

The use, for nearly twenty years, of some of the preliminary inventories has also provided the Public Archives staff with an opportunity to benefit from practical experience in order to revise and to improve the inventories so they will better suit the needs of researchers. The six London government departments having important Canadian material, some of which has been copied for use at the Archives, are the Colonial Office, Admiralty, War Office, Audit Office, Treasury Office and Foreign Office. Of these, only Manuscript Group 11, Colonial Office, had been published previously by the Archives. While the preliminary inventories for MG 11 were considerably better and more complete than many of the others, even this group has benefitted greatly from the revisions which have transformed the preliminary inventories into a general inventory.

The first obvious change and improvement is to be found in extensively researched and rewritten introductions. These introductions provide brief but accurate perspectives on the offices responsible for the creation of particular groups of records, and on the generation and custody of the records. The main functions or responsibilities of each office are clearly indicated, as are the kinds of records generated. This information should help researchers to understand the provenance of the records. Each introduction is well footnoted, and the only improvement that might still be made is the addition of an annotated bibliography at the end of each introduction.

All the records described in this inventory are, of course, retained in the same order of arrangement as at the Public Record Office. They can be serviced by the regular PRO finding aids although more detailed and complete finding aids have been prepared for some records at the Public Archives of Canada.

It should be clearly understood that this is an inventory and a finding aid for serious researchers. To be used effectively it must be read carefully. It gives very few of the factual minutiae that can be found in many of the records, but it is a very good guide which will indicate to the researcher which section of the records should be consulted.

The researcher trying to get quickly all the references to the Rideau Canal and its construction, for example, might find this inventory disappointing. Diligent research is still necessary, with the inventory providing only a general guide to likely sources of information. Used together with the more detailed registers and indexes prepared by the departments which created the records, and with a helpful and well informed archivist available for consultation, these general inventories provide all the guidance needed by serious scholars wishing to use these records. These inventories will help the scholar to comprehend entire collections of records and, once this is understood, it is relatively easy to use the available detailed registers and indexes to get more detailed factual information.

With this inventory the need for nice scholarly research junkets to London will probably disappear for many students of Canadian history. The appeals of Ottawa do not yet rival those of London, but the archival resources and services might soon surpass those of the great British metropolis. Inventories of the kind under review here are one of the reasons for this development.

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Canadian Watercolours and Drawings in the Royal Ontario Museum. MARY ALLODI. Toronto: Royal Ontario Museum, ©1974. 2 v. (ca. 300 p.) ill. (some col.) ISBN 0 88854 159 7 In slip case: \$30.00.

The lot of the archivist of historical paintings, prints and drawings is not an easy one. On one side, the archivist faces Canadian art historians, a brave but tiny band who have only

recently ventured beyond the confines of capital "A" Art and are now gingerly moving onto the unexplored terrain of Canadian popular, folk, primitive and naive art. These historians are still largely unfamiliar with the resources available for their studies in the major archives of this country. On the other side, the archivist faces historians, historical geographers and a plethora of social scientists, the stiff-necked and uncircumcised, most of whom firmly believe that early Canadian art is of greeting card calibre and strongly suspect the proper place for it is in glossy coffee table books. These scholars would hardly condescend to consult it as documentary evidence. In the background is the general public with its growing interest in Canadiana and its general ignorance of the richness and breadth of available materials.

The picture archivist surveys these groups and becomes increasingly frustrated. His problem is diffusion of information concerning what he knows to be a resource of major significance to the study of Canada's culture and heritage. The archivist can offer researchers a public reference area, but since potential users are ignorant of the existence of visual evidence or are biased against its use, it avails but little. Even those researchers who do venture into paintings, drawings and prints, often find themselves restricted by some archives, which, for reasons of conservation, are reluctant to provide originals for purposes of research except in special circumstances. Researchers are thereby reduced to using small black and white contact cards or ordering expensive photographs. To preach the gospel to the unbelievers and to succour the faithful, some more ready access to collections is essential.

