

# The Bliss Classification Bulletin

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## CONTENTS

Editorial	Page 1
Solution to Blissword puzzle No. 3	Page 2
AGM of the Bliss Classification Association	Page 3
Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31 July 1989	Page 6
Class J, 1990 revision	Page 7
BC2 libraries: Queens' College, Cambridge	Page 10
Letter from Beijing	Page 13
Subject indexing: Derek Langridge replies	Page 14
Additions and amendments to BC2	Page 17

## **EDITORIAL**

AT LONG LAST things are moving the way they should, albeit not yet as fast as we should like. These pages include a preview of the newly revised version of BC2's Class J, Education, which should be available from Bowker-Saur shortly after you receive this issue of the *Bulletin*. The first half of Class A (Philosophy & Logic) is in the final stages of proof-reading as I write and the camera-ready copy should be going to Bowker-Saur shortly for publication in the first half of 1991; the second half (Mathematics etc.) is following hard on its heels.

We have not, incidentally, changed publisher! Our publishing group, Butterworths, has decided that all their publications in the library and information science field will henceforth be issued under the Bowker-Saur imprint.

Users will note with pleasure (and relief) the further improvement in the typography of the schedules. The style that is being evolved is designed to make their use easier, and the analysis and hierarchical structure more readily apparent. The value of this will be more clearly seen when Mathematics is published, for this is a class with a fairly small vocabulary of basic terms and a conversely large vocabulary of complex subjects specified by synthesis. Our former practice of placing "brought-down" terms in parentheses would have resulted in a forest of such terms, meant to show the structure clearly but in practice often doing the opposite (see *Bulletin* No.27, 1985, p.9-10).

Another technical improvement which users will *not* see is the creation of machine-readable versions of the earlier classes, made easier by the use of scanners. This will speed up work on the revision of Q and other classes as needed very greatly. (Try keying in a page or two of Class H manually... .. see what I mean?) But fear not! -- the priority is still the publication of the remaining classes.

QC5 4: Our other priority remains the funding of our work. We knew that in the present state of the national economy grant-making bodies would have less to distribute on the one hand and that appeals for funds from hard-up charitable organisations would be both more numerous and more pressing on the other. Nevertheless, our appeal has proved even less fruitful than we had feared, raising more hopes than cash. We ask all members once again to contact us if they have any knowledge of likely sources of funding or experience of fund-raising (preferably successful). In the mean time we soldier on.

A.G.C.

### Solution to Blissword Puzzle no.3

/	/	P	/	K	/	T	/	P	/	I	/	T	V	K
/	/	T	N	P	H	A	H	S	/	J	/	M	/	O
T	J	O	/	H	U	L	/	I	M	R	K	K	Q	T
/	L	/	K	/	J	I	T	V	/	H	/	P	M	/
J	N	K	R	H	D	R	/	H	T	M	P	N	D	L
/	J	/	K	U	E	/	/	R	/	J	/	N	/	/
T	N	H	E	A	C	P	/	T	Y	J	G	P	R	D
/	/	H	/	T	/	H	B	W	/	K	/	X	/	/
K	T	H	J	R	H	O	/	H	Q	E	Q	S	I	E
/	U	/	R	/	A	/	/	T	D	J	/	M	/	/
Q	C	Q	B	P	L	Q	/	I	S	P	R	F	V	L
/	J	J	/	M	/	Q	K	F	X	/	V	/	X	/
K	V	F	U	W	Q	S	/	T	W	K	/	T	K	T
A	/	D	/	A	/	P	R	D	L	B	W	Y	/	/
I	K	K	/	G	/	P	/	H	/	V	/	W	/	/

There is no puzzle this time. Next year there may be another one, making use of the revised class J and also of at least half of A, as well as the other classes.

