

The Almost Magic Pudding:

A Brief History and Overview of Australian Materials at the Library of Congress

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All views and representations expressed in this paper are my own and should not be interpreted as the views or policies of any agency or organization with which I am affiliated.

In searching for a culturally appropriate metaphor to use for the title of this paper, I settled on the Norman Lindsay children's classic *The Magic Pudding* because it seems to me that the Library of Congress collections have a lot in common with Albert, the titular pudding of Lindsay's tale. Our collections resemble Albert in being substantive, robust, and nourishing (albeit in the intellectual rather than the gastronomic sense). Like Albert, who can morph from steak-and-kidney into various other puddings, our collections are also diverse and somewhat prismatic. Unfortunately, persons using the Library of Congress can occasionally find the experience somewhat trying, rather like encountering Albert in one of his more irascible humors. And while the collections are in a sense self-replenishing (in that they are constantly growing), unlike Albert they are not inexhaustible. Thus, I would characterize our collections as an "almost" magic pudding at best (or perhaps a mundane pudding occasionally manifesting magical traits).

My goal for this paper is to provide an overview of the Australian materials in the Library of Congress in the historical context of the Library's growth and development. By way of introduction, I need to address some basic facts about the Library in general, and its Australian materials in particular:

- 1) *The Library of Congress is probably the largest library in the world--but not nearly as big as most people think it is.* The Library of Congress currently boasts holdings of about 130 million items, with about 29 million published books and periodical volumes, and other materials in virtually every conceivable format from cuneiform tablets to computer disks.¹ Based on my years working as a reference librarian in the Library's Main Reading Room, I suspect that the Library's reputation for large and unique collections has contributed to a commonly held misconception--the idea that we hold every book ever

¹ Library of Congress, "About the Library: Fascinating Facts," <http://www.loc.gov/about/facts.html> (February 2005). The British Library can also plausibly claim to be the largest library in the world, claiming a collection of about 150 million items (British Library "About Us: Did You Know?" <http://www.bl.uk/about/didyou.html>). Both institutions include non-book materials in their enumeration; the British Library collects non-book items (such as stamps and patents) which are in the U.S. are collected by agencies other than the Library of Congress.

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published. Because of this misguided notion, many people see the Library as kind of a Mythic Repository of All Human Knowledge--a "magic pudding" of the printed word.² This is unfortunate, in that it sets a standard no one library can ever meet. Speaking from experience both as a librarian and a researcher, I can safely assert that the Library of Congress has extraordinary holdings of materials from Australia. But while these are extensive, they are not and will never be comprehensive--researchers expecting something resembling the "National Library of Australia, Northern Hemisphere Branch" are liable to be disappointed (just as no library in the world can equal our holdings of Americana).

- 2) *There is no one source for Australian materials at the Library.* Other Library of Congress collections of materials published overseas (our Chinese and Russian language collections are cases in point) began with a single major donation and were subsequently augmented by specific gifts and bequests, lending themselves well to a clearly defined timeline of their development. As the following pages will make clear, the Library's Australiana collections were developed in a much more piecemeal fashion, via a diverse array of mechanisms intended to secure materials from throughout the Anglophone realm, not just from Australia. The Library's records for this amorphous process are organized chronologically and by division rather than geographically, with numerous gaps in the records due to fire, natural deterioration, and the odd filing mishap. Further complicating matters is the fact that many items were acquired retrospectively, years or even decades after their original publication.

- 3) *There is no one place for Australian materials at the Library.* Like most librarians, I tend to use the term "collection" in a rather generic sense that people outside the library profession might find somewhat misleading. In this paper, "collection" is most often meant as "an accumulated group of library materials having a common characteristic."³ In the case of our Australian collections, the "common characteristic" is either subject matter or place of publication, but *not* a single physical location; there is no room or alcove in the Library of Congress labeled "Australia." This is due in large part to the fact that the Library organizes much of its material by format, and the various formats are generally housed separately from one another. It is also a function of the Library of Congress classification scheme, which is organized primarily by subject, and then by geographic area. There is much material listed under the main heading "Australia" and its various subheadings (e.g. "Australia--Economic conditions"; "Australia--History"). But materials on, for instance, marriage in Australia will be listed under "Marriage--

² Perhaps the most egregious example of this trope from the realm of popular culture is the film *Battlefield Earth* (2000; based on the posthumous 1982 novel by L. Ron Hubbard). Here the protagonist, one of the few survivors from a devastating alien invasion, manages to teach himself to fly Harrier fighter jets by picking through books plucked from the ruins of the Library of Congress--a flattering tribute to the power of the printed word, but implausible at best.

³ American Library Association. *ALA Glossary of Library and Information Science*, ed. Heartsill Young (Chicago: American Library Association, 1983), pp. 49.

Australia" rather than "Australia--Marriage"; they will be shelved with the materials on marriage, not with the other materials about Australia. There are some areas in our classification scheme, most notably subclass "DU" for the history of Oceania, where Australian materials tend to cluster. But for the most part, our Australian collections might thus best be understood as veins of valuable ore snaking through a great mountain, as opposed to a stack of bullion lying neatly in a vault.

- 4) *There has never been any one person responsible for developing the Library's Australiana collections.* Historians can point to near-legendary bibliophiles and scholars such as David Scott Mitchell, Sir William Dixon, John Oxley, Alexander Turnbull, and many others as the progenitors of the great Australasian research library collections. While Thomas Jefferson is generally regarded as the father of the Library of Congress collections as a whole, I have been able to identify no one subsequent figure who (metaphorically speaking) pointed to Australia on a map of the world and declared that books and other materials must be acquired even from that distant continent. To be sure, the story of Australian materials at the Library of Congress is very much the story of the Library as a whole, and as such it features individuals who embody the 19th-century archetype of the scholar-librarian--formidable figures of steely demeanor, unflagging vision, near-eidetic memories, and impeccably Anglo-Saxon nomenclature. But the public utterances of these men give no indication of an Archimedean moment of revelation regarding the need to acquire materials from Australia. So far as I can determine, this responsibility was attached in ancillary fashion to other areas of responsibility until 1991, when I was appointed the Library's recommending officer⁴ for Australia and New Zealand. But even now, I am not the only member of the Library's professional staff who recommends items from Australia to be added to the collections; the Library's various subject specialists may also order relevant titles published from that part of the world. And my responsibility focuses on the acquisition of published books and periodicals rather than non-book materials.
- 5) *There is no one definition for "Australian materials."* What makes a book "Australian"--authorship, place of publication, subject matter? Is *Schindler's List* "Australian" because it was written by Thomas Keneally? Does subject matter render "Australian" the 19th-century travelogues of Anthony Trollope and Mark Twain? As it happens, my charge as the Library's recommending officer for Australia and New Zealand is fairly flexible and can theoretically include any materials published in Australia, or about Australia from some other part of the world. I regularly order materials published in Australia on a

⁴ "Recommending officer" is the Library of Congress's term for those staff whose responsibility it is to recommend materials to add to the Library's collections. It is a function, not a job title; my job title is "reference librarian," and as such I answer general reference inquiries and serve as my division's webmaster in addition to my job as a recommending officer--"other duties as assigned," to use the boilerplate language from my position description. The term "recommending officer" is to be understood as distinct from a "selector," who holds the final decision as to whether the recommended materials are added to the Library's collections. Responsibility for "recommending" is scattered throughout the Library (there were 236 recommending officers as of late 2006), while "selection" is a more centralized function.

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variety of topics, not just Australian studies⁵ (although that is my primary interest); and I also order materials about Australia that have been published elsewhere (with an emphasis on U.S. imprints that can be claimed on copyright).

For this present study, I will be examining both materials published in Australia regardless of subject matter, and materials about Australia regardless of their place of origin, but with an emphasis on where these two groups intersect--materials created in Australia, about Australia. The Library's holdings of non-book materials from Australia--chiefly sound and video recordings, maps, and photographs--are substantial. But these tend not to be well-represented in our online catalog; nor do I have ready access to the areas where these materials are stored. And so my emphasis will be on published volumes, with non-book materials treated in passing

So far as I can determine, there have been five previous attempts to provide at least a partial characterization of our Australian collections; all were indispensable to this present study. The Library produced a select bibliography of references on Australia in 1942.⁶ In 1969, the noted Australian poet and critic Alec Derwent Hope undertook a study of Australian literary holdings at the Library of Congress.⁷ William Schenck, the Library's collections program officer from 1987 to 2004, authored a more general survey in 1989.⁸ In 1991 I responded to a questionnaire about the Library's Australiana collections from the Australia-New Zealand Studies Center at Pennsylvania State University, as part of their compilation of a guide to Australian studies resources in North America.⁹ My response to this questionnaire served as the basis of a "collection overview" prepared as part of a Library-wide effort at the behest of the Librarian of Congress in 1993.¹⁰

In addition to these documents and others which reside in my files, I have also sifted

⁵ For example, I and my colleagues frequently order Australian scholarly imprints in the fields of Asian and Pacific Island studies; aquaculture; women's studies; economics; environmental studies; and theology--all areas where Australian scholars and researchers make significant contributions. And this is by no means an exhaustive list of subjects.

⁶ Grace Hadley Fuller, comp., *Australia: A Selected List of References* (Washington DC: The Library of Congress, Division of Bibliography, 1942).

⁷ A.D. Hope, "Australian *Belles Lettres*: A Report on the Holdings of the Library of Congress" (unpublished typescript, 1969).

⁸ William Schenck, "Australian Collections at the Library of Congress" (unpublished typescript, 1989).

⁹ Nan Bowman Albinski, *Directory of Resources for Australian Studies in North America* (Clayton, VIC: National Centre for Australian Studies, Monash University; University Park, PA : Australia-New Zealand Studies Center, Pennsylvania State University, 1992).

