
EX LIBRIS NEWS

Newsletter of the Ex Libris Association

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EDITOR'S NOTES

The contents of this number come from a variety of sources and we are grateful to the authors for their contributions.

The two papers from the Hamilton conference, the philosophical and the practical, will we hope be followed in our next number by J. Catharine Greenfield's account of the research for and writing of her commemorative history of The Hamilton Public Library, 1889-1963. (Available from the Public Relations Department, Hamilton Public Library, P.O. Box 2700, Hamilton, ON, L8N 4E4. \$19.95 + \$1.75 shipping).

On a more personal note Roberta Weiner recollects the trials and tribulations, but especially the joys of being on the cutting edge of county library influence on education in Ontario. To keep us in tune with the times we are pleased to print the address on paper deterioration by John Clouston of the University of Western Ontario Library System.

And of course the regular features. A mixed bag for summer reading - enjoy!
(Contributions for the Fall issue will be welcome before 15 September, 1990.)

JFM

MEMBERSHIP

As of January 26, 1990, the Association had 78 regular members, 12 sustaining members and 8 life members; two subscriptions for the News had also been received.

Approximately 40 1989 members had not yet renewed for 1990 at that date. The 1989 mailing list has been used for this issue of the News. However to keep within the limits imposed by the Association's income, the next issue (Fall 1990) will be sent only to paid up members and subscribers.

On the topic of membership the Board of Directors is naturally interested in ways and means of informing already retired or on the verge of retirement persons "whose career has been chiefly in libraries ... or publishing, or in books or related fields..." of the existence of the Association. Current members are exhorted to talk up the Association with their former colleagues and employers through local and provincial newsletters and so on. At present the Association is heavily Ontario oriented but a truly national association is the goal, with Ex Libris News reflecting this with contributions (even letters to the Editor) from sea to sea.

Revision of By-Law concerning membership fees

At the Annual Meeting By-Law # 1 was amended to provide for three categories of personal membership fees:

Regular membership	\$ 10.00
Sustaining membership	\$ 20.00
Life membership	\$200.00
Annual Subscription to <u>Ex Libris News</u>	\$ 20.00

The Board was directed to develop an long term investment policy for life memberships so that income only will be used for current operations.

EX LIBRIS ASSOCIATION: Fourth Annual General Meeting

The Association met in Hamilton at the Convention Center on Thursday, November 9, 1989, in conjunction with the beginning sessions of the Ontario Library Association's 87th annual conference held at the Center.

Peter Rogers, President of OLA, brought greetings to Ex Libris members from the Ontario Library Association. Members were also welcomed by Margaret Andrewes, Coordinator of the Ontario Library Association Strategic Plan and by Elizabeth Hoffman who chairs the Ontario Public Library Strategic Planning Group. Ms Hoffman briefly outlined the work being undertaken to develop a strategic plan for public libraries in Ontario and urged Ex Libris members to become involved by studying the forthcoming draft report and providing comments.

Lachlan MacRae chaired the morning and afternoon program sessions which related to the theme of library history. In the morning Dr Bernd Frohmann, Professor at SLIS, UWO, gave a talk entitled, "The Importance of History to Librarianship" and Katharine Greenfield, retired head of Special Collections at the Hamilton Public Library, spoke on "Writing Library History - the Hamilton Public Library". In the afternoon, the National Librarian, Dr Marianne Scott, spoke on "The National Library and Library History". The talks by Drs Scott and Frohmann are printed in this issue of the News.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY TO LIBRARIANSHIP: by Bernd Frohmann, School of Library and Information Science, The University of Western Ontario

My topic is, in general, history and librarianship, and their interrelations. But I would like first to extend the liberty usually granted speakers and change, at what is now the twelfth rather than the eleventh hour, the title of my talk. Grammatically, this change is quite minor, since it affects only the prepositions of my announced title. The topic I would like to discuss with you is really the importance of the history of librarianship, or the importance of the kind of history relevant to librarianship, or to library studies.

The reason I think the topic important is that the history of libraries and librarianship is sometimes taken to be little more than the hobbies of woolly eccentrics, those curious folk concerned with marginal topics quite outside the mainstream of historical reflection. Where "real" historians concern themselves with the primary determinants of social, economic and political change, historians of librarianship, according to this view, pursue harmless curiosities, such as chronologies of libraries, their contents, their associated technologies, and the narratives of famous and

infamous librarians. These topics might be thought to have no very deep historical significance, if it is assumed that learning about the historical changes brought to light by historians of librarianship are outside the realm of genuine historical dynamics.

I would like to challenge this assumption, and to suggest a more important role for the history of librarianship. I think I can develop this theme, the question of what the study of history of librarianship does for us, what kind of understanding it gives us, by taking three very simple steps. Two of these steps are, I hope you will agree, quite uncontroversial. As for the third, if you find it somewhat controversial, you may derive some comfort in the knowledge that it enjoys the benefit of much argument and support in scholarly literatures of diverse disciplines.

