

also arranged, listing names from newspapers and assessment records. Finally, an index was compiled recording the relevant dates and location on microfilm.

During the same period, White assisted the Society in fulfilling its part of the agreement. A grant from the Richard and Jean Ivey Foundation was used to hire two persons to continue the conservation of the Society's records and complete the organization of the Society's remaining documents. Its library was also reorganized and catalogued. The information from this collection and the remaining records are to be filed in the records management system of the Centre by the end of 1977.

Two major projects were undertaken by the Society during 1977. Funds were allocated for the renovation of the document repository, which was completed in March. The addition of proper shelving and adequate space will enable the Society to provide storage for future acquisitions. The other project, "Pictorial Niagara," was funded by a Local Initiatives Program grant and sponsored by the Society. During a seven-month period, fifteen hundred photographs were processed and filed, recording a pictorial history of this community from 1780 to 1930. Both private citizens and institutions assisted by contributing artwork and early photographs for reproduction. A separate inventory compiled for this "pictorial archive" will be published in early 1978.

Since the Centre has not the funds to maintain a fulltime staff, the success of the programme is particularly noteworthy. A handful of volunteers, assisted and advised by professionals, has over the past year compiled information from seven separate collections and disseminated it by a centralized records system. The classification and inventory are complementary finding aids — one lists by types and origin of documents, the other the collections separately by institution and the arrangement of documents within each collection. The inventory also provides background information on the collections, the formation of the Centre, and an outline of the classification file index. The over-all operation of the Centre was designed to give the researcher through simply defined finding aids a comprehensive view of the archival material available in Niagara. The acquisition of microfilm will greatly increase accessibility to some of the records, as well as provide access to information held in more inaccessible repositories.

A programme being prepared for next year will provide for the microfilming of the collections which are registered and were not completed several years ago by the Archives of Ontario. In addition, the Library is designing a schedule of microfilm purchases which will begin early in 1978 and extend over a four-year period.

Since the Centre's opening, several hundred research requests, by mail and direct service, have been answered, a good indication that the Centre is a valuable service in the small community of Niagara-on-the-Lake.

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## Canada's Lost Plays

Recent scholarship in the field of Canadian drama has revealed a wealth of material which remained uncatalogued ten years ago. Taken together, Dorothy Sedgwick's invaluable study, *A Bibliography of English-Language Theatre and Drama in Canada 1800-1914*, and the *Brock Bibliography of Published Canadian Plays in English 1900-1972* provide a preliminary outline of English-language plays written by Canadians. Edouard G. Rinfret's recently published *Le Théâtre canadien d'expression*

*française* handles French-Canadian drama in a manner more complete than previously undertaken.<sup>1</sup> These three studies alone have been invaluable to researchers in Canadian drama, going a long way toward providing a comprehensive list of Canadian play titles.

Only recently has the retrieval of our dramatic past come under academic scrutiny; naturally each published list of plays has revealed its deficiencies on its first appearance, as recognized omissions lead to hitherto unknown titles. The *Brock Bibliography* lists materials held by libraries across Canada, while Sedgwick and Rinfret apparently compiled their masterful lists from published secondary sources. To date, no published study has consulted primary material for data on Canadian dramatic works. Motivated by this absence, I recently undertook an investigation of the copyright registers in Ottawa from which I compiled a list of over three hundred previously unrecorded titles noted as dramatic material for the period 1921-37.<sup>2</sup> Examination of the lists in *Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States, 1870-1916*, however, supplied over two hundred titles previously unrecorded in Canadian bibliographies.<sup>3</sup> The main criterion for classifying works from this source as Canadian was the listing of a Canadian city as place of registration; works by playwrights known to be Canadian provided some additional titles.

Thus far, the copyright registers for Canada and the United States have yielded nearly six hundred titles which do not appear in the standard bibliographies.<sup>4</sup> Surveys of the registers for periods outside these limits should extend this list of titles even further.

Lists of titles alone, of course, offer insufficient data for the theatre historian, but are of value to librarians and archivists in their search for additional historical material, in dating existing manuscripts, and in identifying pseudonyms. For example, A.E. de Garcia, author of *Canada Fair Canada*, is a *nom de plume* of Albert Ernest Knight, an equation apparently hitherto unrecognized. The compilation of the list also presents problems: for example, *H.M.S. Parliament* is most frequently ascribed to William Henry Fuller, but the Canadian copyright was issued in 1880 to a Mr. McDowell. When one recalls that Franklin Graham in *Histrionic Montreal* wrote of E.A. McDowell's company performing *H.M.S. Parliament* at Emerson, Manitoba in the early 1880s,<sup>5</sup> the acceptance of McDowell as author seems a possibility. Two editions of the title page of this play exist: one merely states that the work was copyrighted under the Copyright Act of 1875, while the other states that the copyright was issued to William Henry Fuller. Is the copyright register denying the claim for Fuller or could there have been a joint authorship? The list can clarify or correct already published

1 Dorothy Sedgwick, *A Bibliography of English-Language Theatre and Drama in Canada 1800-1914* (Nineteenth Century Theatre Research, Occasional Publication, No. 1, 1976), *Brock Bibliography of Published Canadian Stage Plays in English 1900-1972* (St. Catharines, Ontario, 1972) and Edouard G. Rinfret, *Le Théâtre canadien d'expression française* (Montréal, 1975-1977).

2 Incomplete records have thus far prevented the preparation of a similar list for the period 1867-1921 from Canadian copyright registers. A revision of the organizational system used by the copyright office in 1937 provided an interim terminus until such time as a list for the period 1937 to the present can be compiled.

