

funds secured from the private sector. People continually tell me that indexing court records is an impossible task. I would like to suggest that it is not impossible if you take a pragmatic long-range view, and that the cooperation of archival, academic, and professional people and groups can bring a measure of success to bear on these matters. It is significant, for example, that the Osgoode Society in Ontario has made the preservation and use of legal records one of the planks in its platform.

Finally, I would like to emphasize the importance of bringing court records under central and archival care and of organizing, cataloguing, and indexing them. No one can list how many major or minor studies of topics of historical and current interest have not been done because the records are not accessible or practically useable. I would not want my article to be regarded as a piece of academic criticism; I wrote it to inspire action. What is important is not what has been lost, but what we can do with what we have retained. To this end it is my hope that the project being prepared by Professor DeLloyd Guth and myself to undertake a systematic list and guide of all court and other legal records in the provinces, beginning with the four Western ones, can pull together the work of archivists such as Mr. Bocking and make it possible for these records to become known and used. Then we can not only correct the inadequacies of attempts like that of my own to discuss the state of court records in Canada, but also provide a catalyst to develop their employment.

I am reminded of a tale told about F.G. Emmison of the Essex Record Office, England, who brought in school children periodically to look at the records and especially to sign the archives' register book. He not only raised funding, but he also made the archives one of the most prolific in lists, inventories, calendars, and indexes. As a result, the county became the most heavily studied in the country. I doubt that the county councillors begrimed a single pence of the sums expended. Neither did the archival profession when more of its members were hired to handle the flow of traffic. Here in Canada we may not be like England — the world's greatest floating museum. But we may not be far behind it.

Louis A. Knafla
Professor of History
University of Calgary

K.E. Garay's Rejoinder

I had expected a response from former *Archivaria* editor Dr. Terry Cook to my letter criticizing both the content and positioning of Gordon Dodds's article "Canadian Archival Literature: A Bird's-Eye View" (*Archivaria* 17). I did not anticipate, however, that in *Archivaria* 19 Cook would resort to page counting in an effort to defend the piece, nor that he would tenuously attempt to establish that this critic "badly misinterprets" a point made by Dodds in the article.

Without wishing to quibble over such minutiae let me respond to Cook's meticulous accounting of the article's varied content by observing merely that by my own reckoning fully two-thirds of this piece (14½ of 22 pages, not 21 as Cook contends) was devoted to an unnecessarily narcissistic litany of the contents of *The Canadian Archivist* and *Archivaria*.

Cook's allegation that I have misinterpreted Dodds is, if true, a more substantial point and demands a more detailed response. To return to the section in question, after Dodds has surveyed the "literature" he poses the rhetorical question, "Where have twenty years of Canadian archival writing led?" (p. 37) He answers by examining two "extremes" of response, the second of which sees "a whiggish progression in archival writing," a view in which "every plan, every event and every report of the event is proclaimed a 'success'" and "togetherness ... is confirmed at all costs."

It is, however, with regard to my interpretation of Dodds's first "extreme" that Cook has found me in error. The relevant section, which he contends that I had not read, is as follows with my own emphasis added. Dodds's first response to the question of where twenty years of Canadian archival writing has led is:

One conclusion is that they may have not actually led anywhere at all, that they merely mirror the ups and downs of reported archival activity or personal whim. *Archivaria, in particular, has been assailed as a professional luxury (money ill spent) and an indulgence for certain PAC egos.* Certainly, more than one archivist has voiced the observation that the *ACA's journal is so virtually only in name*. They argue that it does not give form and substance to the reality of being an archivist across Canada or, for that matter, even at the PAC. *The contention goes on* to emphasize the practicalities of daily archival existence, often on slender budgets and in unsupportive environments. A well-heeled, glossy publication twice yearly — with the added animus of usually coming forth from Big Brother PAC — seems in such circumstances to be irrelevant to those who yearn for instruction manuals, fund-raising tips, and preconference workshops. (p. 37)

