

There are only a few points to cavil about. It is apparent from the description of the Bagot collection that the compiler is unfamiliar with the use of the titles of the nobility; entries 1820 and 2690 are in the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, not the Provincial Library, which is a separate entity; and this reviewer frequently wondered how many folios or pages were in a volume.

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**Fire Insurance Plans in the National Map Collection. Plans d'assurance-incendie de la Collection nationale de cartes de plans.** ROBERT J. HAYWARD. Ottawa, National Map Collection, 1977, © 1978. xxvi, 171 p. ill., maps, port. ISBN 0 662 01609 2 Free.

This volume is the first major listing of Canadian fire insurance plans, those documents essential for research in the history of architecture, growth and changing land use in urban areas. The recent release of many of these plans onto the market as companies such as the Insurers' Advisory Organization have moved out of the map-production business has tended to flood archives and libraries, making bibliographical control imperative. Robert Hayward has done extensive research on the insurance plans and has put a great deal of work into compiling this important list. In the introduction he briefly outlines the history of the companies involved in fire insurance mapping, notably the Chas. E. Goad Company, and describes the growth of the collection in the Public Archives of Canada which consists of two thousand plans (in twenty-nine thousand sheets) of more than fourteen hundred places in all provinces and territories of Canada. Several non-Canadian cities are held as well.

The listing for each plan is very brief and includes the place (arranged alphabetically within the province), date, company that produced the plan, scale of the sheets, volume number if present and number of sheets. Since most sheets are in the same large format, only smaller sheet sizes are noted. If the sheet was revised, the date of revision is given, followed by the date of the original compilation. Much of the complexity of listing the maps arises from the printing of plans of different places on the opposite sides of a sheet. The sheets have been carefully collated and this information is given in footnotes.

The bibliography is generally very easy to use; however, the listing is problematic for the major cities, where a large number of editions and volumes is needed to cover the area. Hayward's strict chronological arrangement of individual volumes—sometimes more than twenty per city—obscures the obvious sets for decades, making it difficult to pick out comparative coverage for a given area for various years. Furthermore, fire insurance atlases, not to be confused with plans in atlas form which show less information for buildings because of their smaller scale, are listed in an appendix. Though the author clearly shows the difference between these and the plans, this separation tends to leave gaps in the coverage for certain cities. A notable example is Toronto, for which all fire insurance mapping before 1900 (is the Boulton atlas of 1858 really an insurance plan?) is in atlas and not plan form. Since researchers are essentially interested in coverage by period, it would have been more useful to incorporate them in the one list and clearly designate them as atlases.

The task ahead now is to produce a union list of fire insurance plans, using this list as a base, since many local institutions hold other plans and other editions and revisions of those listed here. A recent checklist for British Columbia libraries and archives sug-

gests that to a large extent the National Map Collection's holdings at present may complement other collections rather than extensively duplicate them.<sup>1</sup>

The volume is handsomely produced, with about thirty-three illustrations including plates, key maps, title pages, legends, advertisements and a portrait of Charles Goad, the czar of fire insurance mapping in Canada. This is one of the most valuable map publications to be issued in the Public Archives of Canada's diffusion of archives programme; let us hope it is not the last.

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**The Shopping Guide of the West: Woodward's Catalogue, 1898-1953.** Introduction by ROBERT D. WATT. Vancouver: J.J. Douglas, 1977. xxviii, 160, 176 p. ill. ISBN 0 88894 159 5 \$9.95.

**The Autumn and Winter Catalogue. 1910-1911 of the Hudson's Bay Company.** Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer Publishing, © 1977. 255 p. ill. ISBN 0 920486 00 2 \$8.95.

It may seem unusual for an archival journal to draw attention to reprints of department store mail order catalogues, but these and other kinds of trade catalogues are an important category of material about which most archives are rather negligent. As Robert Watt notes in his excellent forward to the *The Shopping Guide of the West*, "mail order catalogues are ephemeral; an early throw-away item. Each issue repeated the message, 'This catalogue cancels all previous issues,' emphasizing obsolescence and virtually ensuring their destruction." Watt's introductory essay and the facsimile reproduction of Woodward's catalogues (Numbers 31, 1921, and 64, 1929) reveal the research potential of department store catalogues. It is a measure of the ephemeral nature of trade catalogues that when Woodward's, the Vancouver Centennial Museum, and a number of other agencies tried to gather a complete set they were unable to find any between Number 75, Fall and Winter 1934-35 and Number 102, Fall and Winter 1948-49.

The introduction to the facsimile of the *Autumn and Winter Catalogue, 1910-1911 of the Hudson's Bay Company* mentions the rarity of surviving Company catalogues. The HBC catalogue presents an even wider range of lines than Woodward's, but both books provide arresting cross-sections in time of the world presented to the consuming public. A most unusual feature of the HBC catalogue, and one that will be appreciated by historians having access to the originals, is that it even included swatches of material glued to some of the pages.

While the catalogues mentioned here have considerable research potential, they represent only a small part of the total area covered by trade catalogues. Any historian of engineering or archivist dealing with this area as well as with technology, agriculture, architecture and material history, will be acutely aware of the utility of trade catalogues and their paucity in archival collections. Sadly, as a rule, researchers have to be told that the information they seek would have been published in these catalogues, but

<sup>1</sup> Frances Woodward, *Fire Insurance Plans of British Columbia Municipalities: A Checklist* ([Vancouver, B.C.,] Special Collections Division, University of British Columbia Library, 1974).