

Archives and Canadian Studies

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The future quality and scope of Canadian studies will depend upon the state of our country's archives. Scholars examining virtually any aspect of the physical, historical, or contemporary reality of Canada must look at the evidence and at the record of thought and events which it is the unique function of archives to preserve. Without the resources of our archives, original research on the development of our society, institutions, and culture, and on the interaction of these with the geographical and physical conditions of the country, would be impossible. Similarly, the more comprehensive the nation's archival resources become, the greater will be the opportunities for research into the nature and problems of the Canadian experience. Thus, Canadian archives are the foundation of Canadian studies and, indeed, of Canadian nationhood.

This fundamental importance of archives was well expressed by Sir Arthur Doughty: "Of all national assets, archives are the most precious; they are the gift of one generation to another and the extent of our care of them marks the extent of our civilization."¹ Fortunately for this country, Doughty's great successor as Dominion Archivist, Dr. Kaye Lamb, shared in full measure his belief in the fundamental importance of archives and his recognition that an adequate system for the identification, preservation, and use of archival records is indispensable to a knowledge and understanding of Canadian society. Fortunately, too, a new generation of Canadian archivists and the leaders of our major archival institutions across the country are well aware of the important nature of their responsibilities.

Canadian archivists, and all those in this country who share their concerns, now face the challenge of two fundamental and closely related tasks: first, the promotion of much greater public awareness of the significance of archives and, secondly, the development of a comprehensive archival system that will meet the needs of Canadians throughout the country. The degree of success attained in meeting this twin challenge will determine the future of archives in Canada and, indeed, the future of Canadian studies.

Perhaps the more difficult of these tasks will be the creation of a greater public awareness of the value of archives. Yet, unless there is a fair measure of success in promoting such awareness, it is unlikely that the second objective, the development

1 Arthur G. Doughty, *The Canadian Archives and Its Activities* (Ottawa, 1924), p. 5.

of a full and effective national network of archives, can be attained. It is difficult to gauge the current level of public awareness of the importance of archives, although there are many indications that there has been a steady growth in the numbers of those who contribute to archives or make use of them, and who therefore, presumably, appreciate their significance. Nonetheless, their numbers are still minuscule in relation to the wider Canadian public.

Even in the educational community, the crucial importance of archives to teaching and research about Canada is still only dimly perceived. An examination of the records of the annual conferences of Canadian universities over the past fifty years indicates that the subject of archives has seldom come up for any serious or sustained consideration, although almost every other subject conceivably pertaining to education has been discussed, ranging from national unity to animal care. Similarly, with few exceptions, the scores of commission reports and special studies dealing with Canadian higher education that have been produced since 1945 contain either only a passing reference to archives or no mention of the subject at all. Even the academic community, in large part, has not grasped the absolutely fundamental importance of archives to the future of Canadian scholarship. If this is true of many of those who are actively engaged in education, how much larger still must be the lack of awareness among the wider public?

In the face of such a widespread lack of awareness of the value of archives, it is remarkable how much has been accomplished in the development of archives in Canada. Archival institutions have existed in this country for well over a century, and over the course of the years they have done an admirable job of gathering records relating to some parts of our past. Moreover, they have done so without adequate financial assistance from any level of government.

Fortunately, professional archivists recognized from the start the potential scope of their work and adopted a broad interpretation of their role. However, in spite of an open attitude to the acquisition of archival materials, which is not uncommon today, few collections, even in an archive's area of specialization, are complete and many are not fully representative. This is certainly not surprising. Records and papers survive by chance, having somehow escaped wastebaskets, rats, fire, disintegration, and house-cleaning. Many people believe either that, on the one hand, their papers or those of individuals in their family have no value or that, on the other, their papers may be too sensitive to expose to the eyes of posterity. In either case, their papers are committed to the garbage or the furnace. In short, archival records are an endangered species.