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Bliss Classification Association: An association to develop and promote the Bliss Bibliographic Classification (Registered charity no. 270580) c/o The Library, Fitzwilliam College, Huntingdon Road, Cambridge, CB3 0DG Telephone 0223 332042

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BLISS CLASSIFICATION ASSOCIATION

MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Bliss Classification Association held on Friday, December 15, 1989 at the DHSS, Elephant and Castle, London

Present: Jack Mills (Chairman and Editor of BC2)  
Kenneth Bell (Polytechnic of North London)  
Ken Best (Personal member)  
Margaret Blackburn (University of London Library)  
Peter Boaden (University of London Library)  
Jennifer Buchanan (Personal member)  
Madeleine Carrington (Personal member)  
Antony Croghan  
Tony Curwen (Editor, BC Bulletin)  
Ed Dua (DHSS)  
Frank Emmott (Barnardo's)  
Douglas J. Foskett  
Angela Haselton (Tavistock Joint Library)  
Roger Hughes  
Marion MacLeod (Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge)  
Colin Neilson (City University)  
Chris Preddle (National Children's Home)  
Angela Rennie (Barnardo's)  
Hilda Stoddard (Personal member)  
Geraldine Turpie (Bowker-Saur)  
Martin Wright (Victim Support)

Apologies: Debbie Cowley (CCETSW)  
Keith Cheyney (Haberdashers' Aske's Boys' School)  
Jean Garriock  
Giustina Ryan (National Institute for Social Work)  
Angela Upton (National Institute for Social Work)  
Mark Watson (National Institute for Social Work)

- 1 The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on December 16, 1988 were approved. The Chairman congratulated the Editor of the Bulletin on the recent issue.
- 2 Matters arising.
  - 2.1 In response to a question from the floor about Minute 2.1 of December 16, 1988, the Chairman apologised on behalf of the Committee for the inadequate publicity given to the 1987 short course.
  - 2.2 The Chairman reported that a corrected index to Class T would be produced, but had been delayed because of the priority given to Class A.
- 3 Progress of BC2: Editor's report.

The Editor introduced his written report, which had been circulated. [*Appended to these Minutes*]. He reported a recent decision to issue Class A in two parts.

*The Bliss Classification Bulletin, No.32, 1990*

- 4 Membership, Finance and Fund-raising: Treasurer's report.
  - 4.1 The Association now has 101 members. A number of lapsed memberships have been more than compensated for by twelve new members.
  - 4.2 The Treasurer introduced the financial statement. She reported that in future statements capital equipment and depreciation would be included.
  - 4.3 The sales figures distributed at the meeting appeared to indicate a shortage of copies of Class K. Geraldine Turpie promised that copies would be available.
  - 4.4 The Association had launched its first appeal for funds since 1982. Appeals would be made to seventeen firms in information technology and related fields, twenty grant-making trusts and thirty-five companies which might offer sponsorship or a donation. It was hoped to raise enough money to complete publication within four years. Help from member libraries would be welcome. It was suggested from the floor that the subscription might be increased. The Chairman thanked the Committee for their work in connection with the Appeal.
- 5 Ken Best was elected Hon. Auditor for 1990.
- 6 Publicity Officer's report.

There had been little activity in 1989. Press releases had been prepared for forthcoming classes.
- 7 Physical production.

Colin Neilson reported that the Philosophy schedules and the new edition of Class J were ready to be sent to the publisher. Mathematics was at the correction stage. He described the new machinery which the Association had acquired.
- 8 Forthcoming publication.

Philosophy and Education would be sent to Bowker-Saur early in 1990 and would be published that year. Mathematics would be ready later in the year. Classes R and S would be sent to Colin Neilson later in the year.
- 9 Committee membership.

There were five vacancies. Ken Bell, Peter Boaden, Jennifer Buchanan, Ed Dua and Marion MacLeod were elected to the Committee.
- 10 Other business.

The Chairman reported a letter received from Li Na, a librarian in Beijing, praising BC2.

PROGRESS OF BC2 IN 1989: EDITOR'S REPORT TO THE AGM

A great deal of work has been done and the massive project has moved nearer to completion, although not as fast as BCA members (and others) have hoped. Below is a brief account of the work done on different classes.

**Class A Philosophy and Mathematics** (Philosophy, Logic, Mathematics, Statistics, Natural sciences and Scientific method in general). The physical production of this very large and heterogeneous class has continued to prove troublesome, reflecting the particularly difficult package of schedules involved. However, the schedules are now virtually complete and are about to be circulated to the Committee for proof-reading. Proof copies of Class A will be available at the AGM for inspection.

**Class C Chemistry.** The final stages of this large class (those relating to the elements and compounds themselves) have now been completed and final editing and notating by the Editor has just begun.