I have no wish to play the grammarian but clearly Dodds, whether intentionally or, more probably, inadvertently, is doing more here than counterpose the practical/how-to school with the success/togetherness group as Cook contends. Rather, he is identifying in the first "extreme" a school of opinion fundamentally critical of *Archivaria* which, while it "goes on" to stress the need for practical information, sees the journal as "a professional luxury" and as a PAC "indulgence." This critical stance is, in Dodds's presentation of it, integral to the practical/how-to school and thus quite clearly part of that "extreme" which he contends has been kept out of the literature by "the eye of the editor." If Cook had paused to finish reading my letter before rushing off to defend himself from imagined attack he would have seen that I specifically assume to be wrong the suggestion that the editorial eye has kept the views of *Archivaria*'s detractors out of the journal and thus the former editor's resonant affirmation of the journal's unsullied editorial policy is superfluous.

It would be churlish of me, having previously voiced my criticism, to do other than congratulate Gordon Dodds on winning the W. Kaye Lamb Prize for his article. However, would it be regarded as an infringement upon the "sacrosanct" freedom of the editor to suggest that in future the ACA's entire membership might be allowed to participate in making this selection? I am not, nor have I ever been of the school which resents "Big Brother PAC," but I cannot resist the observation that *Archivaria*'s current General Editor, Senior Associate Editor, and entire editorial board are at present employees of the PAC, and it is presumably this body which selects the "over thirty archivists across the country" actually to receive a ballot and select the winning contribution. Could we not celebrate *Archivaria*'s "coming of age" by providing a ballot to every member, perhaps as an insertion in the journal itself?

A final point — although I was stung into defending myself from Cook's attack upon my powers of comprehension (or lack thereof) I confess I have found it difficult to rekindle my initial fervour for the subject in dispute, primarily because my original letter of criticism, which was written in April 1984, immediately upon receipt of *Archivaria* 17, appeared and was commented on only in May 1985. With such vast silences between salvos, momentum is almost impossible to maintain. Is there some insuperable obstacle to publishing the two annual issues of our journal somewhat more widely apart even than the "official" publication months of March and July? At present we are receiving two issues within four months and must suffer a dearth of archival stimulation for the remaining eight. Perhaps a full half year between issues would permit more immediate responses in the letters section and mercifully limit bloodletting to a period of months rather than years.

Dr. K.E. Garay
Division of Archives and
Research Collections
McMaster University

Terry Cook Replies

Dr. K.E. Garay's rejoinder to my comments is a transparent attempt to wriggle out of an uncomfortable corner in which she has placed herself. The letter would merit no reply save that my silence may be construed as somehow agreeing with her curious notions.

In her first five paragraphs, Garay attempts to rebut my criticisms of her original letter. It is a sorry attempt, marred by abandoning her original ground where I had cut it out from under her feet and by changing the terms of the debate to suit her purposes. She originally charged in *Archivaria* 19 that Gordon Dodds's article, "Canadian Archival Literature: A Bird's-Eye View," was unworthy of being published, that it certainly should not have had the lead position, that it almost amounted to "a page-by-page synopsis of *The Canadian Archivist* and *Archivaria*," and that *vis-à-vis* Dodds's own role with the journal it was "navel-gazing ... self-congratulatory ... self-serving...." The last point Garay made not once but twice in a short letter: the page-by-page synopsis occurred "with, it seemed to me, particular concentration on the role played by one Gordon Dodds in steering the archival flagship," and again that Dodds's view was "suffused with an air of rosy nostalgia ... particularly when it deals with the years of his own editorship...."

Taking her original comments in order, I drew forward the example of similar literature surveys in other disciplines being a normal part of professional activity and scholarly writing, and cited the *Canadian Historical Review's* practice in this regard. In her current "rejoinder," Garay ignores the point. I mentioned that such pieces often had the lead positions in other discipline's journals. Garay ignores the point. I disputed her "page-by-page synopsis" scenario by demonstrating Dodds's search for broad themes, trends, and patterns and his downplaying (given its relative size) the role of *Archivaria* — some 80 per cent of Canadian archival literature, but less than 40 per cent of his article. Garay ignores the point. I most strongly challenged her misguided belief that Dodds was engaged in self-serving and self-congratulatory reflection, and did so in two ways. First, I underlined his thematic