

*First Edition, 1903*  
*Second Edition, revised, 1907*  
*Third Edition, rewritten by W. C. Berwick Sayers, 1920*  
*Fourth Edition, revised, 1931*  
*Fifth Edition, revised with additions, 1937*  
*Sixth Edition, rewritten, 1949, Reprinted with corrections, 1950*  
*Seventh Edition, completely rewritten by R. Northwood Lock, 1961*

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1762

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY  
OF

JAMES DUFF BROWN  
(1862-1914)

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London and Prescott.*

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JAMES DUFF BROWN'S

**MANUAL**

**OF**

**LIBRARY ECONOMY**

SEVENTH EDITION  
completely rewritten

by

**R. NORTHWOOD LOCK FLA**

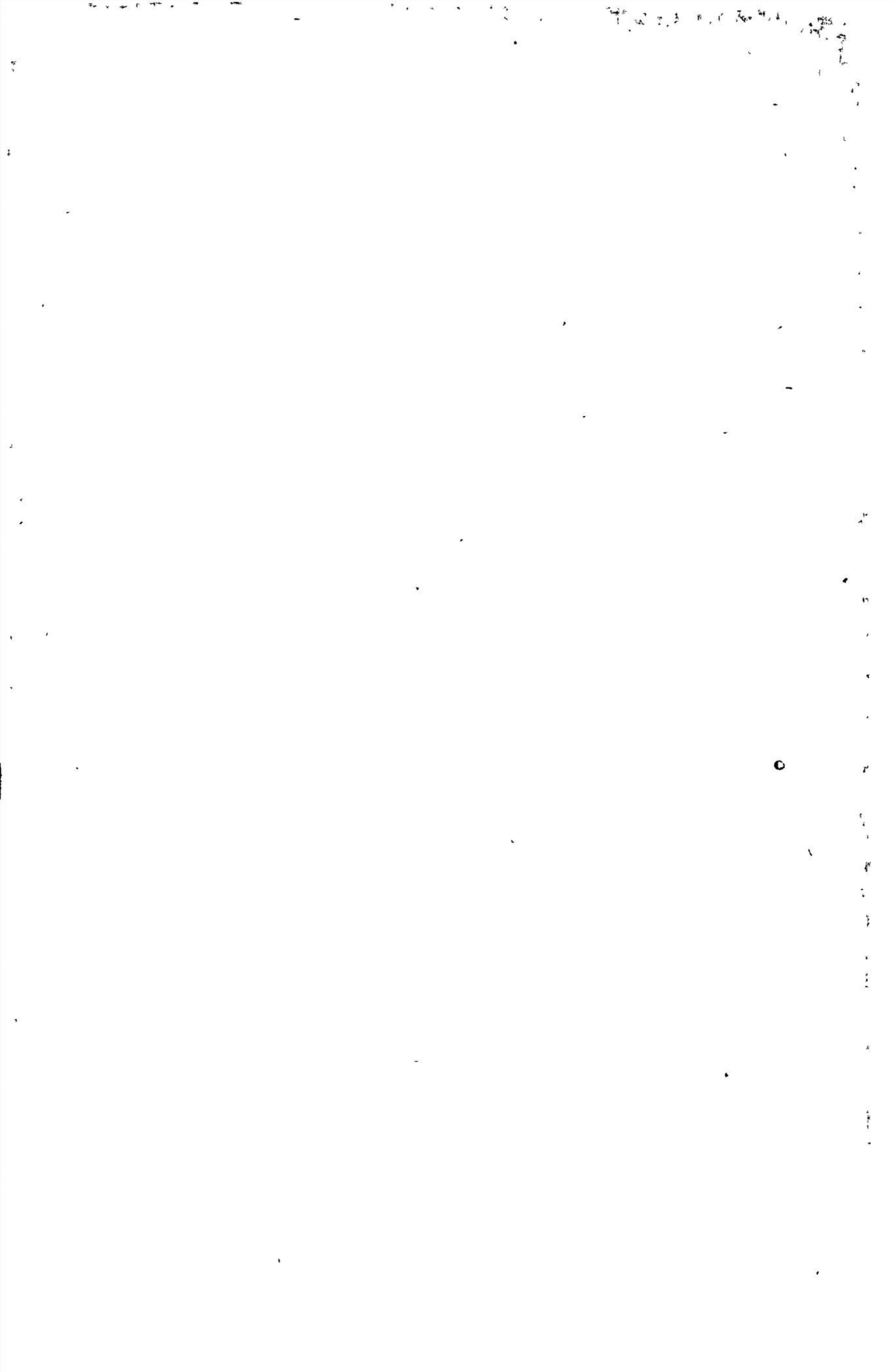
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26.3 1962 Rs. 42.21.  
16 025 B.07