**Class J Education.** The revision of this class by Douglas and Joy Foskett is now complete (including a new introduction). The schedules will soon be circulated to the Committee for proofreading. Proof copies will be available at the AGM for inspection and the camera-ready copy should go to Butterworths early in the New Year. As Douglas made clear at the last AGM, this will not only be the first class to be revised, but will also demonstrate a greater amplification of the 'core' subject, Education, by substantial extracts from closely related subjects, such as Psychology and Management.

**Class Q Social Welfare.** The first steps were taken in the preparation of a revision of this class, probably the most used, so far, of all BC2 classes. Current users were being asked to indicate particular requirements and expectations in the matter of vocabulary, etc. The Editor has spent a fair amount of time modifying BC2 to produce a special classification of Victimology and this has shed useful sidelights on some of the deficiencies of the existing Q schedule and should contribute to a successful revision.

**Classes R/S Politics and Law.** Both classes have now been rewritten in detail in preparation for inputting to the microcomputer which the Editor has now acquired from the BCA. This inputting has now begun and it is fairly certain that the camera-ready copy will go to Butterworths before the next AGM.

**Class U/V Technology.** The great difficulty under which Eric Coates has been labouring in his completion of this huge class sadly continues. But he is slowly reducing the classes still to be done.

**Plans for 1990.** Concurrently with the completion of R/S, Class C will be finalised and notated. Vanda Broughton has now acquired a microcomputer from the BCA and the completed schedule will be input directly. This should be done by mid-1990, after which we hope to begin the finalisation of the massive classes E/G (Biology and Applied biology). It is hoped that more progress will be made on the revision of Class Q.

BLISS CLASSIFICATION ASSOCIATION CONSOLIDATED RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 JULY 1989

<u>1988</u>	<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>PAYMENTS</u>	<u>1989</u>
	Balance brought forward 1 August 1988		322.40	Committee and AGM expenses	282.90
2634.04	General account	2718.88	223.49	Stationery and postage	267.34
6740.52	Appeal account	<u>6858.46</u>	9577.34		
	Subscriptions:		5063.55	2nd edition expenses:	
	Personal	36.00		Research assistant	2006.00
	School	18.00	813.92	Work on unpublished	
	Institutions	<u>818.43</u>	872.43	classes	<u>18.54</u>
910.88			2993.75	Equipment and repairs	69.00
838.30	Royalties on 2nd edition		238.99		
86.78	Distribution from M & G (Charibond)		86.80	153.16	Class T short course, December 1987
				00.00	00.00
1500.00	BCA appeal contributions		00.00	00.00	BCA new Appeal expenses
				257.62	Other payments
6000.00	Sale of supplementary schedules		00.00		210.38
	Interest payments:		70.80	Balance in hand at 31 July	
176.92	Deposit a/c	207.95	2648.08	General current a/c	335.64
489.79	Appeal a/c	<u>499.42</u>	707.37	General deposit a/c	2717.09
			6858.46	Appeal a/c	<u>5351.88</u>
28.00	Other receipts		42.00		8404.61
<u>19405.23</u>		<u>11524.93</u>	<u>19405.23</u>		<u>11524.93</u>

Current assets at 31.7.89

800.13	Charibond (at cost)	800.13
2718.88	Cash in general account	3052.73
<u>6858.46</u>	Cash in Appeal account	<u>5351.88</u>
<u>10377.47</u>		<u>9204.74</u>

Marion Macleod, Hon. Treasurer  
6 Gilbert Close, Cambridge, CB4 3HR

Auditor's report

*I have examined the books, bank statements and other relevant papers of the Bliss Classification Association and find the above statement of accounts to be correct.*

K. Best, Hon. Auditor                      7.12.1989  
2 Greendale, Ilminster, Somerset, TA19 0EB

## **J90**

Douglas and Joy Foskett's revision of Class J Education is due for publication by Bowker-Saur in December 1990; the price (to be confirmed) is £32.00, the ISBN (definitel!) is 0-86291-278-4.