In addition to the need to locate potentially valuable Canadian archival materials and to preserve them from deterioration or destruction before it is too late, a number of special problems deserve comment. Materials that have been acquired and housed in archives must be properly secured, against both theft and adverse environmental conditions. Similarly, some of the lunatic suggestions that have emanated from the Department of Public Works about possible relocation arrangements for the Public Archives of Canada make clear that even at some comparatively senior levels of the Canadian public service there is little understanding of the nature and function of archives, or of the need to provide accommodation for archival records in conditions that will ensure their survival rather than their deterioration.

The need to find and to preserve Canadian archival materials is not confined to written documents. There has been, until recently, an incredible neglect, abuse, and loss of film and media materials, including videotapes and audiotapes, despite the obvious and increasing importance of such materials for students of Canada. This situation reached its symbolic climax when, on 1 July 1967, the centenary of Confederation, more than half the existing early nitrate film in Canada was destroyed by fire. A cultural disaster of such proportions had at least the beneficial outcome of making clear to some people that action was required to establish an effective national archival policy for the conservation of appropriate film and media productions. From its rather tentative beginnings in 1972, the National Film, Television and Sound Archives at the Public Archives of Canada has moved steadily to break the cycle of abuse and neglect of such materials. It has now entered a second phase of its operation, in which it has at least an approximation of the mandate and money it will need to set about selecting and acquiring the feature films, documentaries, and television and radio broadcasts that should be preserved as a vital part of the Canadian record. The National Film Archives will need strong and sustained support if it is to succeed in building a truly representative national collection. Its work will, in turn, be of fundamental importance to those working in the field of Canadian studies in the years to come.

No survey has yet been made of Canadian film and broadcasting history materials held by provincial or local archives, by private corporations, or by private individuals, though such personal holdings may well prove to be the richest source of information about the history of film and broadcasting in Canada. Given the lack of organized and accessible archival records, it is not surprising to find that the influence of film, radio, and television has not yet been investigated in any depth.² Their enormous impact on the life of Canadians has been largely ignored because of a widespread assumption that film and broadcasting are a today - and - tomorrow business of which the archival records would be of interest only to antiquarians.

There is also urgency about the need to preserve the archival records of the fine and performing arts in Canada. Such archival materials relating to the life and work of individual artists and to the activities of artistic organizations and institutions — including, for example, theatres, theatre groups, dance groups and companies, orchestras and musical groups, publishers and booksellers, museums and art galleries, and associations of painters and writers — have a great deal to tell us about the nature and quality of life in this country as it has developed over the decades.

Unfortunately, there are particular problems in acquiring and preserving the records of artistic activity, and these are compounded in a country as large, disparate, and thinly populated as Canada. A large part of the historical records of the arts, and in particular of performing arts, is amongst the most perishable and ephemeral of archival materials. Moreover, arts organizations, in general, have lacked the continuity characteristic of business or governmental or educational institutions.

2 John E. Twomey, *Canadian Broadcasting History Resources in English: Critical Mass or Mess*, the Report of the Canadian Broadcasting History Research Project, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute (Toronto, 1978).

There are many indications of a burgeoning public interest in the arts in every part of Canada. This is reflected in a growing demand for opportunities to learn more about the country's artistic history through study and research. But for all such study and research, and for the publications that may emerge from them, the indispensable precondition is extensive work on the identification, acquisition, preservation, description, and indexing of primary source materials. This important task has only just begun. Some of the public institutions that should be active in this field are much less helpful than they ought to be in maintaining archival records concerning Canadian artistic endeavours. A comparison between the condition, and the inaccessibility, of the CBC's archives for the arts and the completeness and accessibility of those of the BBC, for instance, makes only too clear how much more some of our public institutions could be doing to support and assist students of the performing arts in Canada. It is essential that steps be taken to rectify this and similar situations.

In the fine arts, similarly, study and scholarship might ultimately be based upon comprehensive and accessible records. Canadian art history is at this point only a partially explored field of study in which extensive work remains to be done in virtually every area. Primary research is required into archival materials that have never been examined. The information available about many of our painters, sculptors, woodcarvers, craftsmen, and architects is still often of a most primitive or superficial nature. The use of certain materials and themes, for example in folk art and in church art, has in many instances never been examined. This situation points to the need for a Canadian Art Archives, which might be established under the joint auspices of the National Gallery and the Public Archives of Canada with an appropriate arrangement for provincial participation and the creation of a Canadian art archives network.

