

1957: "Deterioration of Book-Stock—Causes and Remedies" was one of four grants CLR awarded during its first year of operation. The 18-month project was granted \$49,500.

The problem of brittle books, caused by printing on highly acidic paper, was becoming widely recognized and threatened millions of books in library collections. The grant recipient, [William J. Barrow](#), was a pioneer in library and archives conservation and introduced the field of conservation to paper deacidification through alkalization. Barrow's research catalyzed a series of events, including 1989 congressional appropriation to the National Endowment for the Humanities to support a 20-year program to microfilm endangered volumes.

The following description was provided in the first annual report of the Council on Library Resources, Inc., for the period ending June 30, 1957, pp. 21-22.

"Deterioration of Book-Stock—Causes and Remedies"

While pursuing the development of arrangements for a general testing-standardizing service, the Council has taken advantage of the life-long enthusiasm of an outstanding documents-restoration expert to commence study toward the betterment of the situation regarding the librarian's chief stock-in-trade—paper. Mr. William J. Barrow, the documents-restorer of the Virginia State Library, an expert in the history and technology of inks and papers and the inventor of an internationally adopted system of document-preservation, has long planned a systematic investigation into paper-deterioration on the hypothesis that this deterioration is due to causes which can be obviated in manufacture or arrested following manufacture at costs much less than those of any present process of document preservation (including crêpelining, laminating or photocopying). The Council has provided for the support of Mr. Barrow's investigation for 18 months under the sponsorship of the Virginia State Library, whose librarian, Mr. Randolph W. Church, has designated two advisory committees, one of librarians concerned with paper-preservation, the other of experts in the chemistry and technology involved. It is hoped that this study may not only produce data which may contribute to development of standards for library paper-stock but may also provide an economically feasible technique for halting or delaying the deterioration of present stocks and perhaps even an improved method of manufacture.

The following summary of CLR's program is reproduced from the first annual report, for the period ending June 30, 1957.

THE COUNCIL'S PROGRAM

The action taken by the Ford Foundation embodied the essentials of the recommendations of the Folger Library Conferences. The Council is a planning, not an operating body, and is wholly independent of other groups working in the library field. Its membership of twelve is representative of the public interest in libraries rather than of the interest of any class of library users or of the libraries themselves. Nevertheless, within its membership may be found not only the point of view of the users of libraries for research both in the humanities and in the sciences, but also the points of view of the administrators of educational and research organizations of which libraries are a part, of library administrators, and of completely detached interest in the processes of communication.

The Council has freedom to range widely through research and development in all fields to determine new attacks upon the traditional problems involved in the storage and dissemination of knowledge, to enhance and accelerate the development of libraries generally through the encouragement of new methods and assistance in coordinating their application, the promotion of interlibrary cooperation, the pooling of the reservoirs of little-used material in the interest of greater availability, and the coordination of library work even across national boundaries. High on the Council's list of priorities, it is the hope of the Foundation, will be basic research which may lead to new developments.

In a field of endeavor which has received unremitting attention for more than three quarters of a century from an organized and self-critical profession, not deficient in ingenuity or cooperativeness, such an assignment is not an easy one. As might

perhaps have been expected, the Council has found it much easier, during the early months of its existence, to recognize the kinds of activities that do not come within its scope than to announce projects of outstanding promise. Yet certain areas may be marked out within which it may be expected that opportunities for fruitful work will be found:

Basic research in the processes of distribution, organization, storage and communication of knowledge as these affect libraries.

Technological development looking to the physical-mechanical apparatus of library work (including the collections themselves) and to the application of mechanisms not yet utilized.

Methodological development and coordination of effort looking to over-all improvement. Most areas of library work are susceptible of such development: acquisition, bibliographic organization (including cataloging, indexing, etc.), storage, and access both to collections and services. Under this topic would also be included the possibilities for integration of the processes of publication, distribution, bibliographic organization and storage so as to bring the library function more automatically and effectively into the publication-storage-research-publication cycle.

Emphasis upon these areas of activity implies certain exclusions from the scope of the program. The Council's purpose is to develop solutions to library problems in general rather than in particularized or local terms. It cannot, accordingly, undertake to relieve the problems of individual libraries by providing funds for "normal" purposes—the construction of buildings, procurement of collections, or strengthening of staffs. This restriction must ordinarily also apply to projects of cataloging and classification, even though such projects may often seem to their originators as exceeding "normal" activities; yet circumstances may be envisaged in which the organization of a particular body

of material might be so important for the needs of scholarship as to justify the Council's interest.

The hope of finding general rather than particular solutions, and of stimulating improvements in method rather than the mere application of existing techniques, must also weigh in the Council's attitude to certain other classes of activity. There are, for example, almost inexhaustible opportunities for useful work of a bibliographic nature—for the compilation of surveys of the literature of this or that subject or of guides to the resources for studying them, for the preparation of indexes and catalogs of many kinds and in many forms (including union catalogs and lists), for specialist listings in aid of particular studies, etc. Notwithstanding their potential usefulness, the Council's interest in such projects must be guided either by the degree to which they promise a wide-spread and general assistance to the usefulness of libraries or by their potential effectiveness in demonstrating methodological improvement. Similar considerations must also affect the support of the many possible and undeniably important programs for reassembling by photocopy the materials for study which are now dissipated in many repositories or otherwise difficult of access, so as to make them widely available for research. These are, in a sense, publication projects, and libraries after all owe their *raison d'être* to publication. It might in consequence eventually appear that no greater contribution to the usefulness of libraries can be made than by promoting publications of basic or "source" value to the maximum, by photocopy as by other means. But for the present at least the Council's support of publication projects, whether by photocopy of manuscript originals or by microcopy of works already printed, must depend upon considerations of methodology as well as the usual criteria of intrinsic importance, desirability of dissemination, need for preservation, etc.