3 *Dramatic Compositions Copyrighted in the United States, 1870-1916* (Washington, 1918). Sedgwick appears to have used the American registry to verify entries in her bibliography, but did not use it as a primary source.

4 The list is now being considered for publication by the Dalhousie Library School in their Occasional Paper Series.

5 As quoted in Betty Lee, *Love and Whisky* (Toronto, 1973), p. 58.

works. Sedgwick, for example, lists a play by Bertram Forsythe entitled *The Travelling Salesman*, for which she could not find a location, while the copyright register reveals that James Forbes, a Canadian who moved to New York, wrote and published *The Travelling Salesman*.<sup>6</sup> Forsythe may have written such a play, but it seems more likely that alphabetical proximity led to an incorrect ascription of the play to Forsythe rather than Forbes in Sedgwick's secondary source. By examining the copyright registers we are also able to identify Canadian writers who have been catalogued previously under other nationalities. William and Louisa Schubart's *Ludwig, the Emigrant*, for example, would generally be described as American, but is, in fact, a Canadian play published in the United States.<sup>7</sup>

The surge of interest in the history of Canadian drama during the past decade has encouraged numerous studies. How much fuller might these studies have been had scholars had access to the scripts which document our prolific dramatic past. The titles alone suggest thematic groupings around such areas as attitudes toward Indians, religion, and the monarchy. The list also documents other unpublished works by currently recognized authors.

Any study of drama in Canada must recognize the essential difference between this and other literary genres. Novels and poems are written to be read, whereas most plays are written primarily to be performed. Generally, publication would follow a successful stage production, but the historical condition of theatre in Canada has militated against production. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, professional theatres in Canada were controlled almost entirely from New York, first by the Theatrical Syndicate and later by the Shuberts. If a playwright sought financial reward for his craft, his only real hope of success was to move to the United States. The copyright registers provide the names of such writers as Thomas E.B. Henry and John Ernest Lawrence who began writing in Canada but moved to the United States where their works were produced and published. The registers also inform us of authors writing in isolation in Canada whose works were produced professionally. Whatever their literary merits, both types of writers must be included in the total picture of Canadian drama. After World War I, increased production costs, the advent of movies, and continued control from New York worsened the condition of professional theatre in Canada from a playwright's point of view. Amateur theatricals had figured prominently throughout the history of theatre in Canada, and the increased national awareness in the years following World War I sparked a flurry of activity in little theatre, eliciting an eager response from playwrights across Canada. The Canadian book buying market was not strong enough to support the printing of most plays written for amateur production. The depression virtually destroyed any possibility of publication, but the plays were nonetheless produced on stages across the country, were seen by audiences, and became part of the fabric of Canadian culture. As the history of Canadian theatre is investigated further and the collected papers of amateur groups find their way into Canadian archives, more of the scripts bearing these titles may emerge. Typed copies probably remain hidden in attics and among the papers of the amateur actors who performed the parts. The plays written and copyrighted before World War I may indeed be lost to us forever; unless a conscientious effort is made now to locate and preserve scripts from the period between the wars, they too may soon be lost. Librarians and archivists may justifiably be proud of the playscripts they have located and acquired during the past ten years. Once aware of the enormous number of scripts not yet located, they will, it is to be hoped, acquire and make available more of

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6 James Forbes, *The Travelling Salesman* (New York, 1908).

7 William and Louisa Schubart, *Ludwig, the Emigrant* (Buffalo, 1896).

these plays in the decade to come. Then perhaps we can begin to think of a definitive work on the development of Canadian drama and theatre.

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## OMR Recording System for Archival Data

Historians face a number of problems in obtaining quantitative data from archival sources. Particularly troublesome are the complex internal accounting systems used by companies which developed business procedures to facilitate exchange with peoples whose economies differed greatly from those of Europe.<sup>1</sup> Records to be used in a study spanning several years may be incomplete. Once these problems are surmounted, the searcher is confronted by the difficulty of transforming the data into machine readable form as quickly as possible. This paper deals with this latter problem by discussing a technique for data recording and storage not widely used by economic historians, one that should save research time and expense. The utility of the method is demonstrated in terms of an ongoing research project involving the use of Hudson's Bay Company records. Rather than presenting research findings, the article concentrates on the problems faced in using the voluminous Company records. We hope that researchers who face similar data acquisition and handling problems may benefit from our experience.

### THE PROJECT AND SOURCES

The project involves examining the business records of the Hudson's Bay Company before 1770 in order to understand how the trading system functioned under various economic conditions in Europe and North America. To determine the extent to which market conditions in Europe influenced, and in turn were affected by, circumstances in North America, information regarding the following is being sought:

1. the quantities of each type of fur and hide sent to London annually, as well as the numbers that were sold;
2. the prices received by Indians for the commodities they brought to the posts and the prices the Company received for the same items on the London market; and
3. the prices the Company paid to obtain trade goods in Europe and the tariffs it charged the Indians for these articles at its posts on Hudson Bay.

Data regarding the above issues can be obtained from three sets of Hudson's Bay Company records. Information regarding the shipments of furs from Hudson Bay to London is contained largely in the post account books. For the early years (1670-88), when considerable trade was carried on by ship or from short-lived posts, the post account records must be supplemented with fur shipment data found in the "Grand Jour-

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<sup>1</sup> An example is the trading post accounting system developed by the Hudson's Bay Company in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The problems that these records pose for fur trade historians were discussed in Arthur J. Ray, "The Early Hudson's Bay Company Account Books as Sources for Historical Research: An Analysis and Assessment," *Archivaria* 1 (Winter 1975-76): 3-38.