A better knowledge and understanding of the fine and performing arts of this country is essential to our self-knowledge as Canadians. We can come to know ourselves better through the mirror of the arts. We can also, through the arts, come to know one another. But the depth and scope of our knowledge of the arts will depend upon adequate attention being devoted to them by our archival institutions.

The growing recognition of the importance of business records and archives to Canadian studies presents another special challenge to archivists. Business has occupied a central role in Canada's national development. Consequently, a realistic knowledge of the history and processes of business and management in Canada is indispensable to an understanding of this country. Yet, few of the other major areas of our national life have received so little detailed study. This neglect is related, in turn, to the neglected state of business archives which must be the foundation for such studies.

Unfortunately, vital and extensive records of potential interest to scholars, and to the business community itself, have been lost or destroyed. Moreover, the records of many companies have been closed to the public long past the time when such secrecy could be justified. Some corporations do have an appreciation of the historical significance of their business records, and of the legitimacy of public and scholarly interest in these records. The archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, for example, from 1671 to 1900, are open to all *bona fide* researchers. But corporations with such policies are still few in number. This experience points to the need for an effective national programme in Canada to preserve and make accessible historically

valuable business records. Such a programme could be developed if business corporations and associations and archival institutions could be brought together to cooperate in establishing the procedures, guidelines, and facilities which are required to make it possible. Government should be prepared to play its part in facilitating such cooperation.

Business cannot, of course, be studied by examining business records alone. The records, for example, of labour organizations, of chambers of commerce and similar bodies, and of governments and their agencies must be examined in conjunction with business records in order to survey the operation of business and management in Canada. Such an approach to the study of business will tell us a great deal not only about business enterprise in Canada, but also about related subjects such as national economic trends, investment patterns, wages, labour relations, urban development, changing consumer preferences and life styles, and international trade.

The fact that so much of business enterprise in Canada is now owned or controlled by foreign interests poses a potential threat to the preservation, in this country, of records that are indispensable to the future study of Canadian economic, social, and political affairs. For this reason, the Commission on Canadian Studies recommended to the federal government that a committee of inquiry study problems relating to the disposition of the business records and papers of international corporations operating in Canada, and propose appropriate legislative controls upon the export of such documents.³ The terms of reference of such an inquiry should enable it to consider, at the same time, the application of such controls to other foreign and international organizations operating in Canada, including, for example, labour unions, cultural associations, and charitable foundations. The problem is a real one. But its implications have, as yet, been scarcely perceived by our political leaders or, indeed, by the leaders of our cultural institutions.

The commission drew attention, also, to an emerging problem concerning the papers of Canada's prime ministers, elected political leaders, and prominent public officials. Such papers are, of course, of enormous importance for Canadian studies and we have been fortunate that those of a great many of our leading public servants, including all but three of our former prime ministers, have been deposited in the Public Archives of Canada. In recent years, however, the American example in this matter, as in so many others, seems to have exerted an influence on Canadian practice. A number of men and women prominent in public life have indicated a wish to make a personal disposition of their papers, rather than entrusting them to the Public Archives of their country or province. It is ironic, for example, that so great a champion of Canadian traditions as Mr. Diefenbaker has promoted the adoption of this American practice in Canada by declining to entrust his papers to the Public Archives of Canada, arranging instead for them to be housed elsewhere in a special setting, rather in the manner followed by the presidents of the United States. It is a further irony, but a familiar one, that some Canadian political leaders should be adopting this American practice just at the

3 *To Know Ourselves: the Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies* (Ottawa, 1976), vol. 1, pp. 79, 84.

point when, in the light of their experience, it is being rejected and changed in the United States. In 1978, Congress approved a presidential records bill which would make the official records of an outgoing president public property. Indeed, the bill provides that presidential records are the property of the public when they are created.

