Missing items systems and procedures at the British Library

Adrian S. Edwards
The British Library’s main site in London

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Statistics

- 150 million items:
  - 6.9 million Western early printed books and periodical titles,
  - 4 million maps,
  - 8 million postage stamps,
  - 310,000 bound volumes of manuscripts....

- 1,296 reader desks in 11 reading rooms

- 1.65 million items issued to readers in our reading rooms each year.
  - of which 242,000 go to our Rare Books reading room alone
CONTROLS

Storage areas
## CONTROLS

### Some of the main reading categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category code</th>
<th>Type of material</th>
<th>Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>Post-1850 general printed books</td>
<td>• Can be requested by any registered reader to any of the reading rooms in London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAR</td>
<td>Pre-1851 general printed books</td>
<td>• Can be requested by any registered reader to any of the 4 special collections reading rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RR1</td>
<td>Rare printed books</td>
<td>• Can be requested by any registered reader, but only to the Rare Books Reading Room</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| RR3           | High category special printed books       | • Can only be consulted in the ‘home’ reading room;  
• Must be read at special materials desks;  
• Reader has to leave their reader pass with the issue desk staff;  
• Item is stored in locked cupboards when not in use |
| RRX, RRZ      | Restricted printed books (2 levels)       | • As above, but an application has to be made to the relevant curator/curatorial manager for access |
Request ticket

Request Slip Part 2

Year Vol
B2-5-345
DONOVAN, EDWARD.

GENERAL ILLUSTRATION OF
ENTOMOLOGY: PART I. AN EPITOME O...
1805

EDWARDS, AS
8990
S
RARE BOOKS & MUSIC
Reading Category
RR1
06-AUG-2019
25074720

www.bl.uk
Security guidelines and training

**Staff Use of The Collections** policy has to be followed, includes instructions on:

- Correct use of the internal circulation system for collection items.
- Requirement for collection handling training.
- Requirement to store collections items appropriately.
- Guidelines on how to transport collection items around the building.
CONTROLS

Collection Security Group

Purposes

To be responsible for the Library’s *Collection Security Policy*.

To oversee the assessment of risks to the collection and ensure that appropriate mitigations are in place in line with the risk appetite agreed by the British Library Board.

To determine and monitor action planning to respond to new and changing collection risks, and risks inherent in all Library processes. Monitor progress and review benefit realisation.
CONTROLS
British Library reading rooms
SYSTEMS

Other preventative measures

• Timely maintenance of the catalogues and the ‘Automated Book Retrieval System’
• Random collection audits
• Routine shelf tidying in storage areas
• Annual recall of all items in use by staff
• Effective use of daily and monthly reports generated from the ‘Automated Book Retrieval System’
**REPORTING & INVESTIGATING**

**Collection Security Report Forms**

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**COLLECTION SECURITY REPORT FORM**

*Initial report*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date form was initiated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name of member of staff initiating this report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date and time of incident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place incident occurred</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of person who alerted staff to the incident if different from person initiating the form</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Description of collection item**

| Shelf-mark: |
| Title: |
| Author: |
| Date of publication: |
| Place of publication: |
| Publisher: |
| Description (size, no. pages etc.): |
| Storage location: |
| ARRC status (when applicable): |
### REPORTING & INVESTIGATING
#### Report to Collection Security Group, 12-08-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of investigation</th>
<th>Shelfmark/Details</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mislaid – reported 20/05/2008</td>
<td>804.a.10 Il Malagrida. Tragedia trasportata dal verso Francese nell'Italiano. 1765</td>
<td>This item was reported mislaid in 2008 when requested by a reader.</td>
<td>Item found misplaced on shelf by Collection Audit officer during routine review, June 2019.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing – reported 26/06/2019</td>
<td>New acquisition (no shelfmark) L'obscur d'ici / Serge Gavronsky; dessins de Jean-Marc Scanreigh. 1998</td>
<td>This item was misplaced during the cataloguing process.</td>
<td>Item found in cataloguing offices in Boston Spa, as a query, July 2019. Now shelfmarked (C.188.b.131) and shelved. Cataloguing teams reminded that queries should be referred to their team managers and not left unresolved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mislaid – reported 22/07/2019</td>
<td>New acquisition: C.194.c.79.(78.) The Ordinary of Newgate his account of the behaviour and last dying words of Edward Bird... 1719</td>
<td>This item was requested by a reader and not on shelf.</td>
<td>Item found in ‘English Short Title Catalogue’ cataloguing offices, as a query, August 2019. Cataloguers reminded that, once a shelfmark has been allocated to a book, it appears in our online catalogues and can be requested by readers. It therefore either needs to be sent to shelf quickly or the staff member needs to create an online request for it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Lists of missing books published on the website

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Shelfmark</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publication Year</th>
<th>Created</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>11796.bb.1.</td>
<td>BOEHN, Max Ulrich von</td>
<td>Dolls and Puppets ... Translated by Josephine Nicoll ... Wit</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>19-11-1997</td>
<td>MISLAID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>X.319/17622.</td>
<td>Ziliox, Marc</td>
<td>Dangerous animals of the sea, Marc Ziliox</td>
<td>1977</td>
<td>19-11-1997</td>
<td>MISLAID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>X.808/3979.</td>
<td>MANNIX, Daniel Pratt</td>
<td>The Hell-Fire Club.</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>19-11-1997</td>
<td>MISLAID</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://www.bl.uk/about-us/freedom-of-information/6-lists-and-registers
THE UNEXPECTED...
Rolls (posters, broadsides, engravings) found at British Museum 2019
Thank you

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