

LINCOLN LORE

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A DISREGARDED CLASSIFICATION OF LINCOLNIANA

Collections of literature which are confined to restricted fields of history and biography, usually designated as special libraries, present some classification problems which do not to any great extent confront the general libraries. Working within a circumscribed area of printed information, induces one to break down into diversified units, categories which usually go undisturbed in the broader cataloging projects. This attitude is especially noticeable in attempting to classify literary productions as they are separated into different types of published formats.

Where an exhaustive effort is made to gather all varieties of printed items available, the bibliography becomes a very necessary vehicle, not only as a measuring rod for accepted items but also as a check list for gathering subsequent wants. However its limitations are evident when it confines its listings to books and pamphlets.

In the highly specialized field of Lincolniana there is one large accumulation of data, a single piece of paper printed on both sides, which has largely been disregarded by all bibliographers. This is a sort of nondescript class of literature, which should be given some degree of respectability by the use of a descriptive title, that will leave no doubt as to its identity. Bibliographers completely ignore it and collectors of the printed aristocrat—the broadside—will have nothing to do with it.

Possibly the reason for the casting aside of this really worthwhile item may be traced to the unfortunate choice of a name by which it is known in the A. L. A. Glossary of Library Terms. Here it is called a "broadsheet" and described as "a single sheet publication with each side printed as a single page." The hesitancy to make general use of the term "broadsheet" arises from the fact that hardly without an exception, dictionaries and encyclopedias define a "broadsheet" as similar to a "broadside," universally considered as a sheet printed on but one side.

Here are a few definitions and their sources which reveal the interchangeable status of the two terms.

Broadsheet—Print. A broadside. *Webster*.

Broadsheet—A large sheet of paper forming a single page or printed on one side only. *Century Dictionary*.

Broadsheet—A large sheet of paper printed on one side only. Broadside. *Oxford*.

Broadside—A sheet of paper printed on one side only, forming one large page. Broadsheet. *Oxford*.

Broadside—Sometimes termed broadsheet. *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

Broadside—Sometimes called a broadsheet. *Encyclopedia Americana*.

As far as we have been able to observe none of the standard works define a "broadsheet" as having a printed text on both sides of the sheet. All seem to be in agreement that it should have printing on but one side. It is a fair conclusion that the general public accepts as factual the definitions appearing in these recognized sources of authority. There is little prospect that the works above cited will change their definitions to agree with the A. L. A. Glossary.

The Library of Congress was approached to discover the practice there in cataloging a sheet of paper printed on both sides. The chief of the Descriptive Catalogue Division stated that "the Library of Congress has not found it necessary to set apart such printed matter or to give it a special designation. It is described in our descriptive cataloging simply as two pages."

Desiring to learn whether or not the term "broadsheet" is used with any consistency in designating a sheet printed on both sides, reply cards were sent to fifty leading libraries and catalogers. From these replies it is apparent that the majority of librarians do use the term "broadsheet" or an abbreviated term "sheet." The simple designation (2) p. is used—brackets indicate pages not numbered—where the term itself is not cited. Three of the largest libraries however, use the term "leaf" instead of "broadsheet" or "sheet."

The greatest confusion exists among catalogers who edit booklets for auction and private sale. The *Manual of Procedure American Imprints Inventory* states, "A broadsheet is a sheet printed on both sides," which coincides with the A. L. A. Glossary. Only two of the dozen editors replying, use the term "broadsheet" without further description. One well known cataloger qualifies the term "broadsheet" with "printed on both sides." Over against these more orthodox editors we find two who use "broadside" and three others who qualify "broadside" with "printed on both sides." Two prominent editors use "single leaf, printed on both sides."

Several catalogers replying, acknowledged lack of consistency in referring to this class of literature with these terms being used: "pamphlet," "circular," "1 leaf of text," "one sheet," "two pages," "4 to or over, with imprint," and "2 page leaf."

As has been noted three of the larger libraries use the simple term "leaf" for a single piece of paper printed on both sides and also two of the best known editors of catalogs use the same term. The usage offers an opportunity to arrive at consistency, as the dictionaries are in agreement with the *Century* definition that a "leaf" is: "a single thickness of paper . . . containing two pages, one on the front the other on the back."

The preference for the simple term "leaf" over "broadsheet" or even over a newly coined term such as "broad-leaf" is evident from several viewpoints. The strongest argument in its favor, rests upon the fact that it does not contradict generally accepted definitions which appear in standard dictionaries. The prefix "broad" should be eliminated in any term referring to a piece of paper printed on both sides because of format and content objections. A piece of paper printed on both sides is not intended to be posted on a background. Therefore it does not call for an increase in size of either paper or type. The subject matter does not usually consist of an attack on an individual or a volley directed at a group, so both the size of paper and the internal evidence of the text make the prefix "broad" incongruous.

A committee of the American Library Association which has recently made its "Final Report on the Rules for Descriptive Cataloging" recognizes the difficulty in choosing appropriate terms for "Non-Book Materials." A section on this subject recommends that "the rules for special materials in the general manual be kept as simple as practicable." Few words could be more simple, yet more descriptive, than the word "leaf" and it conveys a definite exclusive idea, in which there need be no confusion or qualifying descriptions.

Several years ago in correspondence with J. Monaghan, editor of the *Lincoln Bibliography*, the question about the status of the orphan two page publication was mentioned and drew this reply from Mr. Monaghan: "I believe that it would be a good idea to take sheets printed on both sides for such an excellent collection as you have at Fort Wayne. In spite of the fact that this form of publication does not fall into a definite category it might be very useful to historians."