¹⁰ The collection overview for Australia and New Zealand is available on the Library of Congress website at <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/colloversviews/australian.html>. Information about Australasian literatures in English was compiled by my colleague Abby Yochelson, the Library's recommending officer for this subject; this overview can be found at <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/colloversviews/anglophone.html>.

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through the public record--chiefly the annual reports and Congressional testimony of the various Librarians of Congress, as well as a handful of archival records--for information relevant to Australian materials. And while I have not been able to perform anything resembling a systematic survey of our entire holdings of Australiana, I have made numerous forays into the stacks searching for information regarding the extent and origins of those materials. The collections themselves have yielded some interesting tidbits of information for this effort, as the various stamps and notations made in these volumes by Library staff provide mute testimony as to their origins and (in some cases) peregrinations before finding their way to our shelves. The individual Australian titles cited below might best be regarded as highlights, sidelights, and the occasional oddity, rather than an inventory. It is my hope that this will provide readers with a sense of the strengths and (regrettably) the weaknesses of the Library's Australiana holdings, with at least a partial understanding of how they arrived at their present state.

1815-1864: "A Question of Time and Patience"

While the history of the Library of Congress is amply documented in a variety of published sources, a brief recapitulation of its origins is appropriate here. During the War of 1812, the original library collection was destroyed when British troops burnt the U.S. Capitol. To rebuild the Library and raise some much-needed cash, Thomas Jefferson offered his own extensive personal library of 6,487 volumes for sale to the U.S. government. The proposed acquisition of so large and various a collection of books, which ranged far beyond the realm of law and politics, generated considerable controversy. Some critics lambasted the eclectic nature of the collection, which included such perceived esoterica as the works of Tacitus in the original Latin, the works of Voltaire in the original French, and an English translation of the Koran.¹¹ But the purchase went through in early 1815, enriching Jefferson (at least temporarily; much of the money went straight to his creditors) by about \$23,950¹² and the nation immeasurably.

Addressing at least indirectly the controversy surrounding the purchase of so wide-ranging a collection for use as a legislative reference library, Jefferson stated that "I do not know that it contains any branch of science which Congress would wish to exclude from their collection; there is, in fact, no subject to which a Member of Congress may not have occasion to

¹¹ Summaries of the purchase negotiations and attendant controversy can be found in David C. Mearns, "The Story Up to Now," in Library of Congress, *Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1946* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1947), pp. 27-36; and Lucy Salamaña, *Fortress of Freedom* (Philadelphia, New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1942), pp. 97-107. An annotated five-volume catalog of Jefferson's library has been compiled and published in book form (*Catalogue of the Library of Thomas Jefferson*, compiled with annotations by E. Millicent Sowerby, Washington, DC: The Library of Congress, 1952-59), as has a reproduction of Jefferson's own catalog (*Thomas Jefferson's Library: A Catalog with the Entries in His Own Order*, edited by James Gilreath and Douglas L. Wilson, Washington DC: Library of Congress, 1989; <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/becites/main/jefferson/88607928.toc.html>).

¹² Charles A. Goodrum and Helen W. Dalrymple, *The Library of Congress*, 2nd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1982), p. 15.

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refer."¹³ This statement is often cited as the initial inspiration for the Library's collection development policies. Thanks to Jefferson's voracious and eclectic appetite for books, the Library of Congress has had almost from the beginning an international, if not quite global, orientation. However, the extent to which this included materials from and about Australia was, from the evidence, quite limited for much of the 19th century.

Jefferson's library included accounts in English and French describing the voyages of English privateer William Dampier, whose globe-spanning travels included explorations of the coast of "New Holland" in 1688 and 1699.¹⁴ This appears to be the extent of Jefferson's library holdings on the subject of the Australian continent. Unfortunately, these volumes did not survive the 19th century. Much of the material from Jefferson's original collection was among the approximately 35,000 books destroyed by a devastating fire in the Capitol premises of the Library on Christmas Eve, 1851.¹⁵ John Silva Meehan, fourth Librarian of Congress (1829-1861) and a former printer, was faced with the task of rebuilding both the Library quarters within the Capitol and the Library's collections. Congress appropriated substantial monies for rebuilding, including an appropriation of \$10,000 for the purchase of books in January 1852, and another appropriation of \$75,000 in August 1852 for the purchase of books and furniture.¹⁶ Meehan relied heavily upon London-based booksellers in his efforts to rebuild the collections, a fact clearly evident in a printed list of the Library's new book and newspaper acquisitions for the period from November 1852 to November 1853.

This lengthy (211 pages) document lists a few titles published in London concerning the British colonial presence in Australia. Arthur Phillip's published account (*The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay*, London: J. Stockdale, 1789) is represented here, as are the memoirs of other First Fleet officers: *Account of the English Colony in New South Wales* by David Collins (London: T. Cadell and W. Davies, 1798-1802); *An Historical Journal of the Transactions at Port Jackson and Norfolk Island* by John Hunter (London: J. Stockdale, 1793); and surgeon John White's *Journal of a Voyage to New South Wales* (London: J. Debrett, 1790). Several other works about Australia from the early to mid-19th century also appear on the list: Philip King's *Narrative of a Survey of the Intertropical and Western Coasts of Australia* (London: J. Murray, 1827); *Australia, from Port Macquarie to Moreton Bay* by Clement Hodgkinson (London: T. and W. Boone, 1845); *Three Expeditions into the Interior of Eastern Australia* by New South Wales Surveyor-General Thomas Livingstone Mitchell (London: T. & W. Boone, 1838); *Journals of Two Expeditions into the Interior of New South Wales* by John

¹³ Letter of Thomas Jefferson to Samuel Harrison Smith, September 21, 1814.

¹⁴ Charles de Brosses, *Histoire de Navigations aux Terres Australes*, (Paris, 1756); *Collection of Voyages to the Southern Hemisphere...* (London, 1788), two volumes; *Voyages Autour du Monde et aux Terres Australes de Dampier...*(Paris, 1701-1705), four volumes. See Sowerby, Vol. 4, pp. 281-283.

¹⁵ The extent of the damage is outlined in Mearns, pp. 72-73; Salamanca, pp. 174-176.

¹⁶ Mearns, pp. 75-77; Salamanca, pp. 176-182.

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Oxley (London: J. Murray, 1820); *The Three Colonies of Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia...* by Samuel Sidney (London: Ingram, Cooke, & Co., 1852); *Discoveries in Australia* by John Lort Stokes (London: T. and W. Boone, 1846); and *A Statistical Account of the British Settlements in Australasia* by William Wentworth (London: G. B. Whittaker, 1824).¹⁷

Another acquisitions list published in December 1861 includes *Wanderings in New South Wales, Batavia, Pedir Coast, Singapore, and China* by George Bennet (London: Richard Bentley, 1834); an American edition of *The Convict Ship* (account of the voyage of the convict transport *Earl Grey* to Hobart in 1843) by Colin Arrott Browning (Philadelphia: 1850, originally published London: 1844); *Queensland, Australia* by John Dunmore Lang (London: E. Stanford, 1861); and the 1861 *Australian Almanac* (Sydney: James Waugh, 1861).¹⁸ From the admittedly incomplete evidence available, I would speculate that the Waugh *Almanac* is probably the first book actually published in Australia to be acquired by the Library of Congress. (There are older Australian imprints in our collections, but these were not acquired until later--many not until well into the 20th century.) Unfortunately, so far as I can determine, the *Almanac* is no longer to be found the Library's collections, and its fate is a mystery.¹⁹ The other titles listed above can still be found scattered throughout our rare and general book collections.

It is not clear whether these few volumes were replacements for items destroyed in the 1851 fire or new additions. In any case, these titles appear to represent the bulk of Library holdings on Australia until at least the 1880s. This rather sparse collection is probably in keeping with the Library's function during this period, when it was primarily a legislative reference library for the use of Congress. Since Washington D.C. lacked its own public library system until 1896, members of the general public were allowed to make use of the Library of Congress for their own research beginning in the late 1850s.

Despite his efforts in rebuilding the Library, Meehan was dismissed in May 1861. There were whispers (apparently unsubstantiated) of his support for the Confederate cause, and subsequent reports to Congress contained allegations of poor or nonexistent cataloging,

¹⁷ Library of Congress, *Additions Made to the Library of Congress Since the First Day of November, 1852* (Washington, DC: Printed by Lemuel Towers, 1853), pp. 36-37, 73, 77, 111, 121, 151, 157, 158, 171. Other materials related tangentially to Australia include accounts in English and French of the voyage of the Comte de La Pérouse, whose expedition vanished in the South Pacific soon after leaving Botany Bay in 1788; see p. 126.

¹⁸ Library of Congress, *Additions Made to the Library of Congress Since the First Day of November 1860, With Omissions from the Last General Catalog* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1862), pp. 8-9, 12, 66. The place of publication for the 1861 *Australian Almanac* is given as "Sidney," an error which crops up occasionally in Library of Congress publications from the 19th and early 20th centuries.

¹⁹ Holdings of Waugh's *Almanac* from 1857 to 1876 are listed in the online catalog of the New York Public Library. The Library of Congress holds other 19th century Australian almanacs, notably *Moore's Australian Almanac and Hand-Book* (Sydney, 1884); a reprint edition of George Howe's 1806 *New South Wales Pocket Almanack and Colonial Remembrancer* (Sydney: Public Library of New South Wales, 1966), and a microfilm edition of the *Australasian Almanack* (Sydney: various publishers, 1827-1835).

