

**Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories. Catalogue Collectif des Manuscrits des Archives Canadiennes.** Rev. ed. ROBERT S. GORDON, director; E. GRACE MAURICE, editor. Joint project of the Public Archives of Canada and the Humanities Research Council of Canada. Ottawa: Public Archives Canada, 1975. 2 v. (xx, 1578 p.) \$50.00 in Canada; \$60.00 outside Canada. (Available from Printing and Publishing, Supply and Services Canada, 270 Albert St., Ottawa, Ont. K1A 0S9).

When hundreds of archivists, historians, librarians and curators across Canada identify 27,000 archival units in 171 repositories and see after seven years the production of this information in one central reference work, it is undeniable that a major event in archival publication has occurred. In July 1975 the second edition of the *Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories (ULM)* was launched by the two bodies largely responsible for the publication, the Public Archives of Canada and the Humanities Research Council of Canada. The two-volume work, with double the number of entries as the first edition, is certainly a tribute to the caretakers of the nation's history.

The publication of this edition was long overdue; seven years had passed since the first edition had appeared. The production of the *ULM* seems to have fallen into a seven-year cycle, since it took from 1961 until 1968 to produce the first edition. Researchers will not have to wait another seven years for an up-dated edition, however, since annual publication of additional entries has been promised and it is rumoured that an entire revision will appear after five years. Automation in data and text processing are responsible for this welcome change.

Ironically, it is also the use of automated processes in preparing this work which has led to some weaknesses and embarrassments. Some of them result from the difficulties in translating archival requirements into computer terminology, others derive from programming problems. Entries were input, but did not appear in the final printout. Entries such as "BIRNEY" appear under five title headings rather than one, although all refer to papers of the same individual. The treatment of "HOYT, Family" and "HOYT FAMILY" (note the upper case and comma) as two different entries is the kind of error a machine is more likely to make than is an individual. That the publication looks as good as it does despite these and other editorial problems is a testament to the dedication and energy of Grace Maurice, the editor of the work.

Researchers may find it curious that the amount of detail provided is not determined by the size of the unit of papers described. The preface explains that "this may seem illogical," and it is. If a researcher knows from the brief *ULM* entry that a repository has a large unit on the subject of his research, he must write to that repository. Why should he not also write to the repository to inquire about a small unit which could have been described in the *ULM* in proportional brevity?

The cross-reference index leaves much to be desired. Cross-references now are generally compiled from the summary of the unit entry. Individual repositories could have been asked to provide a separate cross-reference list for their individual holdings indicating major individuals, events and places referred to in each unit. The cross-references for the French-language units appear to be more detailed than for the English-language units. French-language editors at the PAC, probably because they were working with a smaller number of units, have done a substantial amount of work on preparing cross-references for specific holdings. The allocation of manpower for the English-language entries, it appears, did not allow the same thoroughness.

In 1961, approximately 300 repositories were approached to participate in the *ULM* and yet almost fifteen years later only 171 are actively contributing. Is there some reason why almost half are not? Business archives are not included; could they not be asked to participate? Where are the holdings of the ethno-cultural archives and museums in Canada?

Was the Ukrainian Cultural and Educational Centre in Winnipeg approached? Perhaps future editions will concentrate on encouraging those repositories not yet committed to the *ULM* to share their treasures with the public.

There is no doubt that future editions of the *ULM* will be larger and more polished, but this will depend upon more than just encouragement from senior management at the Public Archives of Canada and from various repositories across the country. Financial support and staff commensurate with the size of the project must be located and firmly committed.

The *ULM* is by far the most comprehensive list of manuscripts and records in Canadian archival and related institutions. It is an important contribution to the Canadian archival scene and should be available at all archival repositories, historical associations and societies, university libraries and major public libraries. Although at fifty dollars a copy the *ULM* will not make the best seller lists, it is nevertheless an almost indispensable research tool for the researcher wishing to visit a repository to do more than just look at a few dusty old documents.

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**General Inventory: Manuscripts, Vol. 2, MG11-MG16. Inventaire Général: Manuscrits, Vol. 2, MG11-MG16.** PUBLIC ARCHIVES CANADA, MANUSCRIPT DIVISION. Ottawa: Printing and Publishing, Supply and Services Canada, 1976, xii, 255 p. Catalogue no. SA62-1/2 \$2.50, Canada; \$3.00, other countries.

Scholars and researchers visiting the Public Archives of Canada have long been familiar with the various preliminary inventories prepared and published by that institution. There were times when the word *preliminary* seemed as misleading as that other symbol of post-war Ottawa—the temporary buildings—some of which have survived longer than many structures not so obviously cursed with a promise of impending demolition. However, now we have volume 2 of the general inventories, joining the already published volumes 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, and leaving only volumes 6 and 8 to be printed to complete this issue of inventories prepared by the Manuscript Division. These inventories, though of uneven quality, have generally proven to be very useful to the ever increasing numbers of scholars and researchers using the rich resources of the Archives.

*General Inventory* volume 2 provides a basic introduction to, and a general description of, the extensive records of the Public Record Office (PRO) which have been copied and are available at the Public Archives of Canada. A substantial portion of the basic records in the PRO relating to any Canadian subject has been transcribed or filmed, and is listed in this inventory. Some materials formerly listed with the preliminary inventories have been listed in the new Manuscript Group 40 for archival reasons, which should not prove to be an encumbrance to most researchers if adequate cross-references and conversion lists are maintained.

The long wait for volume 2 was necessitated in part by the need to undertake substantial research into the nature of the records and also by the desire to complete as nearly as possible the copying of some of the classes of records covered by the inventory. Yet this should not be taken to suggest that the Archives has identified and copied all material in the PRO of relevance to Canadian history, for much remains to be done.