In general, records prepared at public expense and in the course of the performance of public duties are and should be public property. Moreover, practical considerations argue in favour of the location of the papers of prominent national leaders in one repository. Such an arrangement is helpful to scholars and, through their work, contributes to the Canadian public and to its knowledge and understanding of Canadian history and public affairs. Similarly, at the provincial level, it is in the public interest for the papers of leading public servants to be entrusted to the official archives of their province. With these considerations in mind, the Commission on Canadian Studies recommended that appropriate federal and provincial parliamentary committees study the question of the preservation and disposition of records, documents, and papers relating to the public service of men and women prominent in governmental affairs, and propose procedures and guidelines that might apply in such matters.⁴

None of the major aspects of Canadian studies has been so much neglected as study and research about the native peoples. Lack of knowledge has, in turn, resulted in treatment of these peoples in a manner that has frequently been uninformed and unhelpful. Archives have a vital part to play in native studies — for example, in the definition of native rights, in the settlement of land claims, and in the development of an informed and intelligent public policy on issues of particular interest to the native peoples. To make up for past neglect, a systematic and sensitive approach to the location and preservation of the archival materials essential for native studies is now required. Such an approach must involve adequate consultation and coordination amongst the various groups, agencies, and authorities concerned, and, above all, with the native peoples themselves. To this end, the Commission on Canadian Studies proposed the formation of a Committee on the Development of Native Archival Resources, with representation from the archival, academic, and native communities as well as from appropriate governmental offices.⁵ The task of this committee should be to survey the present state of Canadian archival resource for native studies, to assess future needs, and to prepare proposals and procedures for the future development of native archives.

The scope of archival activity will expand in many other fields as teachers and researchers apply themselves to new or neglected aspects of the study of Canada. There is, for example, need for a better understanding of the role played in Canadian history and contemporary society by education, by science and technology, by medicine and law, by religion, journalism and publishing, and by events and developments in other professional fields and vocations. The history of labour in Canada, like that of business, needs more attention. There is also much to be done in the fields of social and intellectual history, and in the study of the pervasive role of sports and recreation in Canadian life. The ability of scholars to record and evaluate

4 *Ibid.*, pp. 77, 84.

5 *Ibid.*, pp. 80, 84.

the part played in our history by these features of the Canadian experience will depend upon the ability of archivists to provide them with the primary source information upon which to base their work.

A national survey of historical documents and other records is one of the major recommendations of the Commission on Canadian Studies. Such a survey was intended to combine the advantages of promoting a greater public awareness of the importance of archives with the collection of information about the present location of archival materials. Archivists in Canada have been so few, and the resources of time and money at their disposal have been so limited, that few projects have been undertaken to find and list the archival materials that abound in this country. *The Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories*, and the *Guide des sources d'archives sur le Canada français au Canada* and the *Guide sommaire des archives des communautés religieuses au Canada*, cover only a fraction of the institutions and the individuals preserving documents of research interest. Consequently, there is an urgent need for a survey that would make possible the preparation of a guide, or a series of guides, to all the known archival resources in Canada.

A national survey was begun in a limited way in the summer of 1979 and continued in 1980 through the cooperation of the Public Archives of Canada and the provincial archives. A large number of archival holdings were listed, but they represented only the tip of the iceberg. Furthermore, the surveys conducted pointed out that the basic differences in the state of archives across Canada, the country's varied geography and settlement patterns, its unbalanced wealth, and many other factors make necessary a flexible approach.

Once archival resources are identified, however, the task will still remain of providing an adequate system of archives in Canada to acquire, house, describe, and make available the country's archival resources on a comprehensive basis. There is an almost total absence of an archival system in Canada at the present time. A national network or system of archives will be all the more necessary following the completion of a national inventory of archival materials.

The creation of a national network of archives is another of the key recommendations of the Commission on Canadian Studies aimed at bringing the existing archival institutions into a closer association.⁶ Such institutions are already numerous and varied. They include, in addition to the Public Archives of Canada and the official archives of the provinces and territories, a diverse array of regional, municipal, corporate, association, institutional, and private archives. The proposed network would involve, essentially, the establishment of some continuing arrangements between these institutions for regular consultation, cooperation, and joint endeavours in order to avoid duplication of effort, to ensure that gaps are filled, and to provide the best possible service to the public.

