was put into the following groupings: Sacred writings, within which came criticism; Dogmatic theology, including Doctrine of God, Ecclesiology, and Doctrines of Sacraments, and Last Things; Devotional theology; Worship; Asceticism and Mysticism; Moral theology; Pastoral care;

