

Jean M. Boone 1911-1976

Mrs. Jean M. Boone, Manager of Archives and Special Collections in the Harriet Irving Library of the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, died on 18 May 1976 after a long illness. She was the daughter of the late Dr. George R. and Mrs. Bell and the wife of Harry L. Boone of Fredericton.

Known and affectionately remembered by faculty and students, researchers, archivists, administrators and staff with whom she worked, Jean Boone had been a member of the Library's staff since July 1950. From initial duties at the Circulation Desk of the old Bonar-Law Bennett Library, she had moved into the areas of government documents including geological publications, and Archives and Special Collections, becoming head of the latter department in the mid-sixties when the Library entered a period of rapid growth.

The foundation of the Archives collection, comprising both University records and manuscripts and historical and literary manuscripts, had been soundly laid by Dr. A.G. Bailey as Honourary Librarian and were special interests also of the University Librarians, Robert A. Rogers and Mrs. Marjorie Thompson. Jean Boone, whose roots were deep in Saint John and the province, took up and carried on their work with enthusiasm and vigour and that very special sense of the comic which endeared her to so many. With characteristic energy, she completed in 1955 the entrance course of the Library Association of Great Britain and in the summer of 1964 the archives course given by the Public Archives of Canada and Carleton University, Ottawa.

To each phase of her progressive duties she devoted meticulous care and concern including, latterly, preparing registers of manuscripts, reporting holdings to the Union List of Manuscripts, supervising indexers, carrying out research and corresponding widely. She handled an astonishing range of the more difficult materials received by the library—manuscripts, letters, incunabula, rare books, Beaverbrook Collections, New Brunswickiana, Canadiana, photographs, scrapbooks, and memorabilia. She was a frequent contributor to the Library's newsletter, *HILT* and her article, "Canadiana in the Harriet Irving Library, University of New Brunswick," appeared in the September 1971 issue of the *APLA Bulletin*. Her informal notes to her colleagues were a particular and continuing delight.

A true book woman and humanist who never lost her zest for knowledge, Jean Boone was an "amateur" in the very best sense: a keen hobbyist and cook; an authority on mushrooms; one devoted to animals; a person of warmth, humour and sympathy who never met anyone she did not eventually like or any animal she did not want to mother.

Her comic vein and the "serendipity" she loved led her to begin her annual report for 1967-68 with a wry quotation from the Preface to Samuel Johnson's English Dictionary. For her as for most archivists, it could stand as a fitting epitaph: "In this work, when it shall be found that much is omitted, let it not be forgotten that much likewise is performed."

Gertrude E. Gunn
University of New Brunswick