

group exists physically (there are more than 470 volumes of it) and yet its contents are described in detail only under other RGs, most notably 2, 6, 11 and 12. Unfortunately, the introductions to RG 1 and to the other RGs explain neither why this is so, nor what the connection is between RG 1 and the other RGs. There is some archival mystification here and only after considerable head-scratching does one begin to piece together the puzzle. Better introductions and a healthy injection of cross-references would be appreciated.

Considering that this inventory is already more than seven hundred pages long, one feels rather like *Oliver Twist* asking for more gruel when the idea comes to mind that an index would greatly facilitate consultation of this book, if for no other reason than that it *is* more than seven hundred pages long.

Any criticism, however, must be judged almost petty given the care and work that have gone into the preparation of this invaluable research tool. The publication of this inventory will be welcomed as well by malicious archives course students. For years, unhappily deprived of inventories from other archives, they have had to limit their sniping to the organization of the Public Archives of Canada; the PANS now obligingly lines up with the PAC as a target in the annual turkey shoot.

Ann Rigby's *Guide to the Manuscript Collections in the Provincial Archives of New Brunswick*, while less voluminous and less extensive in scope than that of the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, will be no less useful in its sphere. Here is virtually absolute uniformity of format (based on that of the *Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories*) and clarity of presentation. The collections, at least for the purpose of description in this inventory, have been divided into four groups: Papers of Individuals and Families, Business Papers, Church Records, and Papers of Organizations and Government. Their actual physical arrangement appears to be otherwise, but is not clearly described in the introduction to the inventory. Despite the fact that the collections are listed alphabetically within these groupings, Ms. Rigby has seen fit to complete her work with an index, a gesture bound to be appreciated by all who use this guide.

On the evidence of these three publications, apart from the apparent requirement of sea water for the production of provincial archival inventories, a pertinent observation is that these inventories reflect the profound impact which the *Union List of Manuscripts (ULM)* is having on Canadian archives. Both the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick inventories acknowledge a debt to the *ULM* either for inspiration or for the provision of a format. Archives as well as researchers are benefiting from the former's self-imposed obligation to complete their returns. Assuming that the *ULM* can continue to plant the seeds of activity across the country, we may well see inventories sprouting like spring flowers in the near future; but it may require a little sea water in the interior.

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**Preliminary Inventory: Additional Manuscripts.** Edited by SHEELAGH DRAPER. Vancouver: City of Vancouver Archives, 1974-77. 4 v. illus. \$13.00.

While many well-established repositories, including my own, are still talking about a publications programme, the City of Vancouver Archives has been quietly producing a series of inventories to their Additional Manuscripts Collection.

These four volumes, though not without their problems, are a practical and attractive addition to the corpus of Canadian archival literature. The entries give sufficient detail to allow researchers to establish quickly whether or not each collection is of use to them. The brief biographical or historical sketches included in most major entries provide a context for

the papers and will be invaluable to the researcher who is treading on unfamiliar ground. The volumes are generally well laid out and easy to read; the indexes are certainly sufficient for volumes of this size; the bindings are strong and simple; and, most important for a smaller repository, the volumes are inexpensively produced. Indeed, they are more than what would be necessary to meet the stated objectives of the series. For this the editor is to be congratulated.

I would send a congratulatory letter myself except that the editor has neglected to provide the would-be researcher with the most basic information of all—a title page with mailing address, business hours, and so forth. This failing has not been corrected in the three years between the publication of Volume 1 and Volume 4. Indeed, there is a general lack of explanation throughout. The short introductions to Volumes 1 and 2 have become editor's notes in Volumes 3 and 4 and the researcher is left to discover for himself such things as the significance of the two numbers assigned to each entry. "Add. MSS.4" and "138-4" must be related, but what that relationship is remains a mystery.

It is clear that this series requires a comprehensive introduction. If the City Archives is attempting to establish itself in the minds of researchers and archivists as a significant repository, then one would like to see statements relating to the general size of the operation, its terms of reference, its stated objectives, available research facilities and the like. Such an introduction could easily be updated and inserted in each volume.

Perhaps the most perplexing problems with these preliminary inventories lie not with their effectiveness as a research tool but rather with what they imply to archivists about the collections and priorities at the Vancouver Archives. Although we are told that among forthcoming inventories will be a volume on public records, one must question why such a volume was not the first off the presses. The City of Vancouver Archives operates as an arm of the Vancouver City Government and the collecting of the records of that government is surely its first obligation.

While it is true that many archives hold collections which do not conform entirely to its terms of reference, the Vancouver City Archives seems to be the custodian of a large number of private manuscripts, some of which do not relate to the history of the Vancouver area or even to the Province of British Columbia. For example, the records of the Beach Family (138-21) appear to have been created exclusively in New Jersey and Upper Canada. There are many other examples and one hopes that these collections are not being maintained at the expense of Vancouver's public records.

Municipal archives, as well as most other institutions which require a strong base of support in the community, face the common problem of handling donations of manuscripts or records which are not appropriate to their collections. Much material is offered which need not be preserved at all. In his introduction to Volume 1, former City Archivist R. Lynn Ogden sees the publication of the inventories (why "preliminary," by the way?) as a sign that the Vancouver City Archives has "come of age." It is any archivist's hope that included in this coming of age will be the ability to decline or diffuse items which are clearly not within an institution's jurisdiction without alienating the popular support he or she has had to cultivate in order to thrive.

Archival publishing in Canada has, until the present, remained in the hands of the larger provincial repositories and, of course, the Public Archives of Canada. The appearance of the *Preliminary Inventories* to the Additional Manuscripts Collection at the Vancouver City Archives should be seen as an encouraging sign to archivists in smaller repositories that it is possible to produce, with a limited budget, publications which are a credit both to their institution and to the archival profession in Canada.

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