This is not the beginning of BC3. Taking a leaf out of AACR2's book, we have called it Class J, Education, 1990 revision: BC2 J90, if you like. (J77 and J90 will be used as a convenient shorthand in the following notes). Indeed, as Douglas Foskett pointed out in his talk at a previous AGM, the fundamental work of restructuring and revision was done for J77, one of the first classes of BC2 to be published, along with P, Q, and the Introduction and Auxiliary Schedules. It has stood the tests of time and use well, and the structure established in 1977 has needed very little change indeed, accepting expansion and updating with minimal disturbance. The process of revision will not be recounted here: users should definitely re-read DJF's article, *Thoughts on revising a bibliographical classification sceme*, published in *International Forum on Information and Documentation*, vol.14, no.1, January 1989 and reprinted in last year's *Bulletin*, before embarking on classification or re-classification of their materials on education.

What are the significant changes? The first to strike the classifier is the typography, which shows further improvements and is now almost in its definitive form. (We may, for example, omit the hierarchical leader-line dots before notes and overrun lines in future). We hope users share our pleasure in the appearance of the schedules, which are a tribute to the ingenuity of Colin Neilson and a reflection of the increasing sophistication of the computer resources available to us.

The index has been greatly enlarged and improved. All terms printed in the schedule should be found in it, including those which are given as significant examples of terms achieved by synthesis from other classes.

Next, there has been a necessary expansion in the vocabulary, taking account of both earlier omissions and recent developments such as Fax machines JCM T, Parent-school relations JDD WF, Enterprise activities [as sources of income] JDG U and subdivisions, Summer schools JDT S, Cheating JFJ C, Open book examinations JFL X, Video discs JIQ T, Library work JJJ M, Core curriculum JKB O, Opted-out schools JLB H, International schools JLD CY, and so on.

These, however, represent only a small part of the increase in vocabulary: the major part has been achieved by a much greater use of synthesis from other published classes. Such synthesis was used in J77, but the only class of importance to J published at that time was Q, Welfare: synthesis from other classes was indicative, giving a selection of classmarks as examples with provisional notations. J90 uses classes I, K, Q and T extensively, and reproduces a summary of those classes at the end of the volume following the index, together with an outline of Auxiliary Schedules 1, 2, 3 and 4B. Classes H and P are also used. The result is a very much greater range of specification available to the classifier for Educational management and finance, Educational psychology, Health, welfare and environmental factors, and not least Special categories of educands. Many examples of synthesised classmarks are given, but those in J90 do not invariably repeat with new notations those given in J77. One must not assume that because a term found in J77 no longer appears in J90, it can no longer be specified: it may well be possible to synthesise it. Thus Housewives, formerly JPV W, have disappeared from further education (they were in fact misplaced under Educands by age), but can now be synthesised at JVH KLH (from QKL H) as a special category of educand.

The following are the major areas of synthesis, other than those using the Auxilliary schedules or the entire classification:

JAK/JAK PF	from K/KPF	Society and education
JBH A/JBH P	from TA/TP	Economics of education
JBH Q/JBH Y	from TQ/TY	Management of educational systems
JDF Q/JDF RX	from TQ/TRX	Management of schools, etc.
		Health & welfare services
JDU G/JDU Y	from KPU/KPY	Social environmental factors
JDV A/JDV Y	from KQA/KQY	" " " "
JDW AA/JDW AP	from KRA/KRP	" " " "
JDW B/JDW G	from HB/HG	Human biological factors
JDW H/JDW Y	from HH/HY	Health, hygiene & safety
JDX A/JDX X	from IA/IX	Mental health care & services
JEA/JEL	from IA/IL	Psychological research or processes or typology
JEN/JEQ	from IN/IQ	Social psychology, social behaviour
JVB MW/JVB NI	from KMW/KNI	Socio-economic classes
JVH G/JVH JKS	from QG/QJK S	Background handicapped
JVH K/JVH L	from QK/QL	" "
JVO P/JVO Q	from IUP/IUQ	Persons with specific disorders
JVP B/JVP V	from IUR B/IUR V	" " " "
JVQ S/JVQ Y	from IUS/IUY	" " " "
JVR B/JVR Y	from IVB/IVY	" " " "

It should be noted that Social psychology, JEN/JEQ, follows the revision of Class I which was given in extended outline in the *Bulletin*, No.28, 1986. That revision is heavily based on Class K in turn, and JEN/JEQ frequently refer directly to Class K where appropriate, rather than Class I.

