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U. S. ARMY MEDICAL LIBRARY
ROUTINE OPERATION

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ROUTINE OPERATION
OF THE
ARMY MEDICAL LIBRARY



Compiled by The Librarian.

ARCHIVAL COLLECTION

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NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE
WASHINGTON, D. C.

ROUTINE OPERATION OF THE ARMY MEDICAL LIBRARY

Compiled by The Librarian

GENERAL INFORMATION

The reader who comes to the Army Medical Library in person may consult the unbound journals, documents and statistical material in the first floor Reading Room or the bound volumes in the second floor Reading Hall. Many readers, especially Army, Navy and Public Health officers, and many physicians residing elsewhere write for publications which are loaned through Army Posts or through libraries near the home of the person sending in the request. They consult the Catalogue or the Quarterly Cumulative Index for references, at home. Occasionally if neither the Index Catalogue nor the Cumulative Index is available, lists of references are compiled upon request, by members of the Library staff and also where the material in the files has not been printed it is sometimes made available. Generally much of the literature named in the bibliography can be obtained from the larger libraries throughout the United States.

The Army Medical Library contained a year ago about 400,000 volumes (about 346,000 bound) and about 559,000 pamphlets, with a total of 952,619 differing items. Different from other libraries it has references on file to all journal articles dealing with medicine or borderline subjects. These files are later incorporated in the Index Catalogue of the Army Medical Library. Many of the sets of journals are complete from their first appearance.

THE INDEX CATALOGUE IN THE MAKING

It may be said that the Library is inseparably bound up with the Index Catalogue itself the key that unlocks the storehouse of knowledge. It is the Index Catalogue by which the Library is known throughout the world; it is the Catalogue for which the Library gathers and classifies its books and journal articles, and every member of the staff here gives his time and labor daily to

the end that the Catalogue shall be as complete and satisfactory as it is possible to make it. In its printing of the Index Catalogue then, this Library differs from other libraries and is never to be considered, as some are wont to regard it, a mere repository of printed matter in many languages.

The activities of the Library in making and using the Index Catalogue can be conveniently divided into the following groups:

- A. Collecting material ("book selection and purchase");
- B. Admission of collected material to the Library ("entering");
- C. Selection of material for the Catalogue ("checking");
- D. Making cards for selected material ("indexing");
- E. Preliminary classification of cards ("heading");
- F. Keeping the "manuscript" Index Catalogue ("filing");
- G. Medical, bibliographical, and clerical editing;
- H. Filing the "documents" used for the Index Catalogue;
- I. Use of the Index Catalogue ("information service");
- J. Production and Distribution of the Catalogue.

A. COLLECTING MATERIAL.

The Library receives its material partly by purchase and partly by donation. At present about 1800 journals come in currently, in 18 languages. A few journals come free. Many books are received from the Library of Congress but not all medical books received under the Copyright Law in that Library are so presented and many have to be purchased. Many books are contributed direct by authors. Foreign books almost invariably have to be purchased. All the larger book-sellers send us their catalogues, and books are selected from these lists as well as from book-trade journals. Many official publications of the Government and the several States are received free as are many publications of educational institutions throughout the world.

The selection of books and journals is the responsibility of the Librarian assisted by the two Assistant Librarians and the Junior Librarians. Books and journals purchased abroad are paid for by our Military Attaches in the several countries from appropriated funds. The necessity of keeping within appropriations frequently dictates selections.

B. ADMISSION OF COLLECTED MATERIAL TO THE LIBRARY, ROOMS 1 and 7.

When books and journals arrive at the Library, they are stamped, the journals going to Room 1 and the books to Room 7. Current periodicals are registered on a file, which helps in completing sets of periodicals, and compiling a mimeographed list of current periodicals. Periodicals and pamphlets related to statistics are separated from other journals. Books received are checked against the order file. They are stamped, and, whenever possible, a printed card is ordered for the book from the Library of Congress Card Division. A bookplate is glued on the inside of the book-cover, and the book is accessioned and numbered.

C. SELECTION OF MATERIAL, FOR INDEXING, ROOMS 3 and 5.

The medical members of the Library staff, that is, the Librarian and the two Assistant Librarians, select the material for indexing. The Assistant Librarian in Room 3 examines every journal, the transactions of societies, etc. The Assistant Librarian in Room 5 examines statistical journals and documents, as well as the books, which are also checked in some instances, and analytical entries made if the book is a collection of several works or of articles of varying natures. In the case of certain journals *every* article is indexed and frequently other matter as well. In some journals nothing is indexed because perhaps nothing touching upon medicine appears in that number. Yet the very next number may contain something of importance.

D. INDEXING.

The journals which have been checked are sent to the Indexers in Rooms 8 and 9. They also make cards for theses. Books are sent to Room 7 for analytical book cards. Statistical publications and documents of governments are sent to the Statistical Section (on first floor) for indexing. Cards made by the "Indexers" are returned to the Assistant Librarians (Room 3 and Room 5) for preliminary classification.