One solution is the publication of catalogues of collections. Catalogues to some of the major Canadian collections have been available for some time, notably *Landmarks of Canada: A Guide to the J. Ross Robertson Collection* . . . (2 vols., Toronto, 1917-1921), J. C. Webster's *Catalogue of the John Clarence Webster Canadiana Collection (Picture Section)*, *New Brunswick Museum* (3 vols., Saint John, N.B., 1939-1949) and Percy Godenrath's various catalogues of the W. H. Coverdale Collection of Canadiana (Montreal, 1930, 1932, 1935, 1939 and New York, 1942). Anyone currently working on early Canadian art has these books within reach. They provide some basic technical information and a wealth of data on works. All, however, suffer from major flaws. Godenrath's catalogues have no indexes and are not coherently organized. The indexes to the other two are inadequate, being either too general and all-encompassing or too specific in their categories to permit easy access to views of a subject. Neither has an index to the works of individual artists. Most important, since none of the catalogues has a significant number of illustrations, the researcher is compelled to travel to the repository or to pay for expensive photographs in order to consult the works. Only the most dedicated, of whom there are few, are likely to take the time and trouble.

Some specialized catalogues have appeared over the years: for example, James Kenney's *Catalogue of Pictures in the Public Archives of Canada* (Ottawa, 1925), which, despite its title, is only a catalogue of portraits for an early period and J. Russell Harper's *Everyman's Canada* (Ottawa, 1962) a small but useful selection of the paintings and drawings in the McCord Museum of McGill University. Harper's *Early Painters and Engravers in Canada* (Toronto, 1970) is a god-send to those interested in early Canadian art, but it provides information only about artists, their careers and the present locations of their works, and not on the works themselves.

The Royal Ontario Museum has laboured valiantly in the field of reference works on Canadian art, with F. St. George Spendlove's well-illustrated *The Face of Early Canada* (Toronto, 1958), a judicious selection of prints from the Sigmund Samuel Collection, and C. W. Jeffery's ambitious and valuable *A Catalogue of the Sigmund Samuel Collection: Canadiana and Americana* (Toronto, 1948).

This institution has now produced Mary Allodi's *Canadian Watercolours and Drawings in the Royal Ontario Museum*, a work that one can only hope presages a new dawn in Canadian art reference works. As befits a reference work, the material covered is extensive: the watercolours and drawings of 273 artists are catalogued in 2,200 entries. The technical calibre of the volumes is very high. The books are a joy to hold: their elongated shape (8³/₄" by 12¹/₄") eases handling, and since most of the works of art represented are longer than they are high, the format is appropriate. The volume's heavy stock, sturdy bindings and durable cloth and board covers ensure they will be doing service on library shelves long after many of their weaker brethren have deteriorated. More than just practical, this reference work is handsome to the point of being luxurious, with high quality paper, large type and spacious layout. The weaknesses of this work's predecessors prove to be its strengths: it is extensively illustrated with 430 reproductions, roughly one illustration for every five works; 32 of the reproductions are in colour; a good selection of details has been made; the reproductions are of excellent quality; the colour is good and the black and white, sharp and clear. One particularly appreciates touches such as the use of cream-coloured paper comparable to the paper often originally used for watercolours and which gives a similar translucency to the reproductions.

Scholars will be grateful that reproductions are of adequate size (a minimum of 4¹/₄" by 5¹/₄") to allow careful examination of detail. Often it is the detail of a work—the buildings in the background, for instance—that is of most interest to the researcher.

The work contains two very impressive indexes, one by geographical location and one, admirably detailed, by subject. With these, the researcher need not fear missing material of interest to him. The typography in Allodi's catalogue is well-conceived to facilitate access to any individual artist or work, and the arrangement of works by artist is the most practical for research. Individual entries give detailed technical information on the works and note replicas and variants in other collections.