The first and most uncontroversial step is simply to expand the scope of librarianship to reflect contemporary practices. You will find among the several OED definitions of "Library" the two

following statements: (1) "A place set apart to contain books for reading, study, or reference", and (2) ". . . a public institution or establishment, charged with the care of a collection of books, and the duty of rendering the books accessible to those who require to use them." I think you will agree that a keyword in these two OED definitions is "books". But I think you will also agree that it has become necessary in our time to expand the definition of "library" to include reference not only to books, but also to other media forms. These include not only alternate forms of printed matter, for example, pamphlets, leaflets, maps, broadsides, company reports, periodicals, vertical file materials, and so on, but also to include non-print materials, for example, audio tapes and cassettes, video tapes and cassettes, films, electronic texts, databases, computer programs, that is, the whole broad and ever-expanding range of non-print materials now brought under our control by the methods of librarianship.

We can therefore update the OED definitions to reflect contemporary practices simply by changing "books" to "documents", with the understanding that "documents" refers to the whole range of materials indicated by the examples just mentioned. I emphasize what you may justifiably consider a quite obvious step because I want to draw attention to the variety of media forms falling within the scope of librarianship. Librarianship is concerned with all forms of material records, or "information media" of all kinds.

Let me introduce my second step by directing your attention to another obvious point. It is that there are two aspects of librarianship, or the concern with "documents" (in our expanded sense), or with "information media" of various sorts.

The first aspect concerns the design, testing, implementation, use, and maintenance of the tools, techniques, and procedures of document storage, retrieval, access, and preservation. I refer here, of course, to the traditional practical aspect of librarianship.

But another aspect consists in reflection on the nature and significance of the objects of these tools, techniques, and procedures. I refer here to an informed, disciplined or structured appreciation of the importance of the documents (again, in our expanded sense) so carefully tended by the methods of librarianship.

These two aspects of librarianship are of course related, because the fundamental assumption of all the attention lavished on documents by the techniques and tools is that the documents are important, and that they merit the attention we give them. If, therefore, we can agree that a librarianship worthy of the name includes reflection on the nature, purposes and significance of the documents in its care, a pressing question arises quite directly: What form is this reflection to take?

I suggest, and I come now to my second and, I hope, equally uncontroversial step, that a part, at least, of this reflection is historical in character. I would go further to suggest that historical reflection is an essential part of the meditation on the nature and significance of the documents in the care of the techniques and practices of librarianship. It is necessary, for a disciplined and informed appreciation of these documents, to cultivate an historical understanding of the genesis of documents, their development, their transformations, and their relations to their historical context. The object of this kind of historical reflection is what I mean by "the history of librarianship". It is the importance of this kind of history that I wish to establish in my following remarks.

The third step, which is perhaps more controversial, consists in the assertion that the forms of documents, or the characteristics of the medium of a document, are not neutral but have their own effects, impose their own limitations, have their own potentialities, and interact with their cultural, economic, social and political contexts in their own determinate way. That is, it makes a determinable difference, whether culturally, socially, economically or politically, whether dominant media forms are cuneiform tablets written in Akkadian script, or papyrus rolls

written in a phonetic alphabet, whether the text is in the form of a codex, or a handwritten manuscript produced in the medieval scriptorium, or a product of the printing press, or a satellite broadcast, or a transmission by computer.

The thesis, in short, is that the form of the medium has an effect more or less significant (according to the theorist consulted), than the content it carries. This thesis is perhaps best explained by contrast to its alternative. The alternative view is that only content matters. This view often takes the form that ideas are the only important historical determinants, and that ideas form the contents of documents, whatever media form the document may take. Documents, therefore, enter into really important histories only as neutral conveyors of what really matters, and that is their content. This view may be expressed as the claim that the form of the pipe isn't important, just what it carries, or, it doesn't matter whether you drink your whisky from crystal or an old fruit jar, the effect is still the same.

The consequence of this traditional view is to marginalize history in librarianship. Since other disciplines study what is really historically significant, that is the content of documents, history in librarianship, paying attention to document forms, is relegated to the recording of mere curiosities. It becomes simply a chronological enumeration of libraries, their objects, their associated technologies of document production, storage, and retrieval, and the prominent personalities of the profession. It may be admitted that the area includes many interesting topics, such as the development from cuneiform tablets to the papyrus roll to the codex, to the uses of written materials in Greece, Rome, the Orient and the Arabic world, to the study of the medieval scriptorium to the output of the printing press, and finally to the age of "communication" (the welding of satellite technology and computers), while still maintaining that these transformations do not constitute major historical determinants.

The opposite view, which I mean to promote and which, happily for my purposes, gains more and more ground in contemporary historical

studies, finds historical significance in the form of the medium of the dominant communication technologies in a given historical period, and finds in their transformations important and determinable historical dynamics.