The work of the Indexers is not an easy one. For journal articles they have to make one card only, but for books and pamphlets three cards are required, sometimes more, depending on the number of necessary reference cards. One of the three book cards, a small one, is used for the permanent card catalogue

in the Library Hall, while the other two are for the printed Index Catalogue.

The Indexers meet difficulties at every step in making their cards. Sometimes, the author's name is a very complicated one; at other times the title of the article or thesis is very long, or it is in a foreign language which needs translation. Again, the reference to the journal must be uniform and accurate to the smallest comma or accent. To insure exactness, especially to have the pagination of reference correct, the cards made by the Indexers are checked against the original article in Room 4.

The Scandinavian, Dutch, Turkish, Roumanian, Finnish, Russian and Polish titles are translated into English and go later into the Catalogue in "Brackets" to indicate the fact of translation. The Hungarian titles are translated in another room for convenience. The other journals are in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. Fortunately for the readers most of the Japanese journals are also published in German.

E. HEADING.

Subject classification of the cards made by the Indexers is called "heading" in the Library slang. Heading is a very important phase of the Library work, and is done by the medical members of the Library staff, that is, by the Librarian, and the two Assistant Librarians, who have to keep themselves up-to-date with the medical terminology. Even so, the classification at this phase of the work is only preliminary, because in a few years, when a particular subject comes to editing, it may require a new name and new aspects. Many are the arguments among the staff on what classification should be made. Not infrequently after a volume has been completed it is realized perhaps that a certain choice was unfortunate. However, it must be understood that perfection in arrangement and complete agreement with all of those who use the Index Catalogue is impossible.

F. FILING OF MANUSCRIPT FOR THE INDEX CATALOGUE. ROOM 4.

After the cards have been headed with the proper medical term expressing the main idea of the author of the book or journal article, they are sent to the filing room (4) where they are filed in boxes behind a veritable regiment of guide cards. They are now ready for the use of readers and patiently await

their turn for printing, which may be as long as fifteen years. Material filed under "A", for instance, will not be printed until the 5th Series is begun, perhaps in 1950. Once they have been printed the cards are destroyed.

G. EDITING.

The editorial work on the printed Index Catalogue begins in Room 5, where the Assistant Librarian in charge of editing the Catalogue prepares the final frame of subject headings and sub-headings according to the current medical nomenclature, collects all cards available in the manuscript card file for a given subject, makes corrections of text or spelling or of transliteration of Russian names, and looks for the correct bibliographical form of each entry. Then, the cards are arranged under the chosen subheadings, and cross references made to other related subjects. In doubtful cases of medical terminology, the Librarian himself decides what terms shall be used.

Thereafter, the cards are arranged in alphabetical order under the subheadings (Room 6), and the abbreviations made uniform according to the present style of the Index Catalogue. Meanwhile, the so-called author cards and biography cards have been prepared in Room 6, and the biographical data of authors searched for. These cards, together with the subject cards, are combined in one alphabet of authors and subjects, and sent to the Government Printing Office, where the type is set up directly from the cards by a monotype machine.

The printing office sends one galley-proof and three page revisions. They are corrected in Rooms 5 and 6. The proof, page revisions and a complete catalogue are exhibited in Room 6.

H. FILING OF DOCUMENTS.

After the material received by the Library has been properly indexed and cards made, the current journals are sent to the Reading Room (1st floor), which has a special card file. The journals are kept on shelves until the completion of a volume. Statistical material and Government publications are filed in the Statistical and Document Section, the foundation of which is a generous gift of the Prudential Life Insurance Company. Books and theses are sent to the Library Hall, where the theses are put into boxes, and the books are placed according to their subject matter and a typewritten shelf classification. Here, the bound

volumes of journals and transactions are also stored. Duplicates have been placed in the basement rooms. Unbound material is sent periodically to the Bindery of the Government Printing Office, and volumes for binding are prepared in Room 11, where much of the unbound and incomplete sets of journals is kept.