**GRAFTON & CO**  
**LONDON**  
1961

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Editor acknowledges with many thanks the generous loan of illustrative material—photographs, blocks, stationery forms,—without which this book would be immeasurably the poorer. Librarians have responded most willingly to requests for these loans and have additionally made valuable comments as to their ideals and intentions. To have used all that has been offered would have been impracticable; it is hoped that the selection will prove stimulating and informative.

To the following libraries, societies, companies and individuals the Publisher and the Editor are indebted for the use of the material indicated:—

For photographs of libraries and stationery used in their systems:—

Bedford Public Libraries; Birmingham City Libraries; Birmingham College of Commerce; Birmingham University Library; Bootle Public Library; Cannock Public Library; Cape Province Library Service, South Africa; Cincinnati & Hamilton County Library, U.S.A.; Derby County Library; Eccles Public Library; Enugu Regional Library (Eastern Region, Nigeria); Ghana Library Service (Eastern Region); Hampstead Public Libraries; Holborn Public Libraries; Johannesburg Public Libraries; Kensington Public Libraries; Leeds City Art Gallery; Liverpool Public Library; Manchester Libraries Committee; New Orleans Public Library, U.S.A.; Nottingham City Libraries; Sheffield Public Library; Stratford-upon-Avon Public Library; Toronto Public Library, Canada; The University of London Institute of Education Library; Vancouver Public Library; Warwick County Library; Worcester County Library; Wrexham Public Library.

To the Royal Geographical Society, London, for permission to reprint extensively from the report on the treatment of maps.

To Messrs. Dexion (Plate 36); Libraco (Plates 37, 38, 39, 53, 54, 68, 69, 70); E.K.Z. (Plates 33, 34, 35, 41); Luxfer (Plates 50, 51, 52); Serota (Plates 40, 66, 71); and Sjöstrom (Plates 43, 45, 55).

To the Library Association for permission to use the model Rules and Regulations, and the recommended form of annual statistics.

To the Controller of H.M.S.O. for permission to reproduce the model Bye-laws for Public Libraries, which are Crown copyright.

To the British National Bibliography for the use of a union sheaf catalogue slip.

To W. J. Murison, Esq., F.L.A. for the valuable flow diagram compiled by him for the West Riding County Headquarters and for the Architect's brief in respect of the County Antrim Headquarters.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To Dr. Muriel Lock, B.A., Ph.D., A.L.A., F.R.G.S., F.R.S.A., member of the Society of Indexers, for preparing certain drawings for the block-maker, for compiling the Index, helping with proof reading and for invaluable assistance throughout the whole writing of this book.

R.N.L.



## INTRODUCTION

A COMPARISON of this and previous editions is instructive as showing the development of ideas in library practice. When in 1903 James Duff Brown published his *Manual of Library Economy* it was hailed by eager library workers everywhere as the first comprehensive treatise on its subject, with the possible exception of Arnim Graesel's *Grundzüge der Bibliothekslehre* which had appeared at Leipzig thirteen years before and was also available in a French translation by Jules Lande as the *Manuel de Bibliothéconome*, published in Paris in 1897. Even America had no comparable work. Brown was familiar with that admirable book, and the order of his own work bears some resemblance to it, but Graesel was mainly concerned with university and national libraries, and Brown desired to concentrate into one volume what was found to be the most useful methodology of the public library as we Anglo-Saxon people know it; British conditions guided and influenced him, and the grave financial limitations imposed on rate supported libraries are clearly reflected throughout the Manual. The successive editions of the work show the very gradual enlargement that the British attitude of mind towards libraries has undergone; but, be it remarked, most of the modern developments were foreseen and even advocated by Brown. Not a page of the original now remains, but the book was his, and his name will always be associated with it.