The most extreme case of this view, which is exemplary not for its rigour but for defining and sharpening the issues, is that of McLuhan and his followers, who would argue, in the case of television for example, that the effects of content, whether it be violence or too scantily-clad people in too close proximity, are as nothing compared to the effects of the form of the medium, or of the properties that distinguish it from, for example, the printed page. More moderate claims and more rigorous and scholarly analyses are increasingly in evidence, whether one thinks of Innis's reflections on the space and time biases of various media (heavy material not easily transportable, such as stone or clay, tend to favour decentralized city-states, whereas a light and easily portable material, such as papyrus, favours a centre-to-margin political organization and the spread of empire, such as the Roman); or of Eisenstein's masterly historical investigations, inspired by McLuhan's intemperate claims, of the effects of the printing press; or of the very recent analyses made available by several French scholars in the third volume of the recently-published series *History of Private Life*, where the printing press is seen as crucial to the development of privacy and individual reflection, by means of its enhancement of the spread of silent reading, which provided a private participation in a new range of experience.

This third step, that the form of the medium is not neutral but rather has primary historical significance, together with the previous two steps I have emphasized, shifts the kind of history that pertains to librarianship into a privileged position. It does so because, first, we have widened the scope of librarianship to encompass a broad variety of media; second, we have assumed that historical reflection upon these media forms is essential to librarianship; and finally, we have reason to believe that these forms themselves, quite apart from the

content they convey, are significant historical determinants.

I would now like to illustrate, by three examples, the significance of media transformations, according to some recent thinkers. The first is the transformation from oral to written information media. The claim made for this transformation, and I think you'll agree that it's very important if it can be supported, is that this media shift expedites the development of abstract thought. To see this, consider the means of information storage and retrieval in an oral, pre-literate culture. How does an oral medium store text for retrieval? Studies of Homeric poetry and Yugoslavian folk epics suggest that storage and retrieval depend upon devices enabling recall, such as rhyme, rhythm, narrative, repetition of themes & formulae, use of drama, and highly contextualized language. We use these devices today with children who can't yet read and write. We make a moral point, not by asserting an abstract ethical principle, but by telling a fable, such as that of the ant and the grasshopper. Practitioners of non-print media such as television, whom McLuhan called "the frogmen of the mind", employ similar techniques.

The point is that all of the devices used to store and retrieve information must appeal to the ear rather than to the eye. The nature of the medium therefore imposes limitations upon what can be stored and retrieved. This medium does not readily support abstract, decontextualized arguments, concepts, and the syntactic forms peculiar to them, such as subordinate grammatical relations.

Writing, by contrast, frees text from the mnemonic restrictions imposed by the purely oral medium. There is far less need for devices enabling recall when the text is fixed in space by writing. In addition, new principles of textual organization are available. These are visual, architectural, and spatial principles, as opposed to the purely temporal principles of rhyme and rhythm. An example comes from the archaeological record of ancient Sumeria, where written lists

of various kinds of articles were common. Consider a row-column type of visual organization, with names of plants in rows and names of kinds in columns. If the game is to indicate by a mark the category to which an item belongs, for example whether a particular plant is a weed or a flower, then the written medium forces a rather different kind of decision than does the oral medium. In the oral world, the decision is made in and with reference to a particular context, and is always negotiable and subject to qualification and retraction. The written medium, by contrast, and by virtue of the permanence of its mark and the spatial organization of the chart, supports the formulation of decontextualized, that is, abstract definitions, in support of the more permanent inscription of a mark that must be placed in only one of the squares provided.

Consider too that easy mastery of the figures of the syllogism, for example, "All X is Y, A is X, A is Y", relies upon recognition of visual patterns. They also depend upon the notion of substitution which, although possible to convey by the oral medium, is greatly facilitated by a visual medium, where substitution is easily illustrated by replacing one symbol with another in the same place on the writing material. Writing is a technology characterized by many techniques and procedures which we come to take as paradigmatic of rational thought in general.

My second example is the transformation of writing systems from syllabaries to the phonetic alphabet. Writing systems are themselves technologies, or media, and it has often been claimed that they are far from neutral conveyors of content. This transformation is interpreted as a transition from communal and tribal expression to individual expression. Again, if the case can be supported, I think you will agree that the issue here is of no small importance.

To see the point, let us consider Eric Havelock's example of the phrase "Jack and Jill ran down the hill". In a syllabary, because there is no way of representing the differences between the possible vowel sounds that might fit between the "J" and

the "K" of "Jack", or the "J" and the "L" of "Jill", the written version allows of ambiguity between, say, "Jack" and "Jeek", or "Jyke", or "Jock", and similarly for the written sign for "Jill". But there is no problem in interpreting these signs when the phrase "Jack and Jill ran down the hill" is such a familiar oral formula of the culture that no other possibility of interpretation presents itself. Hence a syllabic writing system depends, so it is claimed, upon a well-established set of oral formulae to properly interpret the text written in it. It is therefore restricted to recording the culture's familiar formulae, usually those controlled by elites for their own maintenance and preservation. It would be virtually impossible, in the example given, for someone to communicate a story about her friends Jock and Jull running down the hill, when neither Jock nor Jull figure in familiar oral formulae.

The phonetic alphabet, by contrast, that wonderful invention of the Greeks, is a more efficient technology of word recognition, allowing a more precise record of whatever is said. Its separation of vowels and consonants and its free combination of a very small set of letters frees it from the syllabary's dependence upon oral formulae. The alphabet's capacity for recording individual voices is the basis of the claim by Eric Havelock and others that the values of Greek culture, those taken as the foundation of our civilization, depend upon the phonetic alphabet.

