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Assessing a Sherlock Holmes Collection

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1. Problem

The Mary Shore Cameron Sherlock Holmes Collection at UNC-Chapel Hill has the following problems:

- The precise holdings of the collection are unknown.
- The strengths/weaknesses of the collection have never been assessed.
- Future developers of the collection would not know which titles to acquire within the collection’s scope.

2. Solution

- Create a shelf list including all the items in the Cameron Collection.
- Identify patterns of holdings to determine strengths and weaknesses of the collection.
- Use Sherlock Holmes bibliographies and other UNC Sherlock Holmes collections to identify areas for collection development.
- Create a desiderata list for future development of collection.

3. Process

Transcribe original shelf list

- Compare shelf list to physical holdings
- Clarify shelf list based on examination of holdings
- Identify holdings patterns within collection
- Identify prominent authors, publishers, and subjects in collection

Conduct research

- Use bibliographic resources to identify specific titles matching holdings patterns

Create desiderata list

- Compare with other UNC Sherlock Holmes collections to avoid duplication
- Create bibliographic list of materials based on research

4. Project Details

- Collection contains over 5,000 individual items
- Collection is not actively developed
- Complete assessment takes over 400 work hours to complete
- Extensive bibliographic resources required for the successful completion of project

5. Results

Creation of the publication “An Assessment of the Mary Shore Cameron Sherlock Holmes Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.”
- Contains the 148 page shelf list
- Contains the 33 page desiderata list
- Contains broad overview of the collection’s holdings with strengths and weaknesses clearly outlined
- Contains detailed description of the assessment process

6. Availability

“An Assessment of the Mary Shore Cameron Sherlock Holmes Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill” is available in the following places:

- The Rare Book Collection at UNC-Chapel Hill: Z8240.R53 2003 Ref
- The Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota
- The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Public Library

Online at:
http://ds.unc.edu/MSpapers/3807.pdf