The use of synthesis on this scale has inevitably led to the displacement and relocation of some classes. For example, in J77 Health & welfare services were found at JDJ, but this notation is needed for the revised and extended school management schedule; in J90 welfare services have been moved to the previously unused JDU/JDX where they have been redeveloped in considerable detail.

The instructions for synthesising classmarks have been tidied up throughout, and the editorial preferences where there are alternatives have been stated clearly.

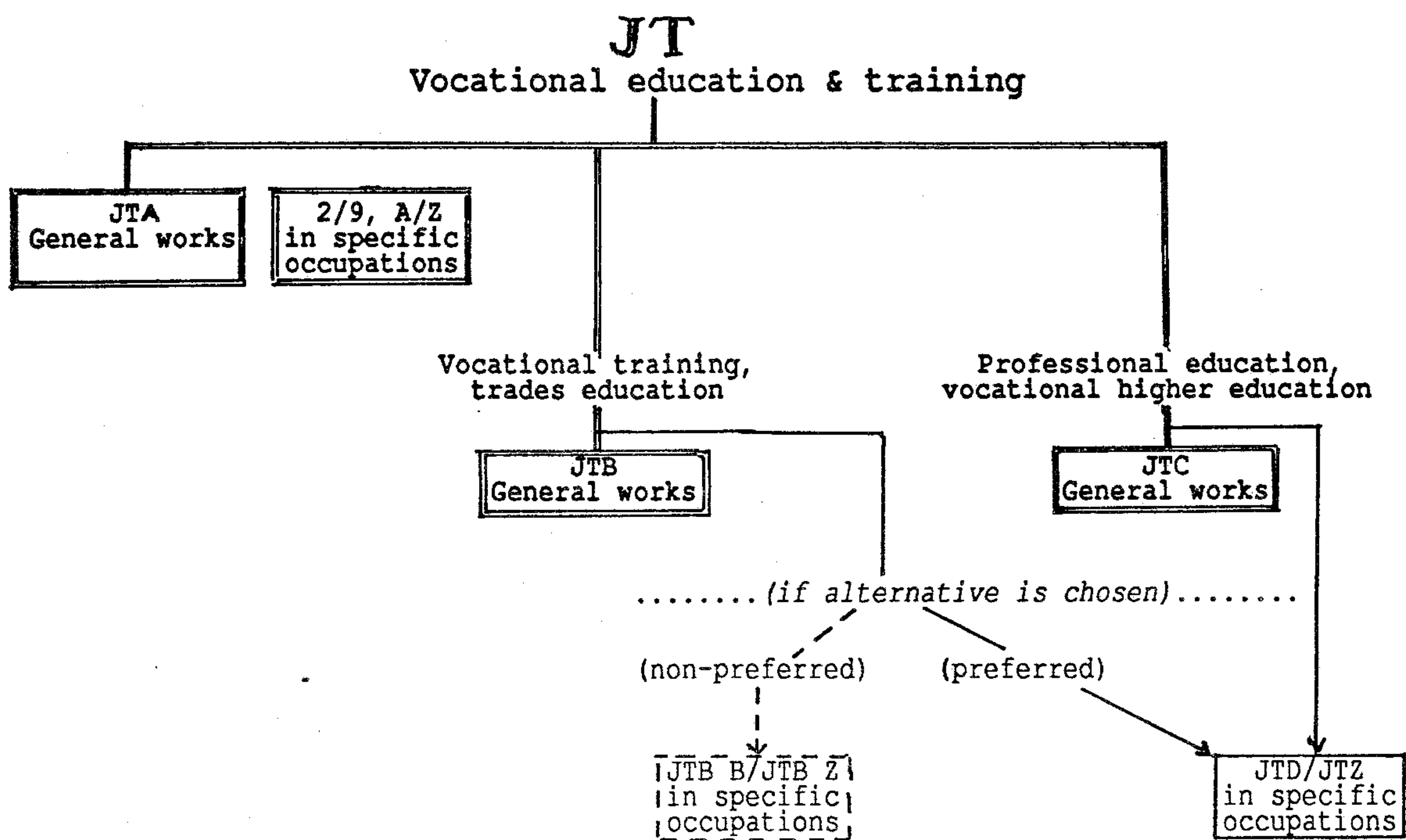
One major change is in the treatment of Vocational education and training. I will attempt to summarise this and show the alternatives; some readers may find the following diagrammatic representation easier to follow.