The network should be based squarely on the official public archives of the federal and provincial governments and make natural use of the constitutional divisions and administrative structures of the country. This framework for an archival network would not only recognize and build on the political realities of Canada; it would also provide appropriate means for the network to be sensitive to

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 72, 82

the cultural, regional, and local considerations which are the realities of so much of Canadian life. The development of an effective national network for archives will be a large task. But such a network is required to meet the archival needs of this country and it should be a significant force for the improvement of archival services in Canada.

The Consultative Group on Archives⁷ advocated the formation of a Canadian Association of Archives to provide for regular meetings of the heads of major Canadian archives, to plan projects and programmes affecting archives, and to express the institutional viewpoint on matters of public policy and professional activity.⁸ In a sense, this proposed new association would be the basis of a national archival network. An interesting alternative to this recommendation was suggested by the Association of Canadian Archivists which proposed the establishment of an independent funding and coordinating agency that would be charged with the broad objectives of preserving and making accessible historical records. The agency would be built on provincial archival networks and would develop provincial priorities into a national set of priorities.⁹

Whatever its format, a national network should help to make possible the formulation of more clear and specific acquisition policies for each archival institution through the development of an overall approach for the acquisition and preservation of archival material in Canada. This would be achieved if the network could bring about a common commitment to and mutual respect for the principles of provenance and territoriality, by recognizing that records should be kept, in so far as possible, in the order and context in which they were created. Such an approach would provide the means for archives to coordinate their boundaries and acquisition policies in a way that respected the role of each provincial, institutional, and local depository, as well as the national responsibilities of the Public Archives of Canada. Application of these two principles should thus lead to increased cooperation between archives and to a reduction in unnecessary jurisdictional overlaps between their activities.

The greater degree of systematization and cooperation provided by a national archival network should also provide a framework through which individual archives, particularly some of those which are new, small, or isolated, could obtain help from some of the larger and more developed institutions by the provision of advice and guidance based on their experience and technical services. Indeed, a national network should be of assistance to all archival institutions in Canada by promoting the standards, science, and techniques of the profession, and by making possible improved programmes of conservation. It could explore the possibility of providing some common basic services and facilitate travel and exchanges of staff, information, and materials amongst its participating institutions. A national network should foster the growth of more private institutional archives in

7 The Consultative Group on Canadian Archives was formed in 1978 in response to a number of requests made over many years to the Canada Council for various forms of archival assistance and, more particularly, to the needs of archives pointed out in the report of the Commission on Canadian Studies. The report of the Group was published in March of 1980 and is titled *Canadian Archives*.

8 *Canadian Archives*, p. 73.

9 *Association of Canadian Archivists, Bulletin*, June 1980, vol. 5, no. 3.

appropriate fields, as well as of public institutions, and, in doing so, emphasize the responsibility of any creator of records to ensure their proper care and disposition.

The Public Archives of Canada is at the heart of the Canadian archival system. For over one hundred years, it has worked steadily to acquire, preserve, and make accessible records relating to the history of this country. Through the years it has acquired a wealth of documentation on many aspects of Canadian life. This institution has become the indispensable source for research in many areas of Canadian studies. However, it is challenged by new circumstances and new opportunities as it moves into its second century. As our society grows in both size and complexity, the Public Archives will need more support to make it possible for it to play its proper role in research and education and in the cultural and public life of Canada. The scope of its activities will have to be broadened to meet new demands for service from the public, new concepts of the role of a national archives, and, also, an expanding interpretation of Canadian studies and a better understanding of the importance of such studies. In particular, a strengthening of the Public Archives will be required if it is to serve effectively as the keystone for a national network of archives.