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administrative mismanagement, and general neglect.²⁰ Under these conditions, locating materials in the Library's collections was something of an adventure, the subject of this rueful recollection by John Russell Young, seventh Librarian of Congress (1897-1899):

Under the old system the Library was so congested, books were heaped up in so many crevices and out-of-the-way corners, down in the crypt, hidden in darkness from access of observation, that obtaining a volume, and especially, one out of the range of general reading, was a question of time and patience. Frequently, it depended on the phenomenal memory of the distinguished Librarian.²¹

From 1864, this "distinguished Librarian" was Ainsworth Rand Spofford, sixth Librarian of Congress, an erstwhile bookseller and publisher whose erudition, patrician bearing, and extraordinary memory for detail made him the very image of a 19th-century polymath. His lengthy tenure as Librarian (1864-1897) is generally regarded as a pivotal period in the Library's history, particularly as regards the growth of its collections. Spofford would be an indefatigable advocate for the transformation of the Library of Congress into a true national library, on a par with those of the United Kingdom and France. To that end, he oversaw what might be regarded as an "adolescent growth spurt" wherein published materials from around the world, including Australia, flowed onto the Library's desks and shelves (and in not a few instances overflowed onto its floors).

1864-1901: "The Greatest Chaos in America"

Spofford saw the U.S. copyright law as potential catalyst for the development of a national library--a tool both for the preservation of America's published record and the growth of the Library's collections. Prior to 1865, responsibility for the receipt of published materials for copyright registration had migrated somewhat listlessly among various U.S. government agencies, where the receipt and storage of registered volumes had become a logistical nightmare. The Library of Congress was designated by law as the copyright depository for the U.S. in 1865; soon thereafter Spofford asked Congress for expansion and more vigorous enforcement of the law, touting the potential benefits to the Library.²² By 1870 Spofford's lobbying paid off; full administrative control of copyright matters was vested with the Librarian of Congress, all copyright claimants within the U.S. were required submit two copies of their works to the Library for registration, and volumes registered with other agencies prior to 1865 were transferred to the Library's collections.²³

²⁰ Mearns, pp. 82-85.

²¹ *Report of the Librarian*, 1897, pp. 7-8

²² Ainsworth Rand Spofford, *Letter from the Librarian of Congress Transmitting His First Annual Report*, December 20, 1866, p. 5.

²³ *Report of the Librarian*, 1870 p. 2.

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This development did not immediately impact foreign book acquisitions, but it is a major turning point in the Library's history. The most obvious result was the beginning of significant expansion of the collections, from 197,668 volumes in 1870 to 832,107 volumes in 1898, with attendant growth in non-book materials as well.²⁴ The designation of the Library of Congress as the U.S. copyright depository can be regarded as the point at which the Library of Congress became, *de facto* if not *de jure*, the national library of the U.S. To this day, the copyright depository constitutes the foundation of the Library's collections of published material and an important part of the Library's self-image. It has also subtly informed the public's perception of the Library as well, perhaps serving as the basis for the durable myth of the Library as a bibliothecal "magic pudding" owning a copy of every book ever published.

In 1891, Congress passed an act allowing citizens of some foreign countries (including "Great Britain and her dependencies") to submit published works for copyright registration in the U.S. The result was an increase in copyright receipts at the Library, prompting Spofford to issue a plaint regarding inadequate staff and space--a regular feature of his communications with Congress for much of this tenure.²⁵ It is reasonable to infer that some of the copyright receipts from Great Britain included materials published in Australia, although direct evidence of this is elusive. To this day, multinational publishers with offices in both Australia and the U.S. (Lonely Planet and the "Oxbridge" university presses are examples) submit works to the Library for copyright registration, as do a handful of other Australian publishers.

Early in his administration (1867), Spofford initiated another program which had a documented impact on acquisitions from Australia--a system of international government document exchanges between the Library of Congress and overseas libraries. The government printer saw this program mainly as a means of dumping excess copies of U.S. government documents. But with characteristic foresight, Spofford recognized government document exchanges as a means of substantially augmenting the Library's collections, and lobbied to have government printers produce sufficient copies of documents for the Library to meet the demands of international exchange. The Smithsonian Institution would be the vehicle for these exchanges, having already developed a similar program for international scientific publications. The Smithsonian library of some 40,000 scientific publications was transferred to the Library of Congress in that same year; the "Smithsonian Deposit" remained under the jurisdiction of the Smithsonian even while it was housed physically in the Library's Capitol offices.²⁶

The proposed international exchanges commenced almost immediately once Congress

²⁴ *Report of the Librarian*, 1870, p. 1; *Report of the Librarian*, 1898, p. 8

²⁵ *Report of the Librarian*, 1892, p. 4.

²⁶ *Report of the Librarian*, 1867, pp. 1, 4. The complex relationship between the Smithsonian and the Library of Congress is outlined in Nancy E. Gwinn, "The Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution: A Legislated Relationship," in John Y. Cole and Jane Aikin, eds., *Encyclopedia of the Library of Congress: For Congress, the Nation, and the World* (Washington, DC: Library of Congress; Lanham, MD: Bernan Press, 2004), pp. 91-102.

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gave its approval. It appears that the response of both the U.S. government printer (in terms of increasing print runs per Spofford's recommendations) and foreign governments was tepid at first.²⁷ But by 1885 the situation had improved appreciably. The Smithsonian (with some funding from the Library) sent a mission to Europe for the express purpose of stimulating document exchanges. This effort was largely successful, returning with 7000 volumes from fourteen European governments, including Great Britain.²⁸ Many years later, when testifying before the Congressional Joint Committee for the Library, Spofford spoke in general terms about the exchange system:

By provision of law fifty additional copies of all documents printed by Congress are set aside for the purpose of exchanging them for publications of foreign governments, through the medium of the Smithsonian Institution. This custom has been in existence for many years. In exchange for these documents the Library receives publications from foreign governments. Some of the governments with which we have tried to exchange books have not responded; others have responded liberally. France does not respond regularly at all. Great Britain sends us everything.²⁹

The last sentence here--"Great Britain sends us everything" is probably open to some interpretation. However, an overview of the Library's collection published in 1901 indicate that official documents from Canada, India, New Zealand, southern Africa, and the six Australian colonies began arriving at the Library beginning in the mid-19th century. A summary of Library holdings of parliamentary documents lists the following from Great Britain's Australian colonies:

New South Wales: 1856-1899 (348 volumes)
Queensland: 1861-1887 (132 volumes)
South Australia: 1857-1899 (78 volumes)
Tasmania: 1862-1899 (78 volumes)
Victoria: 1857-1872, 1900 (78 volumes)
Western Australia: 1890-1898 (29 volumes)³⁰

The acquisitions stamps in these volumes indicate that they came to the Library from the Smithsonian via the exchange program; the route by which they arrived is a matter for speculation. Spofford's terse but expansive characterization of Britain's involvement in the exchange program indicates that they may well have come to the Library through London. If this

²⁷ *Report of the Librarian*, 1868, p. 3.

²⁸ *Report of the Librarian*, 1886, p. 6.

²⁹ United States. 54th Congress, 2nd Session. Joint Committee on the Library. *Condition of the Library of Congress*. Senate Report No. 53 (March 3, 1897), p. 33.

³⁰ *Report of the Librarian*, 1901, p. 330.

is so, the situation changed soon after Federation, with materials arriving to the U.S. directly from institutions in Australia. A 1901 listing of international exchange partners includes the Commonwealth government in Melbourne; the state libraries of New South Wales, Victoria, and Western Australia; and the parliamentary libraries of Queensland, South Australia, and Tasmania.³¹

As might be expected, the Smithsonian exchange program also served as a conduit for published materials of Australian scientific societies and institutions. Exchange partners included the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science, which sent its annual reports beginning in 1887; the Australian Museum (annual records beginning in 1890); and the Royal Societies of New South Wales (annual proceedings beginning in 1862), Victoria (1854), Tasmania (1851), South Australia, (1877), and Queensland (1884).³² Exchange materials were not limited to parliamentary and scientific documents, with such items as the proceedings of the Sydney City Council (from 1899), annual reports from the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce (from 1887), and a published sermon by Charles Perry,³³ first Anglican bishop of Melbourne, finding their way into the collections. The Library's holdings for all of these annual reports and proceedings extend well into the 20th century, and some continue into the 21st. Taken *in toto*, these official documents constitute the first substantial influx of Australian publications into the Library of Congress.

By the late 19th century, the Library was aggressively collecting newspapers from around the world. In 1900, subscriptions for two Australian newspapers were initiated: the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the oldest Australian newspaper still currently published; and the weekly *Leader* from Melbourne (which ceased publication in 1957).³⁴ These papers, either bound or microfilmed, remain part of the Library's collections to this day.

With copyright deposits flowing into the Library at an increasing rate and foreign government documents coming from as far as India and the Antipodes, the Library soon faced a serious and growing space problem in its Capitol premises. The situation was exacerbated by Spofford's seeming indifference to the organization and cataloging of this wealth of material; for the most part, his "marvelous locative memory" (to use author Lucy Salamanca's apt phrase³⁵) served as the Library's indispensable catalog and finding aid. From 1871 Spofford lobbied

³¹ *Report of the Librarian*, 1901, pp. 368-369.

³² These proceedings did not start arriving in earnest until the mid-1870s; acquisition of the volumes from the 1850s and 1860s was mostly retrospective.

³³ Charles Perry, *The Comparative Position of the Church in England and in Victoria* (Melbourne: Lucas Brothers, 1854). This item was acquired in 1878.

³⁴ *Report of the Librarian*, 1900, p. 34.

³⁵ Salamanca, p. 221.