My third example is the transformation in Europe from the handwritten manuscript to the printed book. I'd like to consider just one of the many interwoven threads of this complex issue, and that is the effects of one unique property of the printed page: standardization. In the medieval scriptorium, measures had to be taken to prevent textual drift. One page, one book, differed from another due to the irrepressible variants attendant upon handwritten methods of book production.

The printed page, by contrast, provided, after a suitable stage of development, a standardized text, or what is often referred to as "typographical fixity". The important point about typographical

fixity is that textual development and advance depends upon it. No matter how inaccurate the first rendering in print of a botanical specimen, a part of the human anatomy, or a geographical region on a map, typographical fixity permits progressive corrections. Scribal corrections, by contrast, are easily lost through handwritten methods of production. Systematic progress depends upon a medium that justifies confidence that small improvements be preserved as steps toward further advances. Early publishers of encyclopedias, quickly realizing the commercial value of corrected, revised and improved texts, vigorously solicited reader's corrections for later editions. Print licensed that trust in documents which laid the foundations of scientific advance. One could now, due to standardized texts, and in contrast to the medieval handwritten book, discuss by correspondence the text on a specified line on a specified page of books far removed in space. Again, I think you will agree that if the point can be made, and Elizabeth Eisenstein mounts an impressive case for it, that modern science depends on the printing press, then the type of history relevant to librarianship becomes a record, not of insignificant curiosities, but of major historical determinants. I hope to have shown by these examples the importance of the history of the kinds of objects treated by the methods and procedures of librarianship. Should you have any doubts whether this history really belongs to librarianship, I leave the final word to LCSH, which classifies this history in the Z's.

I conclude with a brief recapitulation. If you are willing to walk with me the three short steps I have indicated, first, to expand the scope of librarianship to include a variety of information media; second, to include history as an essential part of reflective librarianship; and finally to acknowledge the historical consequences of media forms, then the history of the objects treated by librarianship is central to understanding historical dynamics.

The challenge of our historical studies in librarianship, of course, is not simply to increase the number of books in our libraries, but to employ

the understanding we gain from it to better comprehend the often mysterious configurations presented by our own electronic age.

NO TIME FOR HISTORY: by Marianne Scott, National Library of Canada

The task you have assigned to me -- to tell you of resources in Ottawa relating to Canadian library history -- is a pleasant one. But it is somewhat of a challenge as well, given that my audience consists of colleagues and friends with long-standing interest in library history, some of whom now have a bit more time to pursue this interest.

As we all know only too well, the pace at which most events occur leaves little time to put things into historical perspective. Dealing with the present is difficult enough! The mountain of paper that most librarians cope with daily does not incline them to consider how relevant this material might be to future historians. What, of all the memoranda, letters, publicity, and communiques, could be significant? Who, one might ask, will be the keepers of our corporate memory? As we go through the yearly ritual of the annual report, or document the progress of a project, we may be doing our part, but most of the paper we receive or generate gets bundled off to departmental records and, eventually, to archives without benefit of clear signposts about future historical interest. Few of us have control over what is kept once it is out of our hands.

Today I shall tell you about some of the library history resources in Ottawa from my own perspective. This means that I shall describe those at the National Library in some detail, and outline facilities at the National Archives of Canada and in other government departments more briefly. As the Canadian legal depository, the National Library has as its mandate the acquisition and preservation of all Canadian publications, and the responsibility to make them accessible to the nation. This includes not only publications produced in Canada, but those by Canadian writers living abroad, and those having Canadian content.

This means that there should be, in the National Library, at least one copy of every Canadian journal, newsletter, report and monograph published since the Library gained its legal depository status. An active program to acquire retrospective materials is now attempting to fill gaps in serials runs and other formats.

An in-depth examination of the Library's mission was begun in 1986. The results of this study were published in a document distributed by the Library entitled Orientations: A Planning Framework for the 1990s (Ottawa, 1988).

Two developments of the "Orientations" process are relevant to Canadian library history. The first is that the Library Documentation Centre, the resource centre for information on library and information science, was reorganized to include two other units of the Library, the Federal Libraries Liaison Office (FLLO), which has served as a consultative and coordinating body for federal government libraries since 1967, and the Library Service for Disabled Persons, which provides information and advice to libraries serving persons with all forms of disability. In August 1989 the Library Documentation Centre changed its name to the Library Development Centre.

By pooling staff with expertise and knowledge of different aspects of library service, and increasing the Centre's liaison activities with persons in all types of libraries, we expect that the new LDC will not only maintain the type of information and advisory services that have been available in the past, but broaden and improve them. By having the staff visit library schools, provincial library agencies and other organizations, the Library will increase the likelihood of acquiring more of the grey literature that makes

LDC such an important resource centre for background material.

The second development was a redefinition of the Library's heritage role. Several years ago, the Library recognized that the original definition of this role - that the Library is to act as a national repository of information in the social sciences and humanities from the major countries of the world - was impossible to realize. The Library does not have the funds, space or staff for the level of collection-building this definition implied. Accordingly, the Library is now attempting to build a comprehensive collection of Canadiana and to develop research-level collections in selected areas that will support Canadian Studies. It will also continue to support some special collections and subject areas at a research level. One of these subject areas is library and information science, so that the support services that LDC has provided to the library community since its establishment can be maintained.

