

To: Gordon Dunsire, Chair, RDA Steering Committee  
From: Francis Lapka, Chair, RSC Rare Materials Working Group  
Subject: Revision of RDA 1.8.1 Numbers Expressed as Numerals or as Words

Related Document: RSC/RareWG/1 Early Printed Resources and Rare Printed Resources

## **Abstract**

This proposal revises the alternative for early printed resources within the general guidelines for numbers expressed as numerals or as words (1.8.1). The proposal recommends three changes:

1. Add numbering within series and numbering within subseries to the list of elements for which numbers are transcribed in the form in which they appear on the source of information.
2. Re-classify the alternative as an exception.
3. Broaden the scope of the alternative/exception so that it also applies to rare printed resources.

## **Justification**

As part of its tasks for 2016, the Rare Materials Working Group was asked to examine RDA guidelines for early printed resources and propose revisions, as needed. For the Early Printed Resources alternative in 1.8.1, the working group identified issues described below.

## **Issues requiring resolution**

### **Issue #1**

A fundamental principle of rare materials cataloging is the transcription of information in the form in which it appears, for any element that is a manifestation statement. Such fidelity of transcription is vital for identification of the manifestation (i.e., to confirm that the manifestation described corresponds to the manifestation sought, or to distinguish between two or more manifestations with the same or similar characteristics)

For transcription of numbers, the alternative for early printed resources in RDA 1.8.1 imperfectly acknowledges this principle. RDA's general guideline in 1.8.1 lists elements in which numbers are to be normalized (by applying RDA 1.8.2 - 1.8.5), while the alternative removes certain elements from this list. For rare materials, 1.8.2 - 1.8.5 should be applied only for elements that are not manifestation statements. In the list of elements given in 1.8.1, only two meet this requirement: Year degree granted (unambiguously) and Copyright date (in its current

RDA treatment, at least). Any other element listed in the general guidelines in 1.8.1 must be re-listed in the alternative for early printed resources. Thus Numbering within series and Numbering within subseries must be added to the alternative. These two elements are added in the changes below.

## Issue #2

The instruction for early printed resources is currently labeled as an *Alternative*. In the description of rare materials, however, this special instruction must always take precedence over the general instruction. Its application is mandatory because the principle of representation is fundamental to a rare materials description. An instruction of this nature is rightly labeled as an *Exception*.

## Issue #3

Transcription of information in the form in which it appears is a fundamental principle of rare materials description for resources manufactured *in any time period*. There is no justification for limiting the alternative/exception to early material. In the changes below, the proposal adds the category “rare printed resources” to the alternative/exception (see also: RSC/Rare WG/1 Early Printed Resources and Rare Printed Resources).

## Impact of the revisions

The recommended revisions will serve user needs to identify how a resource represents itself, which supports the user’s ability to distinguish between variant manifestations. The changes will also make RDA more consistent in its principles for transcription in descriptions of rare materials.

## Changes

*Marked-up version:*

# 1.8 Numbers Expressed as Numerals or as Words

## 1.8.1 General Guidelines

When recording numbers expressed as numerals or words, apply the following guidelines:

- form of numerals (see [1.8.2](#))
- numbers expressed as words (see [1.8.3](#))
- inclusive numbers (see [1.8.4](#))

ordinal numbers (see 1.8.5).

The guidelines at 1.8.2–1.8.5 apply when recording numbers expressed as numerals or as words in the following elements:

- Numeric and/or alphabetic designation of first issue or part of sequence
- Chronological designation of first issue or part of sequence
- Numeric and/or alphabetic designation of last issue or part of sequence
- Chronological designation of last issue or part of sequence
- Alternative numeric and/or alphabetic designation of first issue or part of sequence
- Alternative chronological designation of first issue or part of sequence
- Alternative numeric and/or alphabetic designation of last issue or part of sequence
- Alternative chronological designation of last issue or part of sequence
- Date of production
- Date of publication
- Date of distribution
- Date of manufacture
- Copyright date
- Numbering within series
- Numbering within subseries
- Year degree granted

***Alternative Exception***

**Early printed resources and rare printed resources.** For early printed resources and rare printed resources transcribe numbers expressed as numerals or as words in the form in which they appear on the source of information in the following elements:

- numbering of serials
- date of production
- date of publication
- date of distribution
- date of manufacture
- numbering within series
- numbering within subseries.

When recording numbers expressed as numerals or as words in a transcribed element, transcribe them in the form in which they appear on the source of information. Apply the general guidelines on transcription (see 1.7), as applicable.

## EXAMPLE

Fifty key literary theorists

Title proper

55 places to discover your favourite tea

Other title information

*Clean-copy version:*

## 1.8 Numbers Expressed as Numerals or as Words

### 1.8.1 General Guidelines

When recording numbers expressed as numerals or words, apply the following guidelines:

- form of numerals (see [1.8.2](#))
- numbers expressed as words (see [1.8.3](#))
- inclusive numbers (see [1.8.4](#))
- ordinal numbers (see [1.8.5](#)).

The guidelines at [1.8.2–1.8.5](#) apply when recording numbers expressed as numerals or as words in the following elements:

- Numeric and/or alphabetic designation of first issue or part of sequence
- Chronological designation of first issue or part of sequence
- Numeric and/or alphabetic designation of last issue or part of sequence
- Chronological designation of last issue or part of sequence
- Alternative numeric and/or alphabetic designation of first issue or part of sequence
- Alternative chronological designation of first issue or part of sequence
- Alternative numeric and/or alphabetic designation of last issue or part of sequence
- Alternative chronological designation of last issue or part of sequence
- Date of production
- Date of publication
- Date of distribution
- Date of manufacture
- Copyright date
- Numbering within series
- Numbering within subseries

Year degree granted

### **Exception**

**Early printed resources and rare printed resources.** For early printed resources and rare printed resources, transcribe numbers expressed as numerals or as words in the form in which they appear on the source of information in the following elements:

- numbering of serials
- date of production
- date of publication
- date of distribution
- date of manufacture
- numbering within series
- numbering within subseries.

When recording numbers expressed as numerals or as words in a transcribed element, transcribe them in the form in which they appear on the source of information. Apply the general guidelines on transcription (see [1.7](#)), as applicable.

#### **EXAMPLE**

Fifty key literary theorists

Title proper

55 places to discover your favourite tea

Other title information

### **Other changes in RDA**

This proposal does not affect other instructions or references to/from other instructions.

### **Changes to the RDA Element Set**

No changes needed.