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Congress for either an expansion of the Capitol or a new, purpose-built library to house the burgeoning collections.³⁶ He oftentimes became something of a scold, as in this excerpt from his 1875 report to Congress:

...it is impossible to believe that the legislature of a great and intelligent people will continue to neglect making some suitable provision to preserve and extend this noble collection. If left in its present condition, the neglect of Congress will soon place its Librarian in the unhappy predicament of presiding over the greatest chaos in America...³⁷

After many vicissitudes, Congress authorized the new library building on a site east of the Capitol in 1886, and it was finally completed in 1897, at the end of Spofford's tenure as Librarian. This ornate building, later named for Thomas Jefferson, has been chronicled in numerous sources and admired by thousands of visitors; a description of its rich history and architecture is beyond the scope of this paper. When the building opened to the public on November 1, 1897, the Library's collections constituted 787,715 books, 218,340 pamphlets, and other materials. Books on the history of Great Britain (with its dependencies) and other countries exclusive of the U.S., as well as "publications of foreign governments," were located in the north book stacks, which is still home to the Library's general collections on world history.³⁸

In 1897 Spofford was replaced as Librarian of Congress by John Russell Young, a former journalist, traveling companion of Ulysses S. Grant on his world tour in the late 1870s, minister to China, and dedicated Republican. Spofford remained on the staff as Young's chief assistant, a position he held until his death in 1908. Young died suddenly in 1899, and soon thereafter an experienced professional librarian was appointed to the position of Librarian of Congress for the first time. The lengthy tenure of Herbert Putnam (1899-1939), former head of the Boston Public Library and president of the American Library Association, witnessed dramatic developments in the size and international scope of the Library's collections, the quality of its cataloging, and its leadership role among American libraries.

1901-1946: "Incessant Solicitation, Exchange, and Purchase"

Like Spofford before him, Putnam did not mince words as to the condition of the Library at the outset of his administration. In his first annual report as Librarian, Putnam rejected the Library's existing cataloging scheme (largely unchanged since Jefferson's day) as "meager, rigid, and inelastic," and bluntly assessed the Library's holdings of foreign and domestic government publications: "The present collection of the Library is exceedingly defective. It may be built up

³⁶ *Report of the Librarian*, 1871, pp. 2-3.

³⁷ *Report of the Librarian*, 1876, p. 7.

³⁸ *Report of the Librarian*, 1897, pp. 4, 6.

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only by incessant solicitation, exchange, and purchase."³⁹ Although he could not have realized it at the time, Putnam's formulation was also a neat synopsis of the channels by which Australian materials are acquired by the Library to this day. While copyright deposit accounted for some Australian imprints, the bulk of our Australian holdings during the 20th century arrived via the international exchanges first established by Spofford; purchases of commercially published books and periodicals; and donations from institutions and individuals.

Buoyed by an expanding economy and a heightened international profile following the successful conclusion of the war with Spain, Congress initially complied with most of Putnam's requests for increased staff and funding. New bureaux were created at the Library, including a Division of Documents (1900) to collect, process, and facilitate public access to the Library's expanding collection of foreign and domestic official publications; a Division of Bibliography (1900), to create lists of Library materials on topics of interest to Congress, and later the general public; and a Legislative Reference Service (1914), to provide specialized research services to Congress. To facilitate the purchase of foreign imprints in countries with a substantial book trade, Putnam initiated the somewhat misleadingly named "blanket order" system, which resembles in some respects John Meehan's use of London booksellers to rebuild the Library's collections after the 1851 fire (see p. 6 above). Under the terms of a blanket order, the Library deals with one bookseller in a country, which selects titles from that country's published output for purchase based on criteria set forth by the Library and subject to monitoring and periodic adjustment.⁴⁰ This approach to collection development--the establishment of largely automatic mechanisms for acquiring materials according to a profile defined by the collecting institution--is fairly typical of large research libraries in the U.S., enabling them to develop collections which are global in scope with a minimum commitment of staff. This is especially true of the Library of Congress, which by the early 20th century had established three distinct machineries for acquiring materials--the international exchange system, blanket orders placed with foreign booksellers, and copyright deposit--intended to function more or less automatically with a minimum of monitoring by Library staff. There are obviously disadvantages to this approach, but it appears that these mechanisms were functioning as planned in the early years of the 20th century. In 1905 alone, the Library acquired almost 69,000 books, to bring its total book holdings to over 1,300,000.⁴¹ Within a decade the Library's holdings of books and periodicals had exceeded two million volumes, with over a million non-book items in the collection, making it one of the largest libraries in the world at that time.⁴²

³⁹ *Report of the Librarian*, 1899, pp. 29, 31.

⁴⁰ The blanket order system is described in Goodrum and Dalrymple, pp. 78-79. These arrangements were redubbed "approval plans" in the mid-1990s, although they remained largely the same in essence.

⁴¹ *Report of the Librarian*, 1905, p. 14. The exact figures were an increase of 68,951 books for a total of 1,344,618. The Library surpassed the 1,000,000 volume mark in 1901; see *Report of the Librarian*, 1901, p. 12.

⁴² *Report of the Librarian*, 1914, p. 26. The official figures were 2,253,309 book volumes; 141,712 maps and charts; 663,474 pieces of music; and 376,812 prints and photographs.

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One of Putnam's major initiatives was a massive reclassification of the Library's collections using a newly developed alphanumeric classification scheme, linked to a system of defined headings for the cataloging of books by subject. The Library of Congress classification system was first developed in 1901 and disseminated to research libraries across the U.S. through published schedules and the sale of printed catalog cards. It is now one of the two major library classification schemes (the other is the Dewey Decimal system) still in use in American and many overseas libraries. With the advent of a freely accessible online catalog, Library of Congress cataloging information for books, periodicals, and other materials is now available to anyone with Internet access.

As an ambitious attempt to classify all human knowledge in one alphanumeric sequence, the Library of Congress classification scheme was not without its quirks, and unfortunately one of these manifested itself in the schedules for Australasian history. Class "D" was designated for "universal and old world history," with subclass "DU" set aside for Oceania. The schedules for the history of the Australian mainland were established as subclasses DU80 through DU398. Inexplicably, Tasmania received its own subclass (DU450 to 480), with the subclass for New Zealand interposed between the two.⁴³ This rather anomalous situation continued until 1987, when Tasmania was finally reunited (metaphorically speaking) with the rest of Australia in the cataloging schedules as subclasses DU182 through DU198, nestled between New South Wales and Victoria. As a result, any library which uses Library of Congress cataloging and which has a substantial collection of works on Tasmanian history probably has these materials clustered in two areas on their shelves--in near physical proximity, to be sure, but still separate.

A certain measure of geographic confusion on the part of the Library's newly expanded professional staff is perhaps understandable in light of the relatively small number of Australian imprints in the general collections at the dawn of the 20th century. As indicated above (pp. 10-11), the Library's 1901 annual report indicates that holdings of Australian parliamentary documents and scientific proceedings were substantial. But apparently this was not the case with books from commercial publishers. The 1901 annual report includes a brief description of book holdings on "Australasia" and the Pacific Islands. Curiously, there is no specific mention of Australia here. The Library is reported to hold 797 book volumes and 128 pamphlets, with about 550 titles devoted to New Zealand, Hawaii, and the Philippines.⁴⁴ That leaves about 247 volumes for the rest of "Australasia." This figure clearly excludes the Australian parliamentary publications and newspapers listed above.

The machinery of the Smithsonian exchange process continued to function into the 20th century. This was substantially augmented, and eventually superseded, by the efforts of the Library's Division of Documents. Each year the Division sent "want lists" of desired official

⁴³ Library of Congress. Classification Division. *Classification. Class D: Universal and Old World History* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1916), pp. 517-521.

⁴⁴ *Report of the Librarian*, 1901, p. 303.

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publications to libraries and archives around the world. As a result of these efforts, the Library of Congress now began receiving Australian federal censuses; federal and state statistical annuals; various official gazettes from the federal and state governments and the territory of New Guinea (administered by Australia under a League of Nations mandate beginning in 1920); maps of Sydney (1922)⁴⁵ and Canberra (1927)⁴⁶; volumes of the *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society* (from 1916 on) and the first series of the *Historical Records of Australia*; proceedings and other publications from the city councils of Melbourne,⁴⁷ Brisbane, Perth, and other Australasian cities; and annual reports from the chambers of commerce of Sydney, Perth, and Fremantle, to join those reports already arriving from Melbourne.

International exchanges were not the only source of official publications from Australia. In February 1903, Congress authorized all U.S. executive agencies to transfer to the Library of Congress any published materials which they no longer required.⁴⁸ And so began another influx of Australian material to the Library, consisting largely of official reports on a variety of technical topics, some predating Federation. Among the U.S. government agencies transferring Australian materials to the Library of Congress were the Departments of State, Agriculture, and War; the Census Bureau; the U.S. Geological Survey; the "Commercial Bureau of the American Republics" (a late 19th-century precursor to the Organization of American States); and the Office of Naval Intelligence, which conducted an energetic campaign of research (not to say espionage) to gather technical information from potential allies and enemies in Asia and the Pacific beginning in the early 1890s. Some material had to bounce around a bit before finding a home at the Library of Congress. The 1885 annual report of the New South Wales Water Conservation Commission was transferred to the Library of Congress from the U.S. Army Engineer School library in 1924; it had hitherto resided with the U.S. National Waterways Commission (1913-1924) and the Office of Naval Intelligence, which had originally acquired the item via the U.S. consulate general in Melbourne in 1892.⁴⁹

This wealth of material did not simply sit on the Library's shelves gathering dust, particularly as Congress and the nation turned their attention to "the Great War" raging in Europe

⁴⁵ *Robinson's Aeroplane Map of Sydney* (Sydney: H.E.C. Robinson Pty. Ltd., 1922), from Library of Congress, Map Collections, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g8964s.ct000517>.

⁴⁶ *Plan of Canberra, the Federal Capital of the Commonwealth of Australia* (Canberra: Federal Capital Commission, 1927), from Library of Congress, Map Collections, <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g8964c.ct002010>. These maps are among a handful of items of Australian origin in the Library's collection to be digitized.