The Library Documentation Centre was formally established in 1970 under Mrs. Marion Wilson; in 1973, Dr. Beryl Anderson was appointed Chief. The Centre's active program - to acquire, organize and index documentation on library and information science, and to gather anything it could dealing with Canadian libraries of all types - continues to this day. The Centre maintains extensive vertical files arranged by subject, type of library and, in some cases, specific library name. From the beginning it has indexed at least 100 publications, including newsletters, journals, reports, typescripts and other documents. Of these, only 16 were indexed by the commercial indexing services, such as Library Literature. Before 1986, cross-indexing was handled by making multiple photocopies of first or title pages of every item and filing them into subject files.

Although indexing of the library science literature has improved immeasurably since the early seventies, a large amount of information on Canadian libraries is still not accessible through the commercial databases or printed indexes. For this reason, LDC staff members scan all

publications received. LDC subscribes to a press clipping service that provides information on libraries in communities all over the country as well as on library developments in general. It also has standing orders for newsletters, communiques, report and bibliography series, accessions lists, and many other types of material issued by provincial library agencies, library boards, library associations, and libraries. LDC continues to index any publications not indexed in LISA, Library Literature, Information Science Abstracts or ERIC. It does in-depth indexing of Canadian items in all the journals and other publications it scans -- approximately 150 titles.

Other forms of material acquired by the Library Development Centre are consultants' reports, collections development and library policies, job descriptions, and similar types of information that could be useful to librarians and others. To assist librarians in planning orientation and user education programs, it maintains files of materials that could be used as examples -- handbooks, guides, and accessions lists.

Since 1986 the Centre has maintained an in-house database management system using InMagic software that provides access to the many types of materials received at LDC. It indexes the monographs, journals and reports shelved in National Library stacks, as well as the grey literature, manuscripts, news items, tapes, and other materials held in the Centre. The database now includes 14,900 records, and has become a first-step searching tool for most of the reference questions LDC receives.

If we do a typical and very simple search (combining the word "history" and the geographical code "Canada") we retrieve 107 references. A quick glance at some of them gives some idea of the types of information this database includes.

- "15 years. Our Presidents look back." NSLA News. (Nova Scotia Library Association)

- "75th anniversary Edmonton Public Library." Letter of the Library Association of Alberta.

- An analytic of a chapter in Peter McNally's Readings in Canadian Library History.

- Bell, Grant. "Shelburne Public Library 1912-1987." Free Press and Economist.

Being familiar with the results of most online searches, you will probably note that the relevance rate of these references is very high. All deal with some aspect of Canadian library history.

Not only has this computerized index greatly reduced the time required to locate relevant information, it has also cut down drastically the amount of material being photocopied and filed. The manual system, involving at least one sheet in each of several files for every piece of information, meant that many of the files were becoming extremely voluminous, with the usual problems associated with large vertical file collections: misfiled or lost sheets of paper, disarranged folders, and deterioration of older materials.

LDC's historical resources were enriched when the Canadian Library Association turned over its files to the Public Archives of Canada. At that time, Dr. Anderson and two other persons went through the ten or twelve cartons of material the Archives did not wish to keep and selected everything pertaining to Canadian libraries. This material is now in LDC files, together with a copy of the finding aid the Archives prepared for the CLA collection.

Another item of historical interest is an extensive unpublished bibliography completed in 1975 by Mr. Paul Schwebke, a graduate of the University of Western Ontario. Entitled Canadian Library Resources: A Bibliography, it lists 2,513 references, many of them annotated, from collections in several major Canadian libraries. Copies are available at the Library Development Centre and the Ottawa Public Library.

The Centre has also attempted to acquire information on federal government libraries -- libraries that do not receive frequent coverage in

the literature. A few government libraries publish their own annual reports. Information on libraries is occasionally found in departmental annual reports, published in the Sessional Papers.

To take one example, the first annual report of the Department of Labour for the year ending June 30, 1901, includes a section entitled "The Departmental Library". "An interesting and useful part of the work of the department has been the establishment of a library of labour literature", it begins, and goes on for the next 20 lines to describe the types of materials the Library intends to acquire and the means it will use to do so. It is signed W.L. Mackenzie King, Deputy Minister of Labour. The annual report for the year ending 1902 contains a 29-page "Catalogue of Reports and Other Documents Contained in the Library".

(1) With the merging of the Federal Libraries Liaison Office into the Library Development Centre, additional resources are now more available to researchers. As the coordinating agency for the Council of Federal Libraries, the FLLO collects data on federal government libraries. In 1972 it published the report of its survey on federal government libraries, which was updated manually until 1985. Since then, the data has been maintained in an automated M.I.S. (Management Information System).

