Reading call numbers is like finding a street address.

A call number is a code given to a book or magazine that tells the general subject matter as well as identifying each book in the library.

The following will help you understand the code:

- **MAR** — location symbol (what library it is in)
- **PR1347** — class number (indicates subject)
- **B48** — book number (includes date of publishing)

The call number can be written as follows:

- **PR1347 B48 2004 c.2**
- **PR1347.B48.2004 c.2**
- **PR1347 B48 2004 c.2**

Volumes are arranged on the shelves:

1. Alphabetically by the letter(s) at the start of the call number. The letters come from the Library of Congress classification system.
   - **Ex:** A (before) AE (before) B (before) BF

2. Then, numerically by the numbers that follow:
   - **Ex:** A6 A23 B299 BF3 BF35

3. Next, in alphabetical and decimal order by the second letter/number combination. On a catalog card or on the book this letter/number combination would be the second line of the call number.
   - **Ex:** B1875 C28
   - **This combination is arranged as if the number following the letter were a decimal.**
   - **Ex:** B1875 (.0)C6

4. Then, by date of publication. Not all call numbers end in a year. Dates are added to the call number only when a new edition is published or an earlier work is reprinted.
   - **Ex:** BF1875 BF1875 BF1875 C28 C28 C28 1970 1979