‘This manual,’ said Brown in 1903, ‘does not attempt to record all the conventions and traditions of the older librarianship, nor does it pretend to describe all the ideas and methods of modern librarianship. It endeavours to collect and summarise some of the best and most vital methods which have been adopted, and to arrange them in such divisions as may tend to give the book a systematic form, and so place the study of library economy on a more consistent and scientific basis than heretofore. . . .’

In a text-book such as this, dealing mainly with broad principles, it has not been thought desirable to notice every detail of library routine work, nor to mention every appliance which has been introduced. To do so thoroughly would extend this manual to many times its present size. Nevertheless, the work gives an adequate view of every department of modern librarianship, and, in addition, provides hundreds of references to periodical and other literature, from which further information may be gathered.’

It is clearly impossible to compass all librarianship in detail in a single work; the very much greater variety of library services since Brown's time would alone make this unrealistic. But it is possible still to give a



practical general account which shall be the groundwork of specialised development.

Hence this new edition will be found to deal with the fundamental practices to which the normal public library conforms. Under every heading whole monographs might be and are written, and this work invites criticism in that attempting to cover a wide field, mere superficiality has resulted. This would be to mistake the aim and execution of the work, which is as much to stimulate study and discussion by the recording of the best and most fruitful practices of current British librarianship as to offer indications as to the literature in which both the underlying principles and alternative methods may be found.

The tendency towards specialisation in such a varied profession as librarianship is strong, and it is at times hard to see the ground common to the widely varying types of libraries, but, underlying every different library is the same basic need for organisation of books and service to readers. No matter for what specialised body of reader the library has been formed, problems of acquisition, arrangement, storage, display and utilisation will arise. These are perennial problems, universal in their manifestation; no true librarian will be likely to find such a work as this entirely irrelevant to his daily work, and the body of trained librarians, greater far than in Brown's time, may well find here some stimulus towards discussion. If this be so, the present editor will be more than satisfied.

It would not be seemly to end this Introduction without some acknowledgement to those who have made this new edition possible. On previous occasions graceful tribute was paid to the lifelong debt owed by the Editor to the 'onlie begetter of this work', James Duff Brown and to those who were his coadjutors, critics and aids, L. Stanley Jast, 'who was always devising something, Arthur W. Lambert, the designer of many library appliances, and William Fortune, the trained librarian who became the business man of the library equipment world.'

To these the present Editor would wish to add firstly the name of that editor himself, W. C. Berwick Sayers. All those who had the privilege of working as part of the Croydon staff will remember the ideals of librarianship which were an integral part of our daily working life. A tradition derived from Brown himself, strengthened by the virile influences of Jast and Savage, culminated in a library service to readers of a peculiarly personal and human nature. If ever a library was to be found truly integrated as part of the community, it was surely there, and a better training ground can hardly be imagined.

Next the thanks of the Editor go to the numerous librarians throughout the world, who have consciously or unconsciously stimulated thought by personal conversations, correspondence or by the printed word. To detail these by name would be impossible; and a general offering of thanks is the only, though inadequate, return that can be made.



Two of my colleagues at the Birmingham School of Librarianship have been particularly generous in their assistance during the preparation of this edition: Graham Jones, M.A., F.L.A., F.L.A.I., who wrote Chapters VIII, IX, XVI and XVII, and E. S. Fox, F.L.A., who collaborated with me in Chapters VII, X and XV. I am most grateful for contributions of such central importance to the book as a whole, representing as they do, in permanent form, the substance of endless discussions and the vital interchange of ideas in which we have so freely joined for the past five years or more. This is, perhaps, the truest form of collaboration and no editor could wish for more. Norman Roberts, B.A.(Econ.), F.L.A., a more recent colleague, has contributed a much-appreciated section in Chapter X from his experience of work with a local history collection; and F. Hughes, F.L.A. valuable information on financial and other matters based on his experience when Librarian of Cannock.

To each and all of these, my sincere thanks.

R. N. L.

Birmingham  
Llangollen 1960