An important step now being taken is the revision of the legislation under which the Public Archives of Canada has been operating for seventy-one years. The provisions of the act of 1912 are no longer adequate to enable the Public Archives to meet current needs and public expectations. The Public Archives is thus prevented or at least inhibited, in some instances, from performing the functions expected of it by contemporary society because of the absence of a satisfactory statutory authority. It is hoped that the new Public Archives act will confirm the authority for various activities on which the Public Archives is already engaged, thanks to a liberal interpretation of its old legislation. In addition, it should make it possible for the Archives to expand its services and to enter appropriate new areas of activity. A strong case can be made, for example, for the Public Archives to sponsor or assist research studies in the archival field and to undertake special projects aimed at achieving a better and wider utilization of archival resources. The new act should enable the Public Archives to move on from the care, custody, and control of archives to a responsibility for the advancement of knowledge about Canada's heritage and history. For these reasons, the Commission on Canadian Studies recommended that such legislation be presented to Parliament as soon as possible.¹⁰ Similarly, many provincial and municipal archives are also in need of new and expanded legislative mandates.

In addition to an adequate legislative mandate, the Public Archives must have adequate accommodation and an adequate budget in order to be able to discharge its responsibilities. The Archives now faces a serious accommodation problem. It has been hampered for some time by a lack of space which has limited its ability to provide both storage and services. If suitable accommodation is not soon provided, the Public Archives of Canada will be severely handicapped in its work, the historical records in its care will suffer, and its ability to serve the research needs of Canadians will inevitably be curtailed.

10 *To Know Ourselves*, pp. 75-76, 83.

Beyond these and similar considerations, it may well be argued, more broadly, that the Public Archives has a unique and important role to play in teaching Canadians about themselves and in assisting our society to make better-informed decisions about its affairs in the future. In this context, planning for the future accommodation of the Public Archives should take into account its role not only as a custodial and research resource, but also as a showcase and a symbol of the shared experience and common interests of Canadians. To this end, the Public Archives should be housed in a building which is appropriate for its mission, with a distinct identity, accessible to the public, large enough to permit the concentration of its wide range of related collections, and with standards of accommodation and service of which Canadians can be proud.

Budget, too, must enable the Public Archives to meet the terms of its mandate and the immense calls that are being made upon its presently very limited resources. In addition to sustaining its essential current basic operations, the Archives needs funds to carry through a number of special programmes which will relate directly to its capacity to serve scholars, public servants, and interested citizens in the field of Canadian studies. The diffusion programme of the Public Archives is vital to the promotion of public awareness of the function and value of archives and, also, to the development of a Canadian archival system. But this programme is now able to provide less than half of the service it provided when it was initiated in 1974. Work must go forward to complete and up-date the *Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian Repositories/Catalogue collectif des manuscrits conservés dans les dépôts d'archives canadiens* in order to provide a comprehensive list of significant manuscripts in Canadian archival institutions. Serious gaps must be filled in the documentation of Canadian life. Papers that will be fundamental to our knowledge about this country must be found and secured, before they are lost or destroyed. The programme of acquiring or making copies of documents abroad that bear upon the history and affairs of Canada should be broadened and accelerated. The degree of success attained by the Public Archives in carrying forward these and other activities will govern its capacity to serve the needs of Canadian scholars and the Canadian public in the years to come. Given the multiplicity and magnitude of the tasks that confront it, a strong case can be made for the creation of an Advisory Board to assist the Public Archives in establishing policies and priorities and in its relationships with government and the public.

No sections of the Canadian community have a greater stake in the development of a strong archival system than those engaged in education. In turn, there is much that can be and should be done by educators and educational institutions, at many levels, to promote an understanding of the value of archives and to assist the archival profession. As a first step, educational institutions should direct more thought to developing proper arrangements for the management of their own records and should recognize their responsibility to provide certain minimal archival services. These relate to the acquisition and care of their own records and those of members of their staff. They should assume responsibility for preserving those records which document the policies and history of their institution. Such collections will provide essential information for the study of Canadian education.

Educational institutions have also an opportunity — indeed, a responsibility — to promote an understanding of the function of archives as a part of their educational programme. They should explain to their students the value of working

with source materials, and encourage them to make full use of the opportunities provided by archives. It cannot be taken for granted that either teachers or students have sufficient knowledge of research methods or of the use of detailed finding aids to make the best use of archival services and resources. It would thus be helpful if, for example, universities would offer to their students an opportunity to take a credit or non-credit course in archival procedures and methods. Such courses should certainly be offered at the graduate level at least, although they still rarely are. In addition, they might often be a useful component of many undergraduate programmes. Efforts to provide archives with better qualified patrons will contribute to the more effective use of archival resources for Canadian studies. These efforts would often be assisted if universities and other educational institutions took fuller advantage of opportunities to invite archivists to participate in their teaching programme and to advise them on the materials available to support Canadian studies.