⁴⁷ Not all of these publications were received from overseas; the 1933 volume of the Melbourne City Council proceedings was transferred to the Library of Congress from the District of Columbia Public Library.

⁴⁸ *Report of the Librarian*, 1903, p. 24.

⁴⁹ See Jeffrey M. Dorwart, *The Office of Naval Intelligence: The Birth of America's First Intelligence Agency, 1865-1918* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1979), pp. 30-62, for a summary of early intelligence gathering activities by naval attachés stationed overseas.

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and the Middle East beginning in 1914. The head of the Legislative Reference Service reported that the Library's collection of Australian government publications were consulted in connection with a number of Congressional inquiries between 1916 and 1919. These included requests for information on literacy testing for immigrants to Australia⁵⁰; the public debate over conscription in Australia; the legislative response to the great New South Wales railway strike; the pay and training of enlisted men in the Australian armed forces; Australian tax laws⁵¹; legislation on the use of metals and ores⁵²; and financial credits for rural Australians.⁵³

The bulk of the Australian material coming into the Library probably continued to consist chiefly of official government and scientific publications during the first three decades of the 20th century. However, the Library's book holdings from Australia began to become more diverse during this period, with an increasing number of gifts and purchases of Australian literature, published histories, and other items from commercial publishers rather than government printers. In 1901 the Library added 26,194 volumes to the collection by purchase⁵⁴; by 1930 this had increased to 196,632.⁵⁵ While it is impossible to estimate how much of this material came from Australia, it is probably safe to assume that it was a relatively small percentage of the total. The "selected lists of recent purchases" which appear in the Library's annual reports in the early 1900s record precious few works from or about Australia. These include *Australian Aborigines, The Languages and Customs of Several Tribes of Aborigines in the Western District of Victoria, Australia*, by James Dawson (Melbourne: G. Robertson, 1881); *In the Australian Bush and on the Coast of the Coral Sea* by Richard Semon (London, New York: Macmillan, 1899); *The New Atlas of Australia* by Robert McLean (Sydney: J. Sands, 1886)⁵⁶; and *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia* by Baldwin Spencer (London, New York: Macmillan, 1903).⁵⁷ Subsequent annual reports make no specific mention of Australian imprints at all; all of the works listed above are still part of the Library's general collections.

Unlike the international exchange process, the Library's acquisition of Australian books,

⁵⁰ *Report of the Librarian*, 1916, p. 139.

⁵¹ *Report of the Librarian*, 1917, pp. 121-122, 129, 133-135.

⁵² *Report of the Librarian*, 1918, p. 97.

⁵³ *Report of the Librarian*, 1919, p. 101

⁵⁴ *Report of the Librarian*, 1901, p. 14;

⁵⁵ *Report of the Librarian*, 1930, p. 50.

⁵⁶ *Report of the Librarian*, 1903, pp. 366, 370, and 393. The place of publication for Mclean's *Atlas* is given as "Sidney" in this annual report.

⁵⁷ *Report of the Librarian of Congress*, 1904, p. 418.

especially works of fiction, is not particularly conducive to historical narrative. Commercial imprints from Australia have generally arrived here a few at a time, not *en masse*; and records of these individual purchases and gifts are buried in an unindexed mass of acquisition records for the Library's millions of books. In his study of Australian materials at the Library of Congress, William Schenck noted that most pre-World War II editions of Australian literature were purchased from British and American publishers.⁵⁸ My admittedly unscientific exploration of our stacks tends to bear this assertion out. It further appears based on the official acquisition stamps found in many of these volumes that much of this material was being purchased within a few years of publication. However, many acquisitions were retrospective. For example, two American editions of works by Thomas Alexander Browne (writing under the pseudonym "Rolf Boldrewood") were acquired some decades after their publication.⁵⁹ The two-volume *The Cyclopedia of South Australia* published between 1907 and 1909 (Adelaide: A. G. Selway) was not acquired until 1945. *The Selected Poems of Henry Kendall* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1923) was donated to the Library in 1940. The third edition of Henry Lawson's *Humorous Verses* (Sydney: Cornstalk Publishing Company, 1927) was not purchased until 1950, while his *In the Days When the World Was Wide, and Other Verses* (London: Angus & Robertson, 1913) was not added to the collections until 1979. Works by C.E.W. Bean, Christopher Brennan, Miles Franklin, Joseph Furphy, Norman Lindsay, "Banjo" Paterson, and many other Australian authors were added to the collections prior to the 1940s as well.

While the U.S. and the world endured depression and political instability during the 1930s, the Library's collections continued to expand from 4,103,936 volumes in 1930 to 6,102,259 in 1940, with attendant increases in other formats.⁶⁰ A new Library building, initially known as the Library of Congress Annex (later named the John Adams Building), was built one block east of the main building on Capitol Hill and opened to the public in 1939. In that same year, Putnam was succeeded as Librarian of Congress in 1939 by poet and literary scholar Archibald MacLeish, who would lead the institution until 1944. The advent of war in the Pacific and the presence of large numbers of Allied troops and support personnel in Australia led to heightened American interest in that part of the world. The Library's 1943 annual report makes a passing reference to "long-established agents, aided by our diplomatic missions and our military representatives" sending material about the southwest Pacific region from "Australasia."⁶¹ The Office of War Information established libraries in Sydney and Melbourne, and there is some evidence that the Library consulted the staff of these institutions regarding acquisitions of

⁵⁸ Schenck, p. 1

⁵⁹ *Nevermore* (London, New York: Macmillan, 1892), acquired 1922; *The Miner's Right* (London, New York: Macmillan, 1890), acquired 1942.

⁶⁰ Appendices Part III.3, Tables 2 and 3, *Encyclopedia of the Library of Congress*, pp. 514-515.

⁶¹ *Report of the Librarian*, 1943, p. 106. The identity of these "agents" is unclear, but may be a reference to Australian booksellers with whom blanket orders were lodged.

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Australian publications.⁶² It is possible that the presence of these American "boots on the ground" in Australia might have resulted in a temporary expansion of the Library's newspaper subscriptions; the Library has scattered holdings of *The West Australian* (Perth), the *Advertiser* (Adelaide), the *Sun* (Melbourne), the *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney), the *Sydney Farmer & Settler*, and the *Sydney Sun* from the mid-1940s to the early 1950s. A subscription to the *Age* was also initiated in 1942; it continues to be received by the Library on a regular basis, along with the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Courier-Mail* from Brisbane (beginning in 1968), and the News Limited national paper *The Australian* (beginning in 1965).

In 1942 the Library's Division of Bibliography published *Australia: A Selected List of References* by staff bibliographer Grace Hadley Fuller.⁶³ This 101-page typescript volume provides a broad but incomplete snapshot of the Library's Australiana holdings at that time. It contained 793 references organized by subject, with sections on bibliography, reference works, history, politics, economics, society, culture, and of course the war effort. Entries included journal articles and essays within edited compilations as well as books and pamphlets. All items were taken from the Library of Congress collections; most citations are no older than 1920, and it includes no works of fiction (although it contains about 20 references to secondary works on Australian literature).⁶⁴

The Library appears to have attempted a more active approach to international acquisitions in the 1940s, helping to establish (1942) the Farmington Plan, an ambitious cooperative effort to acquire overseas imprints involving a number of major U.S. research libraries. Books from Australia were included in the Plan from 1951 until 1972, the year the Plan was dissolved.⁶⁵ To augment the blanket order system, the Library began using published national bibliographies as a means of identifying relevant materials published abroad. Presumably the *Annual Catalogue of Australian Publications* (later renamed *Australian National Bibliography*), which started arriving at the Library via exchange in 1936, would have been among the bibliographies consulted. The *Australian National Bibliography* was regularly used by the Library's recommending officers (including myself) to identify books for purchase until 1996, when it ceased publication.⁶⁶

In 1946, the Library for the first time established "canons of selection" which codified the

⁶² *Report of the Librarian*, 1944, p. 66.

⁶³ It does not appear that Ms. Fuller could be regarded as specialist on Australia; her output as bibliographer included works on Alaska, Turkey, Africa, Latin America, the U.S. Constitution, and many other topics.

⁶⁴ Fuller, pp. 88-90.

⁶⁵ Schenck, p. 2

⁶⁶ Since that time our Australian approval plan dealer has sent us expanded notices of new titles; I also consult publishers' catalogs, books reviews from Australian media, and bookstores on my occasional trips down under.

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institution's philosophy of collection development:

1. The Library of Congress should possess in some useful form all bibliothecal materials necessary to the Congress and to the officers of government of the United States in the performance of their duties.
2. The Library of Congress should possess all books and other materials (whether in original or copy) which express the life and achievements of the people of the United States.
3. The Library of Congress should possess, in some useful form, the material parts of the records of other societies, past and present, and should accumulate, in original or in copy, full and representative collections of the written records of those societies and peoples whose experience is of most immediate concern to the people of the United States.⁶⁷

The first two canons are revealing for their clear emphases on service to Congress and Federal agencies, and to the collection of Americana. The Library's international collections are the subject of the third canon, which appears to contain some (probably deliberate) ambiguities. (How does one reconcile "full" with "representative"? And how does one measure "most immediate concern"?) While I doubt that this statement was intended to undergo rigorous exegesis, it seems to me that it stands in some tension with Thomas Jefferson's expansive assertion that "there is...no subject to which a Member of Congress may not have occasion to refer." In keeping with the vision of Jefferson and Spofford, the Library has created a collection that is truly global in scope, and the presence of Australian materials in the collections is a function of this global vision. But "global" is probably to be understood as something distinct from "comprehensive," which as an aspiration for the collection runs aground on the shoals of fiscal and administrative reality--hence the presence in the third canon of qualifiers such as "representative" and "most immediate concern." This inherent tension between a global vision and a "representative" reality is manifest in the Library's Australian collections as they developed throughout the 20th century.