- JQ [Vocational, occupational training] -- cancelled; use JT
- JT Vocational education and training
- JTA . General works
- . In particular subjects
  - preferred treatment:* class with those subjects throughout the classification, 2/9, A/Z
  - alternative for education libraries:* class in JTB/JTZ
  - \* Two alternatives within this alternative are shown below
- JTB . Vocational training, trades education



The Bliss Classification Bulletin, No.32, 1990

- JTB A . . General works
- . . In particular subjects
  - preferred treatment*: class with those subjects throughout the classification, 2/9, A/Z
  - preferred treatment within the alternative*: class works on vocational training in particular subjects together with those on vocational education in JTD/JTZ
- JTB B/Z *non-preferred treatment within the alternative*: class here works on vocational training
- . Professional education, vocational higher education
- JTC . . General works
- . . In particular subjects
  - preferred treatment*: class with those subjects throughout the classification, 2/9, A/Z
- JTD/JTZ *preferred treatment within the alternative*: class here works on vocational education in particular subjects and also those on vocational training
- non-preferred treatment within the alternative*: class here solely works on professional education in particular subjects (with vocational training at JTB B/JTB Z)



Note: JTJ is in all cases the sole place for professional & vocational education & training of persons in education. JTB J is never used.

A.G.C.

BC2 LIBRARIES

**CLASSIFYING THE UNDERGRADUATE COLLECTION AT QUEENS' COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE**, by Mrs CLARE SARGENT, MA

The library at Queens' dates from the foundation of the College by Margaret of Anjou, under the instigation of Andrew Docket, in 1448. The original, now 'Old' court of the College incorporated into its design the three major elements which constituted a medieval Cambridge college: chapel, library, and [dining] hall, surrounded by residential rooms for master, fellows and undergraduates. The chapel remained in use until 1890 when it proved too small a building to house the rapidly growing membership and a new chapel, designed by George Bodley, was built in another court. The hall suffered the same fate in 1980 and is now used for formal receptions only, all college dining taking place in a new complex. The library, however, remains in its original location, although the medieval lecterns were incorporated into stacks in the 1660s, and the collection has long since outgrown its home.

A fixed-shelf location of Class, Shelf and Number was introduced into the library some time in the 1600s, judging by records of printing orders for sheets of relevant letters. As the library grew, new classes were added, mostly based on a rough related-subject-system, and books and shelves, mostly island cases, were fitted wherever they could go. By 1948 the situation was desperate. New subjects were being developed and taught within the University, there were new expectations from gaining a degree, and the library at Queens' was judged, and found wanting.

The College decided to create a new collection, still related to the old, incorporating what were then the newer books, and to set up a reading room for undergraduates which would house it. It was also to be considered the War Memorial for those members of College who had died in the Second World War. The adjoining Old Chapel had stood virtually unused since 1890. This was now re-developed under the guidance of the architect Sir A. Richardson to form a reading room with a gallery, with bookcase-lined walls, with access to the Old Library from the gallery. The new stock came from donations, purchases and the newer stock of the Old Library, so that a subject-based classification with fixed-shelf numbers was already available. Throughout the setting-up of the new library, Queens' had the assistance of staff from Cambridge University Library. They now proposed to create a classification for the new books based on the Dewey-related classification in use in the University Library at that time, but giving the appearance of the three-label system already familiar at Queens'. This work, which involved typing a new catalogue, was begun in 1952 and almost completed within the space of three months -- "for this great labour the College is indebted to Mr J.R. Harrison (directing), Mr A.R. Palmer, and Mr R.C.G. Vickery, all members of the staff of the University Library, and to our own Mr Chessum, who affixed all the new labels (twenty thousand before the beginning of the Michaelmas Term)." [Report on the Library presented to the Governing Body, Queens' College, 1953].