I. INFORMATION SERVICE.

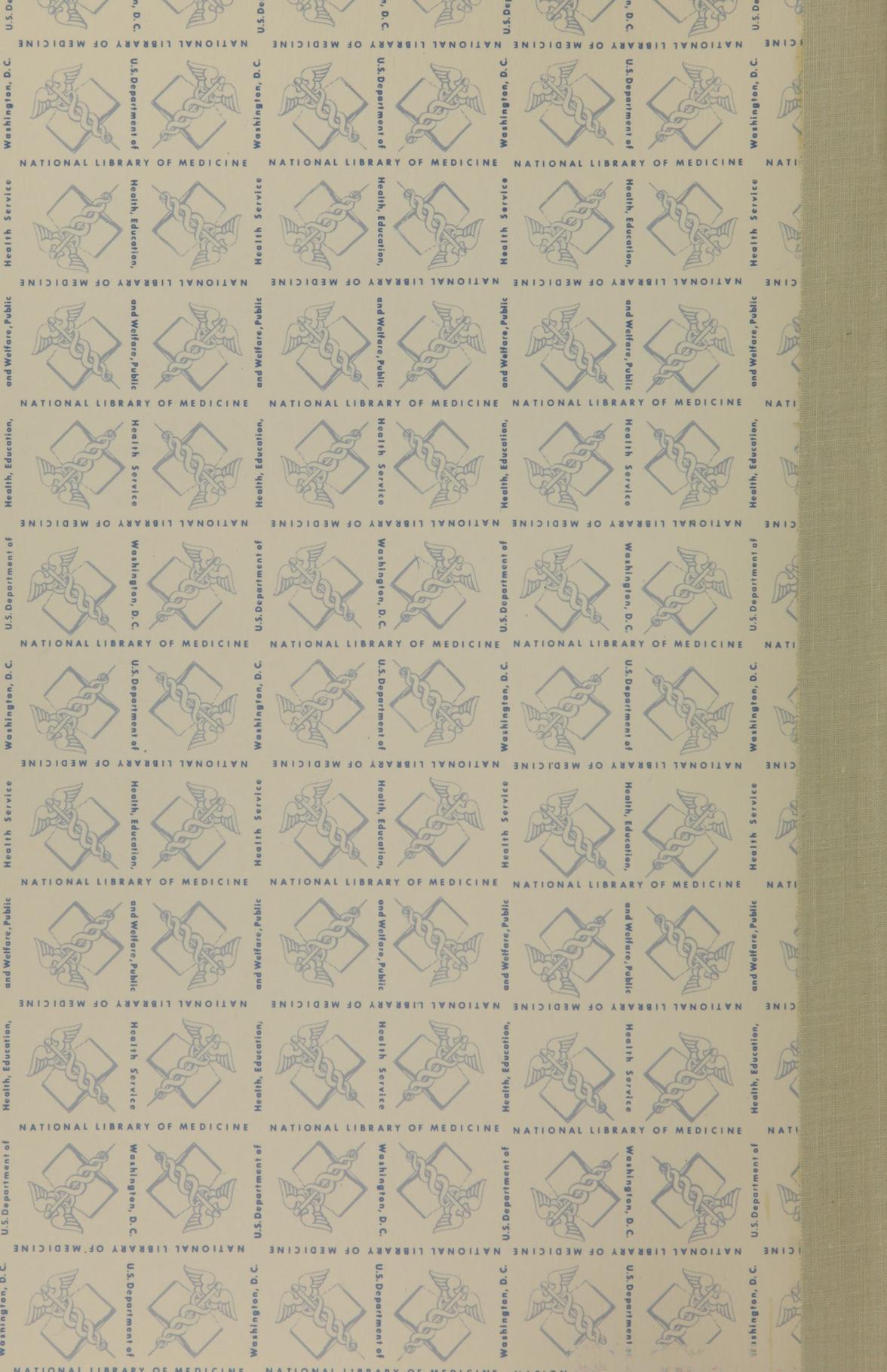
The routine requirements of the Library necessitate a set of the Index Catalogue in almost every department. Information of the most diverse character is requested from persons in all parts of America and from many countries of Europe and South America. While the Library does not maintain a department of research as such, members of the staff are generally able to give the information required or to state where it may be secured. Frequently, as a result of inquiry, book loans are arranged, photo-static copies of certain pages in books or journals are made, and many concrete questions are answered direct. In addition, for the benefit of the Library and the general public, a very considerable amount of research goes on by the staff here, in the field of biography and medical history.

J. PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

The Index Catalogue is actually printed at the Government Printing Office in Washington. It takes about ten months to produce a single volume of approximately 1000 pages. The edition is limited to 1000 copies in addition to those printed for sale at a price of about \$2.50 a volume. A volume of the Index Catalogue ("B" volume is now in press) is of course printed by degrees. The printing is done in batches of say 2000 cards or more, and the type is set up directly from the cards in boxes, the cards being numbered consecutively to avoid their being printed in the wrong order. A volume contains from 75,000 to 100,000 references and a series considerably over one million. Some subjects, as "Blood" for instance, will contain 15,000 cards or references and will occupy one-eighth of an entire volume. It costs about \$33,000.00 to publish an edition of 1000 copies of a single volume. Complete sets of all the Index Catalogue volumes of the 1st, 2d, 3d, and 4th Series and the Specimen Fasciculus, or experimental first volume, are on a shelf in the corridor.

The Library maintains a file of those institutions receiving the Index Catalogue as a gift. Necessarily the qualifications of

those desiring it are carefully examined and considered, for if an institution is marked for receiving the publication, it will of course have to continue as each volume appears. As a general rule the use that is proposed to be made of it is the gauge employed. Some institutions are supplied with more than one copy where the demand is very large. Other institutions, when it is found that the Catalogue appears in several libraries in the same locality, are not placed on the list for obvious reasons of economy. The Catalogue is sent to the important libraries of foreign countries, as well as those in America. About 250 are sent abroad and approximately 500 to institutions in this country. The remaining copies are held as a reserve for future distribution as needs arise.



U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Public Health Service

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FAMILY BINDER
Syracuse, N. Y.
Stockton, Calif.

