

The map on the last page of the book is an enigma. I see little purpose in its inclusion. Few will even refer to it as they either will not know it is there, will not have any need to consult it, or even if they did it is printed too dark for easy reading.

The printing quality generally is slightly above average for this type of soft-cover book but still far from fully satisfactory. The rich brown ink for the text and background of the photo pages is most effective. A fairly fine screen was used in the plate making and this gives a good tonal range to most of the photographs. But somehow we still must convince our Canadian printers to give us clear white whites and brighter highlights in their photo reproductions.

The shortcomings I have mentioned should not detract from the many positive aspects of *Alberta at the Turn of the Century* and the praise that is rightfully due to the Provincial Archives of Alberta. Alberta Archives and this book are among the pioneers of the proper presentation of archival visual documentation. We would do well to follow their example and if future archival publications are better, it is because Alberta Archives have shown the way. And from what I understand, production costs are satisfyingly low — not a minor consideration during these times of limited budgets.

Richard J. Huyda
Public Archives of Canada

The National Archives and Urban Research. Edited by JAMES FINSTER. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1974. Pp. 164. \$10.00.

This collection of papers comprises the published result of the Conference on the National Archives and Urban Research held in Washington, D.C., on 18-19 June 1970. The topic of both book and conference is immediate and relevant but the essays themselves leave me rather disappointed. They are written by a mixture of professional historians, archivists and government administrators. Basically the historians try to suggest new directions in which their research should be going, the administrators are exhaustive in describing their programs, and somewhere in between the archivists try to connect the first two by suggesting potential research sources. Unfortunately only in one panel, that on housing, does the entire theme coalesce sufficiently to provide a useful comment on archival sources as they relate to urban studies.

This is not to say that the other essays are not worthwhile pieces. Nearly all the papers in the other panels on urban population, transportation and the impact of federal activities on the American city, are provocative and

interesting, but the panels themselves do not achieve the unique mix for which I think the conference organizers were looking. They provide information on the types of federal programs being undertaken in American cities and provide insights into the state of urban studies in the United States, but suggest little about broad new uses for archival materials pertaining to urban centers. One wishes that the historians had suggested what types of sources they need, that the archivists had been more comprehensive in providing information on the types of material available, and that the administrators had challenged the problems of use of and access to federal government records. Most disappointing of all is that the "National Archives Resource Papers" prepared for the conference are only listed and not printed. Nevertheless, both the conference and the published essays are a gigantic step in the right direction for disseminating information about and use of government records. I would hope that Canadian archives can benefit from the experiences of the National Archives of the United States.

R. P. Gillis
Public Archives of Canada

Guide to the Reports of the Public Archives of Canada, 1872-1972.

FRANÇOISE CARON-HOULE. Ottawa: Information Canada, 1975.

Pp. 97. \$3.25 (Aussi disponible en français)

One milestone in the history of any Archives is the day on which it becomes necessary to publish a guide to its guides and catalogues. It is an experience which is both heartening and chastening. Although the Archives has been sufficiently active to produce so many publications, it has also made so many changes of course, possibly so many false starts, that the archivist wonders how soon his most cherished plans will be overturned by his successor. There are the proposals which never became anything more than that. There are the publications which never progressed beyond part 1. Worst of all are the nuggets of information or research buried so well in some annual report that someone else has repeated the research without any suspicion of plagiarism arising.

The Public Archives of Canada has at last reached this stage in its history — somewhat later than many similar bodies and with rather less skeletons than most. From 1872 to 1881 the annual reports of the Dominion Archivist appeared only as a section in the *Report of the Minister of Agriculture*. In general they were factual accounts of the work of Douglas Brymner and his small staff. From 1882 onward the reports were also published separately and contained lists and inventories of documents. In 1912 the Public Archives was transferred to the Secretary of State's office and the Archivist's report was published as a separate item. Until 1952 the reports continued to appear annually. Since then they have been published at