It is as important, too, that educational institutions contribute to the development of Canadian archives by an extension of their teaching role to include provision for the training of professional archivists and conservators. There have not been adequate programmes and facilities for the training of archivists and conservators. There has been no entry qualification for the profession of archivist or for that of conservator. A number of library schools provide optional courses on archives of varying quality within their Master of Library Science programme. The Public Archives of Canada provides a one-month short course for archivists already employed. One university holds, in conjunction with its Provincial Archives, a summer institute in archival practice. And short one-week familiarization courses, or even briefer seminars or workshops on diverse practical aspects of archival work, are sponsored by various bodies from time to time. These arrangements are far from adequate to meet the current and future needs for archival training in Canada. Moreover, such ad hoc approaches will never allow the level of research necessary to improve the theory and practice of archival science. The growing complexity of archival work requires knowledgeable and sophisticated experts. Nothing short of graduate university programmes can provide the intellectual stimulation and the impetus to critical and creative thinking which the profession in Canada needs at this point in its development. To this end, the Commission on Canadian Studies recommended that immediate steps should be taken to establish graduate programmes to train professional archivists in both our official languages.¹¹ The University of British Columbia Master of Archival Studies programme which began in the fall of 1981 is an encouraging first step.

At the same time, programmes are needed to provide continuing education for working archivists and, also, to provide basic instruction for non-professionals working with archival materials. In part, this need can be met by the current array of special workshops, seminars, and summer programmes. But both universities and community colleges should explore with archivists, in each region of the country, the opportunity to develop courses to provide this training. Similarly, a number of colleges of applied arts and technology, in consultation with professional archivists and conservators, should be encouraged to develop programmes to train professional conservators. The Canadian Conservation Institute should participate in the

11 *Ibid.*, pp. 74-75, 83

planning of such programmes and it might wish to consider providing basic instruction to individuals and groups wishing to learn the techniques of conservation of archival materials.

In conjunction with the development of adequate arrangements for the professional education of archivists and conservators, steps must be taken to encourage and assist research and special studies in these two fields. At the moment, archivists and conservators appear to be on the outside looking in. They are overlooked in the terms of many granting programmes and are often excluded from the activities of the scholarly community. Consciously or unconsciously, many of the scholars who use archives regard them merely as the dross for their research, and archivists merely the tenders of that dross. Such assumptions reflect upon the ignorance, or thoughtlessness, of those who hold them. Given the fundamental importance of archives to modern society and the growing complexity of archival work, it is now essential that archivists be given the time and the means to examine and report upon the problems and changing nature of their profession. Searching studies are required of many of the special aspects of archival activity. It is time for a view of the role of archives which will recognize the need for archivists to study and to write about the concerns of their profession.

Fortunately, archivists themselves recognize the need for more research and publication about archives, and for the development of adequate educational arrangements for their profession. Indeed, over the past several years, Canadian archivists have been involved in a process of intensive study and discussion of their professional and organizational needs. This process has already resulted in the establishment, at long last, of the Association and Bureau of Canadian Archivists, in the development of new provincial, regional, and community associations and activities, and in a lively and expanding body of professional periodical literature.

Canadian archivists are clearly aware of the importance of their responsibilities. However, much remains to be done in the development of archives work as a full profession, in bringing to this work the full support it requires, and in promoting public awareness of the value of archives. In many quarters, there is still only a dim perception of the fact that Canadian archives are the foundation of Canadian studies and that the development of these studies will depend in large measure upon the preservation and proper handling of Canada's rich archival resources. As the collective memory of our country, archives have a key role to play in enabling Canadians to know themselves better in order that we can manage our own affairs to greater advantage and make our best contribution to the international scene.