In order to respond to requests for information on Canadian library history, the Centre relies heavily on source publications familiar to you all: the CLA Library History Interest Group essays compiled by Peter McNally and published in 1981 and 1986. The first was the "Theme Issue on Canadian Library History" in Canadian Library Journal,(2) and the second was the CLA publication Readings in Canadian Library History.(3) As you are well aware, there is still no single publication dealing with the history of Canadian libraries. Dr. Morton was working on one before her death, and LDC had hoped that her manuscript would be among the papers the Centre acquired when most of the CLA materials were deposited in the Archives. However, it was not there, and its whereabouts are unknown.

The two articles by Elizabeth Morton and Beryl Anderson in the Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science are still important starting-points.(4) Recent issues of the Canadian Library Yearbook (5) include a summary of Canadian library developments from various perspectives. Several of these chapters have been written by National Library staff. The ALA Annual also provides a useful overview of the events of each year.

Canadian Libraries in their Changing Environment(6) is another invaluable collection. LDC has attempted to acquire the publications cited in these historical reviews, and many are there, although you may require some assistance in locating them. (For example, the Aegidius-Fautoux conferences on Quebec library history, published under the Conference imprint, was found with some difficulty because it had been shelved with official publications issued by the Bibliothèque nationale du Québec where the sessions were held.)

Browsing the National Library's automated catalogue DOBIS may well produce items of interest. Because many government documents do not receive full cataloguing, it is advisable to check the title as well as the subject-heading records (title words are permuted in the system). Pre-1980 material should also be searched in the manual card catalogue for the National Library located in the main Reference Room, and in the old Canadian Union Catalogue of Books and Serials on the fourth floor.

Information on library research in Canada is often difficult to find. Beginning with the year 1980/81, LDC has issued: Canadian Library/Information Science Research Projects: A List. It is published annually as a separate document, available without charge from LDC. It also appears bimonthly in the Canadian Library Journal and the CALL (Canadian Association of Law Libraries) Newsletter; and three times a year in National Library News. The information for these lists is gleaned from the many publications LDC scans on a regular basis. As this type of information is

often not covered in the published literature, LDC appreciates learning of any research projects relating to libraries that are ongoing, proposed or completed.

Historical information on government libraries is often available from the library itself, although you will probably wish to use LDC vertical files as a starting-off point. One of the better documented, and one of the oldest, is the library of Agriculture Canada, which was the original legal depository library. (The library dates from 1910, but its collections go back to Confederation.) The library of the Geological Survey of Canada dates back to 1847. To trace its history, one must look at the splitting off of the Department of Mines from the original Department of the Interior, and Mines' reorganization into Energy, Mines and Resources. Some of the oldest parts of the original Geological Survey collection (including the Sir William Logan and George Mercer Dawson collections) were transferred to the Museum of Natural History at one time but are now back at GSC. The chequered history of library collections belonging to the various national museums provides another challenge, as they have undergone amalgamation and separation, periods when they were kept in storage, and multiple changes in the departments responsible for their administration.

The Library of Parliament has probably received more coverage in the published and unpublished literature than any other government library in Canada. Additional background is available at the library itself, integrated into the general collection of clippings and other information files, books and other documents. The library does not have extensive archival material much beyond 1920, and many of their oldest publications are triple-starred to restrict use. Two bibliographies on its history have been issued by research staff: a history of the library itself, and one on the Parliamentary buildings.

The Library of Parliament suggests two possible approaches to its users. As a rule, the library does not serve the general public. It will assist researchers who have been referred by other

libraries, usually to enable them to consult publications unavailable in other libraries. Our Reference and Information Services Division can arrange this for you. Research staff also request that preliminary research be done at another library, i.e., that the Library of Parliament be used as a library of last resort. Secondly, letters of inquiry may be addressed to the Reference and Technical Services Branch, whose head is Margot Montgomery, to establish whether the library can provide the needed information.

Some of the early reports from the Dominion Bureau of Statistics provide a remarkable amount of material on early Canadian libraries, in sharp contrast to the skimpy coverage libraries have received in recent years. The Library Development Centre attempts to acquire bibliographies and report series issued by library schools and libraries, such as those produced by the University of Toronto. Dalhousie University has used its guest-lecturer series to cover library history, and the tapes of these lectures are available in the Centre.

Not to raise your expectations too high, however, it should be pointed out that the Library Development Centre, as a relatively new resource, cannot claim to hold more than a few materials that date before its establishment in the fall of 1970. The resources at universities with major research collections and accredited faculties of library and information science are the principal repositories for older historical material.

Other areas of the National Library providing general information services offer potential sources of information. The main Reference Room contains a very useful card catalogue of the Library's extensive newspaper collection, the Decade File, which lists, by decade, the titles of newspapers published during that period.

Another catalogue, formerly housed in the library of the National Archives, is used occasionally as a last-resort tool by librarians and researchers. Called the "Newspaper Index", it was maintained by the National Archives from 1900

until 1950. (From the 1950s until 1977, when the Canadian Newspaper Index first started publication, clipping files were kept instead.) Archives library staff describe the contents of the catalogue as "highly eclectic", but they also point out that the old newspaper collections, formerly in the Archives, were also very uneven. It is similar to the "where-to-find-it" card indexes libraries used to maintain before the computer did away with cards. The staff who worked on it used their judgment to determine what had historic value and should therefore be indexed, and the headings were based on the titles or keywords of the items indexed rather than on a predetermined thesaurus. An analysis of the index conducted in 1988 showed that approximately 40 publications were cited at least once, twelve of these (the major newspapers of Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, etc.) frequently.