One does experience disappointment with this work, however, despite its excellence. The general public will probably find it wanting: despite the attractive reproductions, it is strictly a catalogue without a general narrative to guide the lay reader. It is perhaps unfair to expect the catalogue to serve both a popular and a specialized audience, but it does tend to fall between two stools. If its function is essentially scholarly, one would have expected more documentation: Allodi's introduction is lamentably brief and devoid of detailed analysis. The biographies of the artists and the commentary on the works tantalize more than they inform: they are regrettably short and lack footnotes. Little information is given on provenance and nothing about the reasoning and documentation behind attributions, dating or location of scenes. Such omissions are of more than arcane interest: researchers require as detailed and substantial information as possible on an artist's background and training as well as the circumstances and date of a work before they can use it with confidence for documentary purposes.

There are inevitably some minor slips in the notes. For instance, the assertion (in entry number 1505) that "the federal government" bought a certain property in 1845 is incorrect. There was no government that could be termed federal before 1867. The artist notes state that James Peachey served as Deputy Surveyor-General; in fact, the records of the Surveyor-General's department show he was only a deputy surveyor. This error was probably picked up from earlier studies. Footnotes would have allowed readers to check the sources used.

Finally, if these volumes are research tools rather than popular picture books, a researcher might willingly forego much of their technical excellence for more extensive illustration. A cheaper catalogue with illustrations in black and white of every item would have been more useful.

Such criticisms, however, should be placed in context. Mary Allodi's catalogue is far superior to any of its Canadian predecessors. One can only hope that she and the Royal Ontario Museum will go on to produce volumes cataloguing the prints and oils in their collection and that other institutions will follow suit.

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International Directory of Archives, as of January 1975. **Annuaire International des archives**, à Jour en Janvier 1975. Paris: Presses universitaires de France 1975. 480 p. (*Archivum*, v. 22/23; 1972/73) DM 98 Available from Verlag Dokumentation, D-8000 München 71, Pöessenbacher Strasse 2, Bundesrepublik Deutschland.

The *International Directory of Archives* supersedes one published in 1955 (*Archivum*, Vol. 5) which was supplemented in 1959 (*Archivum*, Vol. 9). It represents 132 countries, a considerable increase over the 55 in the 1955-59 issue. The foreword, questionnaire, and list of contents are printed in French, English, German, Spanish, and Italian. The entries are arranged by country, and for each country by type of archives (for example, federal, provincial, judicial, religious); entries are made in the language of the country where the repository is situated if it is one of the five languages in which the foreword appears, otherwise they are in French with the name of the repository left in its own language. A good feature of the directory is its listing, at the outset of each country's entries, of any national directories and catalogues which have been produced.

The entries provide name, address and telephone number of the repository, hours of operation, annual period of closure, conditions of access, and details regarding holdings, published guides, copying and typing facilities, restrictions, and loan policy. The information is reproduced in abridged form: where it is uniform for a country or category, it appears at the beginning of the entries under a section titled "common data"; in some instances a yes or no answer requires reference back to the questionnaire. Such short cuts are an inconvenience to the reader but they are necessary to keep the directory to a publishable size. Another imperfection is the failure of all entries to provide information on all points.

Any criticism of the handling of entries must be balanced with what I feel are unrealistic and improper expectations of directories of archives: researchers want detailed information on holdings and facilities; archivists want to know about records management operations and other programmes; conservators are interested in repair shops and equipment. Gathering, verifying, and reproducing the most basic information regarding the archives of only a small locality is a difficult task; to do it on an international scale is a formidable undertaking. The foreword to this international directory states that it is not intended to be a world guide to archives but rather a directory of archive services. If there are faults in the presentation of the data regarding these services, it is because the directory has tried to provide answers to too many questions. A directory that merely identifies archival repositories and provides their addresses is a useful tool. The user, be he potential researcher or surveying archivist or conservator, will thus be enabled to seek his own information. National guides and catalogues provide considerable information on holdings and there is no need for an archival directory to duplicate this. Information beyond basics is a bonus and in most cases the user will want to confirm it or request more.