1946 to the Present: "Continuing in the Furrow, at the Speed of Oxen"

After World War II, under MacLeish's successor Luther Evans (1945-1953), the Library seemed poised to undertake a significant expansion of its international collections and its entire administrative structure. The Library's 1946 annual report includes a lengthy (137 pages) wish list of proposed new bureaux, including a globe-spanning array of regional studies divisions. Here it was recommended that a new Australia and New Zealand Section, consisting of a chief and a reference assistant, be created to oversee the acquisition of Australasian publications, provide reference assistance to researchers, and to promote "the exchange of library personnel as

⁶⁷ Mearns, pp. 223-224

well as the exchange of library materials."⁶⁸ I have found no evidence that this proposal was particularly well-received--nor indeed that it was received by anyone at all, save for the readers of the annual report. No action was taken on the proposed new section, and no subsequent proposals along these lines emerged (although "exchange of library personnel" unexpectedly became a reality almost five decades later; see p. 24). Nor have I found any documentary evidence that Australian studies was established as a reference subject responsibility at the Library any time prior to 1991. Responsibility for acquiring Australian material would remain in the purview of the Acquisition Department (later the Acquisitions Directorate) and two of its functional divisions, the Order Division (for purchases) and the Exchange and Gift Division until 1997, when the Directorate was reorganized along regional lines; responsibility for all Australian acquisitions then passed to the Australia/Canada/Ireland/New Zealand/United Kingdom (ACINU) Section of the newly created Anglo-American Acquisitions Division. I would speculate that responsibility for Australian studies among the Library's reference staff probably followed this same pattern of being grouped together with the United Kingdom, Ireland, and the Anglophone nations of the British Commonwealth through the middle and late decades of the 20th century.

The Library's 1953 annual report deemed receipts of Australian material to be "satisfactory," without offering any specifics.⁶⁹ The Library undertook a survey of international exchanges in 1963 and 1964 which included the Australian states, apparently to determine if receipts were remaining constant.⁷⁰ Judging from the Library's extensive holdings of Australian state publications from the 1950s and 1960s, their findings were largely positive. However, no mention is made of official publications from the Australian territories, and it appears that the Library has never acquired official publications from the Australian Capital Territory or the Northern Territory on a regular basis. And there is some evidence that the international document exchanges which had served the Library so well since the mid-19th century were beginning to fray around the edges somewhat. The voluminous correspondence of James Bennett Childs, longtime Chief of the Library's Documents Division and an authority on bibliography of government documents, has a sizable body of letters and notes concerning Australia from the 1950s to the 1970s (years after Childs' nominal retirement). The bulk of these letters are responses (sometimes negative, or with an invoice attached demanding payment) to Childs' requests for specific publications, as well as requests for lists of publications from various Australian government agencies and printing offices, letters from Australian colleagues, and

⁶⁸ *Report of the Librarian*, 1946, p. 374.

⁶⁹ *Report of the Librarian*, 1953, p. 13. Why the authors even bothered with such a terse characterization is a puzzle; it might conceivably be a subtle dismissal of the proposal some years earlier for an Australia/New Zealand Section.

⁷⁰ *Report of the Librarian*, 1963, p. 6; 1964, p. 6.

Childs' own handwritten notes.⁷¹ This correspondence bespeaks the growing difficulties faced by government document librarians in identifying and procuring materials for exchange, a process which was becoming more labor-intensive as governments on both sides of the Pacific Ocean expanded the scope of their activities in the postwar period. A process which could once be summarized simply as "we give you our documents, you give us yours" was becoming a complicated set of transactions, consuming an increasing amount of staff time and resources.

Congress continued to make use of Australian parliamentary materials, if indirectly, during the 1950s and 1960s; the Law Library of Congress prepared reports for Congress on legislation in a number of industrialized countries (including Australia) on atomic energy patents⁷² and election expenses of political candidates.⁷³ Retrospective acquisition of older Australian materials from a variety of sources continued as well. The oldest item published in Australia currently held by the Library of Congress was acquired from the private collection of noted Australian bibliophile George Mackaness in 1967. Currently part of the Law Library of Congress' rare book collection, it is a bound set of New South Wales *Acts of Council, 1824 to 1834*; the earliest of these collected *Acts* was printed in Sydney in 1827.⁷⁴

In 1969, the noted Australian poet and critic Alec Derwent Hope, then serving as Library Fellow at Australian National University, undertook a study of the Library's holdings of Australian literature--the first known study of any portion of the Library's Australiana collections. Compiling a list of 62 Australian authors, Hope checked holdings of their work in the Library's catalog and then compared these to lists compiled from various bibliographic sources. Hope found that, out of a total published output of 578 titles for all the authors on his list, the Library held 344, or 59%. He also estimated that the Library held about 90% of published criticism of Australian authors in the form of books and journal articles; and observed that contemporary authors seemed to be better represented in the catalog than authors from the 19th and early 20th centuries. Literary journals such as *Meanjin* and *Southerly* were well represented, although he noted some significant omissions.⁷⁵ Hope concluded:

⁷¹ James Bennett Childs Desk Papers, Serial and Government Publication Division, Library of Congress Archives, Container 3: Australia, 1950-1973. One note regarding an index to Victorian parliamentary papers was hastily scribbled on the back of a 1966 flyer for the Library of Congress staff bowling league.

⁷² *Report of the Librarian*, 1959, p. 55.

⁷³ *Report of the Librarian*, 1960, p. 45.

⁷⁴ Mackaness had arranged with bookseller Angus & Robertson to sell his book collection beginning in 1966. The volume in question bears the Mackaness bookstamp with the notation "Ex Libris Bountiana, Dr. George Mackaness, Australiana."

⁷⁵ Hope, pp. 3-5. One omission he did not detect was the Sydney *Bulletin*, to which the Library did not subscribe until the 1960s. The Chicago-based Center for Research Libraries has near-complete holdings on microfilm of this important title.

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...some acquaintance with major English, American, and Canadian university libraries would lead me to conclude that the Library of Congress has perhaps the best collection of Australian *belles lettres* outside Australia itself, with the possible exception of the University of Texas...while the holdings of the Library are better than most, they could not be regarded as a satisfactory collection, except for the reader who would simply like to get a general impression of Australian writing or who was interested only in the most recent production, which *is* quite well represented...a serious student of Australian literature, either working on a particular author, on a particular period or on a particular genre, or undertaking a wider study would not find it adequate. Few writers are represented by all their works and all the relevant critical biographical and bibliographical material. In spite of some remarkable exceptions, few representative works are represented by all the editions and variants which a serious scholar would need to consult.⁷⁶

This assessment appears to embody the tension to which I alluded earlier between "representative" and "comprehensive" conceptions of the Library's international collections (see p. 19 above). Hope is clearly describing a "representative" collection, not a comprehensive "magic pudding"; while that collection compares well with those of other North American research libraries, he does not regard it as adequate, because it is not comprehensive. (The "remarkable exceptions" he noted might have included such esoterica as our Hebrew edition of Henry Lawson's stories, or the Gaelic translation of *Robbery Under Arms*.⁷⁷) While Hope's study did not precipitate a major change in the Library's acquisition policies, many of the omissions Hope noted were added to the collections later. A notable example is the journal *Australian Literary Studies*, first published in 1963 and acquired (with back issues) by the Library in 1975.

Beginning in the mid-1970s, receipts from Australia fluctuated along a general downward trend that lasted throughout the 1980s, from about 1400 new titles acquired in 1976 to just over 500 in 1990.⁷⁸ The decline in exchange materials were most likely caused (or at least exacerbated) by a trend towards privatization of government document publishing and a rise in desktop publishing in the United States, the United Kingdom, and many other industrialized nations, including Australia. As more government publishing was contracted out to private publishers or simply produced in-house, the Library of Congress and the national and state libraries of Australia simply had fewer government documents available for exchange.⁷⁹ The

⁷⁶ Hope, p. 7.

⁷⁷ Henry Lawson, *Erets Adashah*, translated by Hayah Kaufman (Merhavva, 1947); Rolf Boldrewood, *Gadaidheacht Le Láimh Láidir*, translated by Domhnall Ó Grianna (Baile Atha Cliath: Oifig díolta foillseacháin rialtais, 1936).

⁷⁸ Library of Congress memorandum dated May 20, 1991; from the author's personal files. Receipts from New Zealand were trending downward at this time as well.

⁷⁹ These observations are based on discussions over the years with acquisitions staff and government document librarians at the Library of Congress and numerous Australian libraries. The Australian Government Printing Service ceased operations entirely in 1997, and responsibility for document printing devolved upon individual agencies.

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fluctuations in purchases is harder to explain; there was a general increase in Australia's published output from 6509 new titles in 1976 to 11,714 new titles in 1988 (with various spikes and dips along the way).⁸⁰ Regardless of the reasons for the decline, by 1991 the Library had determined that it was necessary to have a single recommending officer undertake primary responsibility for recommending materials from Australia and New Zealand. This responsibility had hitherto rested with the recommending officer for the United Kingdom, along with recommending duties for Canada, Ireland, and various minor British dependencies.⁸¹ At that time I was serving as a general reference librarian in the Main Reading Room, a position I had held for about two years (and still hold today).

I would like to say that my assignment as the recommending officer for Australia and New Zealand was the result of some expertise or experience on my part, but in fact it was more along the lines of what is known in military circles as "line-of-sight assignment" (and elsewhere as "random chance")--a fairly typical experience at large research libraries where extensive subject responsibilities must be covered by limited staff. My academic background was primarily in the fields of religion and Chinese history; my knowledge of Australia was that of a reasonably well-educated individual with no practical experience of the country. Unfortunately, soon after my new assignment the Library was greeted with unwelcome news from Sydney--the State Library of New South Wales was cancelling its long-standing exchange agreement with the Library of Congress due to budgetary and other constraints.⁸² While other Australian libraries have not followed suit with formal cancellations, receipts of government publications via the exchange program remain sluggish; as of this writing our holdings of some state parliamentary papers series and Hansards have remained more or less static for several years.