There are about 100 subject drawers. Some of the references go as far back as the 1870s, but the period from the 1920s to the 1940s is most heavily indexed. A quick look under a few headings produced snippets such as the following:

"LIBRARIANS

asked for spicy books. Montreal Gazette, May 17, 1923."

"LIBRARIANS

no capable librarians in Canada. G.H. Locke cannot find a Canadian fit for his assignment. The Beaver, 21-2-29."

"LIBRARIES

Making the world safe for libraries. D. Cameron, Saturday Night, 3-3-1928."

"PUBLIC LIBRARY

Establishment of the Public Library for Montreal. Montreal Herald. 1906-1908."

Only about 40 such items were identified, but they do cover a decidedly under-documented period in library history. An index to the Bvtown Gazette occupies three drawers of the same cabinet, and another set of drawers is labelled "Index to odd issues, 1831-1847". The Archives library

describes these as special issues of newspapers having special historical significance.

The National Library's large collection of Canadian city directories, supplemented by a second major collection in the Archives, also provides an invaluable resource in locating information about individuals, businesses and organizations. Access to these collections has been improved immeasurably by the publication Canadian Directories, 1790-1987: A Bibliography and Place-Name Index, compiled by Mary Bond (Ottawa, National Library of Canada, 1989, 3 volumes), which traces exhaustively the names of cities, townships, counties and districts through two centuries. The work is dedicated to Dorothy Ryder, author of A Checklist of Canadian Directories, 1790-1950, who worked at the National Library for many years.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA

If you have not visited the Archives during the last two or three years, you may find that there have been considerable changes since the former Public Archives of Canada changed its name and effected its major reorganization.

One difference is that the venerable Archives library, whose book catalogue is a staple of many reference collections, is no longer open to the general public as it was in the past. Four departmental libraries have replaced it, named after well-known historians and archivists. The A.G. Doughty Library serves the Historical Resources and Public Programs branches. The D. Brymner Library serves the needs of Personnel Services, Financial and Administrative Services, and Informatics and Records Services. The Gustave Lanctot Library is devoted to the Conservation and Policy branches and also serves the Executive Office (the core of its files is the Photographic Conservation collection). The W.K. Lamb Library serves the Government Records Branch. The libraries' primary role is to serve Archives staff, although the Doughty Library provides information to the Canadian archival community by responding to questions referred from the centralized Reference and Researcher Services

Division, Public Programs Branch.

The library's card catalogue is now located in the Archives Reference Room on the third floor. It contains a few items relating to library history -- for example, a couple of papers by John Hallam, an 1884 catalogue of the Mechanics' Institute of Montreal -- so it might be worth checking.

As you well know, research in Archives requires techniques that are quite different from those used in libraries. Access is through four types of indexes, from the general to the particular: 1) the General Index, 2) the Main Index, 3) Inventories, and 4) Finding Aids. Many of the finding aids are reproduced on microfiche and are available across the country. Inventories provide a brief description, and finding aids more detail. There are very few "see" references, and entries are not uniform.

Archives staff strongly suggest that the published literature be explored thoroughly before the Archives collections are used. As we know, provenance is the determining factor in archives organization, so the more knowledge we have regarding the individual or association we are researching, the more points of access we have in consulting archival indexes. Again, if we are dealing with any governmental organizations, it is necessary to trace departmental and agency histories in order to ensure that all periods are covered. Our Reference Room contains copies of the Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories, lists of the manuscript collections held in the National Archives, and other tools.

The principal library association collection in the Manuscripts Division is undoubtedly that of the Canadian Library Association. It comprises 108 boxes, and includes the papers of Dr. Elizabeth Morton. There is a finding aid for the collection (no. 422). The other two major collections of library associations are from the Canadian Association of Law Libraries, which occupies 4 metres of space. 1.25 metres are described in Finding Aid no. 1431. Papers of the Canadian Association of Map Librarians are held by the

Cartographic and Architectural Archives Division (formerly the National Map Collection).

The Archives at one time intended to acquire a much larger amount of material from library associations, but as there are about 200 to 300 library associations in Canada, decided not to pursue this material actively. The stated reason is that this was the business of the schools of library and information science.

The government records of Dr. Kaye Lamb are in Federal Records Centres. The finding aid for the Annual Reports produced during his tenure as Dominion Archivist/ National Librarian is no. 1644, but his personal papers are not in a public repository. Dr. Sylvestre's personal papers, dealing largely with his work as journalist, writer and literary scholar rather than librarian, are in the Literary Manuscript Collection of the National Library.

SOME ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Library history in Canada suffers from problems of time and space: time, because being a librarian is at least a full-time job, so that the research and writing required usually has to be done in spare moments, and space, because most librarians operate in facilities with restricted storage capacities.