After 1958 the College dispensed with the post of library clerk and all the routine work of the library was carried out by the Fellow Librarian and a team of undergraduates. Maintaining consistency within the classification was obviously impossible, and many new subjects were being taught for which it made no allowance. When a part-time assistant librarian was appointed in 1970 she faced the major task of trying to up-date the classification. Many subjects were treated by a somewhat archaic approach, others, for example engineering, and later computer science, were simply not provided for at all. Working whenever she could obtain help in re-labelling and cataloguing, and sometimes in the face of entrenched opposition, she re-organised several subjects. She adopted what she termed

*The Bliss Classification Bulletin, No.32, 1990*

her "Pseudo-decimal" system. This was essentially an in-house classification retaining the outward appearance of the three number labels, but introducing many more numerical sub-divisions. The internal order of each class was either created in-house in consultation with Queens' Fellows and undergraduates, or borrowed from the individual faculty libraries of Cambridge, which themselves used either in-house systems or adaptations of Dewey, or in one instance BC1.

I was appointed to Queens' Library in September 1988. At this time the undergraduate collection consisted of about 25000 frontline texts, 6000 journals and 8000 older items dating from the 19th and early 20th centuries. However, despite valiant attempts by my predecessor, the library had sunk to a low spot in its career: use by undergraduates was sporadic and there had been talk whether it had a place at all in a University so well stocked with libraries as Cambridge. My brief was to "put it right ..."

I decided that two major issues had to be tackled: the stock had to be thoroughly checked, possibly revised, and organised into a system whereby it could be fully exploited; and confidence had to be restored among the undergraduate users. Re-classifying and cataloguing seemed to be the only answer to both these problems, but the long-term disruption often implied in re-classifying would counter my second objective. I decided, therefore, that any work which disrupted the library must be carried out in the shortest possible time, giving it priority in my own daily work, and I must use undergraduates as much as possible to "sell" the new system. I chose BC2 for a number of reasons related to this decision: I was extremely familiar with it, having worked at King's College Library, Cambridge; the letter-based classmarks indicated a complete break with the previous systems, and gave an immediate sense of the library being re-vitalised; the subject-index is almost indispensable in an academic library and well-suited to key-word indexing by computer, which we plan to install soon; I had support and offers of help from other Bliss users in Cambridge; and it is extremely fast to do.

My experience at King's had shown that going from an overtly simple three-number system to one which appears more complex does raise antagonism in users. Nobody ever questioned the location of a book before, but now they challenge me as to the meaning of a classmark and demand explanations of the overall order. Suspicion is rife.

I introduced the new classification by preparing one section of the classification, Philosophy (class AA in Bliss, class 2 in the old Queens' system), complete with classified catalogue and subject index, ready for a sherry party and sale in January 1989. The college Fellowship was invited to this and deemed the new order "a good thing"; my predecessor when she saw it exclaimed "I always longed to get the Greeks in front of Descartes!" From then on I adopted the policy that all new books be immediately classified into Bliss to create a substratum in all classes. This was possible with the very generous cooperation of Elizabeth Russell at King's College, Cambridge, who allowed me to borrow schedules and draft schedules, and her own classification of certain books. This showed the remarkably self-sustaining nature of the subject-index: as my base of classmarks grew I had to visit King's less and less, as I frequently had the elements of a classmark already available. The cost of the published schedules was a deterrent to someone on a limited budget, but the absence of any schedule at all in some areas was a much greater problem. With the objective of completing the work as quickly as possible, I could not afford to wait for completed schedules. I am therefore deeply indebted to the compilers of interim workable schedules who allowed me access to their work: particularly Elizabeth Russell and Kenneth Moody for computer science, Elizabeth Russell and David Paine for engineering and applied physics, and Graham Howorth for History.

*The Bliss Classification Bulletin, No.32, 1990*

By July 1989 I was ready to begin a major summer session designed to cover as much ground as possible. The first task of my undergraduate team was to swing the library around until each section stood in what should be its final location when classified. This was designed to minimise any further re-shuffling and to avoid the confusion of areas of the library suddenly moving. This left us for one academic year with three major classes, Theology (class 1 in the old Queens' system), Economics (4) and History (14-15) in apparently random positions, but it did prepare their users for their ultimate locations.