On a more positive note, I was asked to compile information on the Library's Australiana collections for a guide on Australian studies resources at North American libraries, and for a "collection overview" for use by the Office of the Librarian (see p. 4 above). These tasks proved to be useful in acquainting myself with the Library's Australiana collections. While not as methodologically rigorous as Hope's effort, these efforts offer a somewhat broader perspective on the collections, embracing not just literature but the humanities and social sciences generally and including some non-book materials as well. At the time the collection overview was authored in early 1993, the Library's online catalog included about 37,000 titles (not volumes) published in or about Australia and New Zealand combined, including about 7000 periodical titles. The overview noted the Library's extensive holdings of government statistical and legislative

⁸⁰ From the front matter of the *Australian National Bibliography* (Canberra: National Library of Australia), 1981 and 1990 editions.

⁸¹ William Schenck, author of the 1989 report on the Library's Australian collections, also took an active personal interest in acquiring Australian materials and contributed much of his time and expertise in training me as a recommending officer.

⁸² Library of Congress memorandum dated May 28, 1992; from the author's personal files.

publications, as well as maps, sound recordings, films, and photographs.⁸³

In 1992 I was approached by a reference librarian at the State Library of New South Wales in Sydney about the possibility of a professional exchange, wherein the two of us would swap positions and residences for a year while remaining employees of our respective institutions. After 13 months and many vicissitudes, I departed Washington DC in September 1993 and worked as a general reference librarian there for a year--an invaluable opportunity to develop, if not expertise, then at least something appreciably better than my previous state of well-read but secondhand knowledge about Australia. During my stay I visited a number of libraries across the country, including the National Library of Australia, the Federal Parliamentary Library, and the libraries of Australian National University and the New South Wales Parliament, among others. I also got an opportunity for a rare face-to-face visit with management and staff at James Bennett Library Services, the Library of Congress' approval plan dealer for Australia.⁸⁴

My all-too brief one-year stay in Australia (supplemented by numerous subsequent visits) served as an inspiration for a proposed historical dictionary of Sydney, part of a series of historical dictionaries of cities of the world from Scarecrow Press. While I performed some of the research for this work at various libraries in Sydney, the bulk of the research and writing of the book between 1998 and 2000 was done using the collections of the Library of Congress--probably the most extensive research project on an Australian topic undertaken at the Library in recent years. The 80-page bibliography for the dictionary, grouped into broad subject rubrics, was intended as a reasonably thorough survey of published books and scholarly journal articles in English on various aspects of the history of Sydney and its suburbs. Of the 1392 entries in the bibliography, 1032 items (about 74%) are held by the Library of Congress.⁸⁵ The Library's collections proved strong in published histories of the city proper; studies of the Sydney region prior to European settlement; works on early New South Wales colonial history and the transportation of convicts; labor, maritime, and economic history; general surveys of ethnic diversity in the Sydney region; women's history; intellectual history; biography of authors and artists from Sydney; architecture and historic buildings; fine arts, especially painting and music; the sciences, environment, health, and natural history; education and cultural institutions; religion; current and historical statistical publications; and government publications about

⁸³ Library of Congress, "Collections Overviews: Australia/New Zealand," <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/colloversviews/australian.html> (1993).

⁸⁴ I described my exchange experience and outlined possible procedures for future exchanges in an unpublished 1994 report to my division management; my library visits and meeting with the approval plan dealer are treated on pp. 5-6 of the report. On subsequent visits to Australia I have established working and social relations with staff at other Australian libraries, most notably the state libraries of Victoria and Queensland.

⁸⁵ See Arthur Emerson, *Historical Dictionary of Sydney* (Lanham MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001), pp. 481-562, for the complete bibliography. I was able to consult some items not held by the Library of Congress during my time in Sydney, and borrowed others by interlibrary loan or asked colleagues in Sydney to consult them on my behalf; I recommended many of these titles for purchase by the Library while working on the book.

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Sydney on the state and federal levels. Some of the more interesting items in the Library of Congress collections related to the history of Sydney include the first-person accounts of François Maurice Lepailleur, François Xavier Prieur, and Leandre Ducharme, French Canadian rebels exiled to the Sydney area in 1840; the *Vade Mecum* of the Sydney City Council, an annually published pocket almanac of information about the city; official reports from the mid-1980s concerning historic sites on islands in Sydney Harbour; a 1918 parliamentary report on the great New South Wales railway strike; the 1902 report of the New South Wales Royal Commission on Sydney Water Supply; and the 1887 report of the New South Wales Intoxicating Drink Inquiry Commission, complete with a map showing the location of pubs in Sydney and its inner suburbs.⁸⁶

Subject areas in the bibliography in which Library of Congress holdings were 50% or less included urban planning documents on the local level (as opposed to the state and federal governments); 19th century city directories; published histories of specific suburbs; histories of specific non-European ethnic communities; sport; transportation and infrastructure (exclusive of major undertakings like the Harbour Bridge); and published works about parks and gardens. I and my colleagues have since tried, with some success, to address some of these gaps as we continue to build the Library's Australiana collections.

The task of writing the *Historical Dictionary of Sydney* had a collateral benefit in generating a modest collection of Australian ephemera. The Library has seldom collected such materials from any region outside the U.S., due to the time, expense, and attendant issues of bibliographic control. But my working files of newspaper clippings, brochures, pamphlets, and other materials created in the process of researching and writing the *Dictionary* constitute a potentially useful resource on the history of Sydney and its suburbs. (My files also include a valued memento from my first stay in Sydney, an autographed draft of an October 1993 address by Gough Whitlam on "Hellenism in the Antipodes," given in recognition of my assistance in providing some of the background research for this speech.) I have had some few opportunities to make some of this material, such as my file on the 1908 visit of the U.S. Atlantic Fleet (the so-called "Great White Fleet"), available to visiting researchers; and I would welcome the opportunity to do so in future.⁸⁷

⁸⁶ François Maurice Lepailleur, *Journal d'un Patriote Exilé en Australie, 1839-1845* (Sillery, Québec: Septentrion; Saint-Laurent, Québec: Diffusion Dimedia, 1996), translated into English as *Land of a Thousand Sorrows*, translated and edited by F. Murray Greenwood (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980); François Xavier Prieur and Léandre Ducharme, *Notes d'un Condamné Politique de 1838/Journal d'un Exilé Politique aux Terres Australes* (Montréal: Éditions du Jour, 1974), with Prieur's account translated into English as *Notes of a Convict of 1838*, translated by George Mackaness (Sydney: G. Mackaness, 1949); Sydney Municipal Council, *Vade Mecum* (Sydney, 1900-1941); James Semple Kerr, *Cockatoo Island, Penal and Institutional Remains* (Sydney: National Trust of Australia, 1984), *Goat Island* (Sydney: Maritime Services Board of NSW, 1985), and *Fort Denison* (Sydney: National Trust of Australia, 1986); J.B. Holme, *The New South Wales Strike Crisis, 1917* (Sydney: Department of Labour and Industry, 1918); New South Wales, Royal Commission on Sydney Water Supply, *Report* (Sydney: Government Printer, 1902); New South Wales, Intoxicating Drink Inquiry Commission, *Report* (Sydney: C. Potter, Government Printer, 1887).

⁸⁷ These files are still active, due largely to the efforts of Andy Carr, a former colleague at the State Library of New South Wales and one of Nature's archivists, who periodically sends me deliveries of mostly sport-related Australian ephemera.

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I periodically receive reference inquiries which give me the opportunity to test and explore our collections further. For example, an inquiry as to whether the events depicted in Peter Weir's film *Picnic at Hanging Rock* were based on fact led me to a published local history of the Mount Macedon area, among other sources.⁸⁸ A question about the origins of the Australian Army "slouch hat" led me to several published histories of Australian military uniforms in our collections (as well as multiple theories as to why the left brim is snapped up).

For the reasons enumerated at the beginning of this paper, the Library's Australiana collections do not lend themselves particularly well to metrics; nevertheless, I will attempt to quantify and characterize the current state of the collections to the extent possible. As of December 2006, the Library of Congress had 53,155 titles on the subject of Australia listed in its online catalog. This figure carries with it a number of caveats and qualifications:

- 1) It refers to *titles*, not *volumes*. 4875 of these titles are periodical publications, such as journals, magazines, and parliamentary documents series. These can range from one volume to hundreds (the parliamentary documents are an example of the latter). Arbitrarily assigning an average figure of 30 volumes per periodical title, this results in a rough estimate of about 199,405 volumes--just over two-thirds of one percent of our total estimated holdings of 29,000,000 volumes of books and journals.
- 2) It does not include materials published *in* Australia but not *about* Australia. The structure of our online catalog is such that is not possible to search the catalog solely by place of publication. Our holdings of such material are not inconsiderable; for example, our catalog includes about 460 titles published in Australia on the subject of China, about 330 general works on the two world wars (as opposed to works dealing specifically with Australia's involvement), and just over 600 titles on economics (exclusive of economics in Australia).
- 3) It includes only partial information on material published prior to 1968. In that year, the Library of Congress began to create machine-readable records for its online catalog. By the end of 1980, all items incoming to the Library were being cataloged electronically, so no more cards were added to the old card catalog. Conversion of the old catalog cards into machine-readable form has gone on in fits and starts since the 1980s; but this process is not now, and may never be, complete. In the card catalog under "Australia," there are about 15 trays worth of title, subject, and corporate author cards in the old catalog, each holding about 1400 cards, for a total of 21,000 cards. I hesitate to ascribe much significance to this number, because each individual item in the catalog is usually represented by at least three cards (author, title, subject); subject cards about Australia are scattered throughout the 21,887 trays of our card catalog--not just under "A"--due to the

⁸⁸ Jean Milbourne, *Mount Macedon: Its History and Its Grandeur, 1836-1978* (Bendigo: Cambridge Press, 1982); donated to the Library by the author in 1986. The Library of Congress is one of two U.S. libraries (the other being Harvard University) holding this title. In the spirit of "hands across the sea" I also consulted with colleagues at the state libraries of Victoria and New South Wales, who had checked local Victorian newspapers to which I had no local access.

nature of our classification scheme (see pp. 2-3 above); and there is at present no way to determine the amount of overlap between the online and card catalog short of checking each item in the card catalog against the online catalog--not a task I, nor anyone else on the Library staff, is prepared to undertake.