In his foreword to Readings in Canadian Library History, Peter McNally wrote that the essays, despite their breadth and depth, "do not constitute anything other than an introduction. Still awaiting appearance are much basic research plus syntheses which will interpret the main elements of the field for a general audience." (7)

Library history, like other humanities subjects, is undoubtedly a poor relation in the curricula of most schools of library and information science, which are tending more and more to concentrate on information technology and management courses. Sources of library history are too frequently scattered, unrecorded or lost. There is no question that a great deal of useful information continues to exist in personal files,

sometimes hidden there in the fear that a new broom may sweep it all into the recycling bin. As you know, librarians tend to fall into one of two categories: the "clean-broom" or the "pack-rat", and government pack-rats are of the closet variety.

Nevertheless, librarians still write history. They do this partly for ideological reasons, because they know that, without an historical perspective of what libraries have been, they are in fear of losing sight of what they should be. They also do it because, difficult, frustrating, and time-consuming as it is, the pursuit of history is probably one of the most pleasurable activities we know.

1) Canada. Parliament. House of Commons. Sessional Papers. No. 36, 1-2 Edward VII, 1902, p. 35; No. 36, 2-3 Edward VII, 1903, pp. 64-92.

2) Canadian Library Journal. Vol. 38, no. 6, December 1981.

3) Readings in Canadian Library History. Ed. by Peter F. McNally. Ottawa: CLA, 1986. 4) Morton, Elizabeth Homer. "Canada, Libraries in." Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science. Vol. 4, pp. 71-157.

Anderson, Beryl L. "Canada, Libraries in, 1970-1979." Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science. Supplement I, 1983, vol. 36, pp. 94-155.

5) Canadian Library Yearbook. Toronto: Micromedia, 1985- .

6) Canadian Libraries in Their Changing Environment. Ed. by Loraine Spencer Garry and Carl Garry. Downsview, Ont.: York University, Centre for Continuing Education, 1977.

7) Op. cit., p. iii.

PIONEERING IN WENTWORTH COUNTY: by Roberta Wilson Weiner, Wentworth County Librarian, 1948-1955

Autumn 1989

I am travelling by bus in Eastern Ontario, watching autumn colours, rolling farmlands, rocky outcrops, charming villages and century-old houses of yellow or red brick. But I see no little schools. My memories slip back 41 years to county library days in Southern Ontario.

Autumn 1948

There we were, my assistant Velma Burd in her car and I map in hand, searching out those Wentworth Schools to take them their first library books. Some bigger schools, true, but about three quarters turned out to one, two or three room schoolhouses. I noted one with "1864" over its doorway. We had a few (very few) village libraries in Wentworth. We visited them to deliver their books if they had decided to join the county "co-operative" and to come to HQ to select their book quota. We set up displays at all four of the fall fairs, and we talked to Women's Institutes and other groups all over the county to explain how they could sponsor "deposit stations" in their little communities. A newcomer from the West, I was fascinated by the novelties of Ontario: big brick farmhouses, elm trees, even a strange language of "townships" and "concession" and "back forty".

Autumn 1949

A bookvan this time, and driver, P.M. Hedden, who stayed with the library for many years. A meticulous polisher, he was early for every trip and (we grumbled) would deliver us to a meeting in good time to open up the hall and set out the chairs! That first bookvan was a relatively small cab-over-engine truck fitted with interior shelves (mainly to serve the villages) and floor space for boxes (pre-selected books for the schools). We delivered some 3,200 volumes to the school classes that fall, about half a book per capita. This was the year we began service to high schools as well as elementary ones. Almost by accident, our visits grew into a public speaking tour. What with curiosity inside and lovely September weather outdoors, almost all classes came out into the

schoolyards to hear about the county library and to go through the van in small groups. Imagine two people talking to 6,000 children in 76 schools over three weeks, while the driver carried in and unpacked books. At the fall fairs crowds of parents climbed into the van and told us that the "new library truck" had been a lively dinner table topic.

Book Talks

In subsequent years, notably after Helen Peterson joined us in 1951 as the second trained librarian, we undertook regular book talks in all our schools. At the 66 smaller ones (one to three rooms) we fitted talks into thrice-a-year book exchanges. At the 15 larger ones (four to twenty-five rooms) we scheduled book talks on special visits, trying to make sure that every class had one book talk a year. Reading stimulation seemed essential to supplement mere book delivery.

We chose wide themes months in advance, selected a dozen or so books of note, ordered extra copies, made posters and other "props". We touched on curriculum topics only incidentally, but tried really to present literature as literature and reading as imaginative fun. Beatrix Potter, Arthur Ransome, wartime escape books, adventures like Kon-Tiki were some of the favourites with the children and with us.

County-wide public speaking was not neglected. In fact, it was Helen Peterson's forte. Women's Institutes, Home and School groups and other meetings delighted in her wide knowledge of books and her Estonian-Canadian wit. We went to every fall fair and to some farmers' banquets, but I do not recall ever going to a ploughing match, as some county Librarians did.

The year 1952 when our library was celebrating the first five years of astonishing growth, was probably the zenith of our pioneering effort. Hard work (drudgery even) was offset by our youthful enthusiasm, shared fun and H.P.'s desk-side coffee pot. We wrote skits occasionally but never did put