When we began to classify I had to decide where to start: beginning? end? favourite subject? best available schedule? In the end this was dictated by the help available. My team for that first summer included two linguists, one specialising in philology and the other in Japanese, a physicist with a passion for Anglo-Saxon history, a mathematician who liked playing with computers (and a morbid interest in embalming techniques), a geologist, a botanist and an English graduate. Each tackled his or her own field. (My own discipline is ancient history with social anthropology). This enabled the students to work on books with which they were familiar, instead of having to tackle an unknown subject as well as the intricacies of the classification. Retroactive number building they found great fun (one later added all the minor prophets together to produce the longest classmark ever seen and was peeved when I reduced it to "Minor prophets") and the idea of contributing to research on classification was very stimulating, as was the opportunity to choose alternatives which reflected the teaching approach used in the University.

The enthusiasm on the part of the "Library staff" infected other students staying in College over the summer. The library, particularly tea on the lawn, became the social focus for many of them, and passers-by coming in to chat with the "staff" could find themselves handed a scalpel to remove old labels, or engaged in a heated argument about the analysis of a book. Objective Two was being achieved: it was clear that anyone could cope with this new-fangled idea of the Librarian's.

By the end of the first summer we had re-classified and labelled 12 000 volumes. We are using the large white labels originally designed and supplied by Barnardo's library. During the term we did no work on books, to avoid noise and disturbance, but the classified catalogue was created, and the subject-index grew to reach 5 000 terms. The following summer, beginning July 1990, another team assembled and we completed the work: the major classes History, Theology, Economics, Classics and minor areas of Politics and Fine Arts with Music.

Objective Two has benefitted tremendously from this work. The library now feels more comfortable, and undergraduates confidently show each other how to use the new catalogues and the subject-index. The exercise has given me a knowledge of the stock which I could not otherwise hope to have achieved in the time, and has acted as a total and very thorough stock-check, with an accompanying catalogue-check which will prove invaluable as we proceed to computerisation. The College is now planning a major up-grading of the library building and it is a great advantage to be able to report confidently on the nature of the stock. Obviously work done at such speed and by essentially untrained help must contain some errors, but they are invariably errors of notation-building rather than of analysis, and are easily corrected in the course of routine work.

Queens' was among the first libraries to produce a subject-based catalogue. A *catalogue of the Library of the College of St. Margaret and St. Bernard commonly called Queen's College in the University of Cambridge methodically arranged* by Thomas Hartwell Horne, London, 1827. This remains the working catalogue for the Old Library. I am happy to say that we have not introduced something new into the Library, just up-dated it.

## **Letter from Beijing**

*At the end of last year Jack Mills received the following very charming letter from a recently-qualified librarian in Beijing:*

Dear Mr Mills

My name is Li Na. I have just graduated from the Library and Information Science Department of Beijing Normal University.

More than two years ago, when I was a sophomore, I fortuitously met a book, which had never been read by anyone in our university's library. It attracted my attention all at once. I was unable to tear myself away from it. Its name is Bliss Bibliographic Classification Second Edition Class K Sociology.

I spent a whole winter vacation in the Beijing National Library reading six other parts including the Introduction and Auxiliary Schedule as well as yours A Modern Outline of Library Classification. A thesis was finished in 1987. Then it was selected for inclusion in a book published by our department. I believe it was the first paper which comprehensively introduced and systematically analysed the BBC in China. I also lectured on BBC for students and teachers of our department for several times.

In 1988, my friend and I applied the Moho Logic Method to classification -- weighed each element of a scheme to evaluate every existing widely-used classification scheme. We came to the conclusion that BBC is the most scientific classification in the world, mainly because of its use of S.R. Ranganathan's theory, the principle of retroactive notation and other excellent ideas.

Inevitably, it has some shortcomings : its complexity makes it a little difficult for nonprofessional people, its short history made it always live in the shadow of DC and LC, its long duration of revision made its users disappointed.

However, BBC has a very bright future. Even though traditional classifications have been revised and enlarged, they can not radically satisfy current situation and retrievers' need. What we really want is the classification that embodies the spirit of our time. BBC is the one.

I have a great esteem for you. I believe you will successfully finish your work. China welcomes the new Bliss Bibliographic Classification.

I am looking forward to your good news.

Yours sincerely

Li Na