- 4) It does not include many non-book materials. Maps are reasonably well-represented in the online catalog, as are photographs; sound and video recordings are represented more sparingly. But catalogs for these non-book resources are often not indexed by subject or geographic area, and the Library's reference staff must generally be consulted to find needed materials.

While books and journals about Australia are scattered throughout our collection, there are some areas where they tend to aggregate. Probably the largest single concentration is in the DU80 to DU398 and DU450 to DU480 call number ranges for Australian history, with approximately 8300 volumes (a rough estimate based on the average number of volumes on a shelf, and the total number of shelves). Next would be the J905 to J936 call number range, where approximately 7400 volumes of Australian state and federal parliamentary publications are found. The PR9600 to PR1919 call number range for Australian literature holds about 5200 volumes. All three call number ranges have some volumes which are kept in our remote storage facility in Fort Meade, Maryland, making these estimates tentative at best.

In addition to books and periodical listings, there are about 2140 records in the online catalog for Australian maps, most from the 20th century. However, probably the oldest item *about* Australia in the Library's collections is John Stockdale's *New Chart of New Holland on Which Are Delineated New South Wales, and a Plan for Botany Bay* from the late 18th century, in the collections of the Library's Geography and Map Division.⁸⁹ The Library's collections of prints, photographs, and non-music sound recordings from Australia focus on World War II campaigns in the Pacific, although among our prints and photographs are such items as World War I military recruiting posters, political posters from the Australian Labor Party during the Whitlam leadership, and one 1960 publicity still of director Alfred Hitchcock seated atop a rather bemused-looking turtle at a zoo in Sydney.⁹⁰ Australian music is represented in recordings of folk songs and Aboriginal music (many of which are found in the Archive of Folk Culture). There are also historical recordings of various Australian classical and jazz ensembles; works by contemporary classical composers (e.g. Peter Sculthorpe, Ross Edwards, Carl Vine, Elena Kats-Chernin) and rock groups (Little River Band, Midnight Oil, Mental As Anything, INXS, Not

⁸⁹ The map is viewable online at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g8960.ct000507>. The date of publication is uncertain, but would have to be between 1770 (Cook's naming and exploration of Botany Bay) and 1797 (the European discovery of the Bass Strait), and probably predating the First Fleet (as there is almost no detail on the chart given for Port Jackson).

⁹⁰ Many of the Australian war photographs are found in the Farm Security Administration - Office of War Information Photograph Collection; consult the Library of Congress website at http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/res/071_fsab.html for more information. The political posters are part of the Yanker Poster Collection; see http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/res/250_yank.html for more information. The Hitchcock photograph is from the New York World-Telegram & Sun Collection, reproduction number LC-USZ62-111043; the photograph can be viewed online at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c11043>.

Drowning, Waving) are represented as well. The Library holds many Australian films from the early 20th century, including Norman Dawn's *For the Term of His Natural Life* (1927) and Raymond Longford's *A Sentimental Bloke* (1919). More contemporary items tend toward Australian feature films distributed in the U.S., although our holdings include such oddments as a television cigarette commercial featuring Duke Ellington and filmed in Sydney (1970).⁹¹ Manuscript material about Australia tends to be scattered among the various collections, which have an emphasis on American history. Examples include the papers of Nelson Trusler Johnson, a longtime State Department "China hand" who served as U.S. minister to Australia from 1941 to 1946; and the papers of American publisher Benjamin Huebsch, which includes correspondence with Patrick White.

Contrary to another widely-held misconception about the Library, any researcher from anywhere in the world above 18 years of age and possessing photo identification is welcome to use the Library's collections (although reader registration is required). Given the diversity of the collections and the fact that there is no one place to search the Library's entire collection, finding Australian materials at the Library can be a challenge for the researcher (as it has been for me). While there is no "one-stop shopping" for this process, there are some basic steps I can recommend for researchers:

- 1) **Search our online catalog (<http://catalog.loc.gov/>).** Even though it does not list all of our materials, our online catalog is still the best place to begin looking. It has reasonably complete information on all of the Library's books and periodicals in English from 1968 to the present (with other languages having been added through the 1970s and all languages represented by 1980); partial listings for pre-1968 books and periodicals in all languages; and partial listings for manuscript collections, maps, graphic material (prints, posters, and photographs), and sound and video recordings. There are separate catalogs for graphic materials (Prints and Photographs Online Catalog, or PPOC; <http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/catalog.html>) and sound recordings (Sound Online Inventory and Catalog, or SONIC; <http://www.loc.gov/rr/record/Soniccont.html>). There is considerable overlap between the main online catalog and these other catalogs.
- 2) **Consult the *Directory of Resources for Australian Studies in North America* by Nan Bowman Albinski (Clayton, VIC: National Centre for Australian Studies, Monash University; University Park, PA: Australia-New Zealand Studies Center, Pennsylvania State University, 1992).** Although now somewhat dated, this is still a useful resource for getting an overview of Library of Congress holdings in Australiana. The directory is organized by subject with an index of repositories; the Library of Congress is listed under "U" in the index (for "U.S. Library of Congress") rather than "L."

⁹¹ From the Valburn/Ellington Collection, Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division, Library of Congress call number VAB 6831 (viewing copy).

- 3) **Talk to the Library's Australia/New Zealand specialist (aeme@loc.gov; 202-707-0942).** While I do not possess Ainsworth Spofford's "marvelous locative memory" and cannot claim eidetic knowledge of the entire collection, I probably know the Library's Australiana holdings better than anyone. Armed with the reference librarian's credo--" I may not know, but I know how to find out"--I can usually assist researchers in finding what they need and help them navigate their way around the Library, which can be a daunting institution for those using the collections for the first time.

It is estimated that currently the collections of the Library of Congress are growing at a rate of 10,000 items per working day.⁹² Materials about Australia are a trickle in comparison to this flood; since 2000 we have been adding new titles about Australia to our collections at the rate of about 1000 per year. Most of these new titles are acquired by purchase, and my budget for purchasing Australian books (exclusive of law materials, which has a separate acquisitions budget) has fluctuated in that time from a recent low of US\$16,280 in 2002 to a high of US\$29,781 in 2006.⁹³ While I have no figures on the number of volumes received via exchange, it is clear to me from a perusal of our stacks that the rate of growth in our collection of official documents has slowed dramatically in recent years, although receipts of documents from the National Library of Australia and the state libraries of Western Australia and Victoria continue on a regular basis; I review incoming shipments from these institutions perhaps two or three times a year.

The problem of access to recent Australian government publications is perhaps somewhat ameliorated by the fact that Australian governments at all levels have taken the lead in digitizing their documents and making them freely available on the Internet for years. However, I am concerned that digital access solves the one problem of access for research purposes, but raises long-term issues of searching, storage, and security. How does one find these documents online? How long does the agency maintain digital copies of the documents publicly accessible on its servers? Who archives digital publications? And what if (heaven forbid) some unfriendly power launched an attack on Australia's digital infrastructure? Libraries, archives, and government agencies are beginning to grapple with these issues. For my part, I consider that digital access *complements* the presence of hard copies on library shelves, but does not necessarily *replace* it--which leaves librarians with the same problem of how to acquire these documents.

Of the three modes of acquisition outlined by Putnam in 1901, "solicitation" is probably the rarest at present. The Library continues to receive occasional donations of Australian material; most are from Australian authors donating individual copies of their work to the Library, and these are generally welcomed with open arms. The only large institutional donor of Australian material to the Library over the past decade has been the Australian Embassy in

⁹² Library of Congress, "About the Library: Fascinating Facts," <http://www.loc.gov/about/facts.html> (February 2005).

⁹³ All figures are from the acquisitions module of the Library's integrated library system (LC ILS).

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Washington. Their contributions have included periodic donations of Australian telephone books and other miscellaneous volumes; a 1999 CD-ROM edition of Captain James Cook's journals from his *Endeavour* voyage, given to the Library in commemoration of its bicentennial in 2000; and two large shipments (1998 and 2003) of several hundred deaccessioned books and journals from the Embassy's library, which were invaluable in filling gaps in our collections.

In a note to James Bennett Childs, prominent Australian librarian and bibliographer Dale Borchartd says of an ongoing project: "I shall continue in the furrow, though it be at the speed of oxen."⁹⁴ This sentiment may seem out of place in what pundits are calling "the digital age." But I think it an appropriate metaphor to describe my plodding but hopefully effective efforts to monitor and maintain those mechanisms by which the Library continues to acquire Australian materials. While the Library of Congress will never be the "magic pudding" of popular imagination when it comes to Australiana, it remains an extraordinarily diverse, continually expanding, and perhaps somewhat eccentric gathering of material. I believe that researchers coming to the Library of Congress will be well-rewarded for helping themselves to this almost magic pudding; and if I may echo the sentiments of that gregarious penguin Sam Sawnoff, hearty eaters are always welcome.

⁹⁴ Letter dated August 17, 1971; from the James Bennett Childs Desk Papers, Library of Congress Archives.

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