

Since this is a research guide, one thing that becomes critical, and is almost always difficult, is the organization of the many entries into some coherent order. The particular organization of this publication seems to work well in most cases. The researcher can use either the index and the detailed table of contents to find quickly whether a particular source is held by the archives, or he can dip into a certain classification to find what does exist there.

There are anomalies. The fact that the secondary sources are not always in alphabetical order can lead to confusion. An article by one author, which appears originally in *Acadiensis*, is placed under the section on secondary sources while another article by the same author, having appeared in *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, is found under the section on primary sources. There is a surprising number of articles that originally appeared in journals listed without explanation under the section on primary sources. Moreover, although the chapter headings and subheadings, along with the index, are very useful in most respects, certain items are difficult to find. For example, this reader never did locate the three volumes of the letters of Surveyor General Charles Morris despite working through both chapter headings and index. And with the index one fears that items which are neither persons nor places can be lost in the crevice between this division.

What is written above does not denigrate the publication as much as caution readers in the use of it. Overall, it is a very useful guide for those with an interest in Nova Scotia or Loyalist history. It allows a reader far from the Public Archives in Halifax to discover quickly and conveniently what the Archives contains in his area of interest.

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Documentary Evidence in Canada. J. DOUGLAS EWART, Agincourt: Carswell Legal Publications, 1984. xxxvii, 389 p. ISBN 0-459-35950-9 \$40.00.

Evidence law in Canada can be a trap for the unwary. Not only are there a large number of federal and provincial statutes and an unofficial "Uniform Evidence Act," but there is also the whole of the uncodified common law of evidence with which to contend. Added to this is the perplexing fact that the majority of evidence law consists of statutory or common law exceptions to basic principles which may or may not be codified. Fortunately few archivists have need of a complete understanding of evidence law but most archivists have in their collections documents which could potentially be evidence in a legal proceeding. Aside from a ritual bowing to "evidentiary value" as an indicator of the importance of such records, only a small number of archivists have an appreciation of their records as legal evidence. Several papers in the special "Archives and the Law" issue of *Archivaria* (number 18) dealt with documents in the courts, but *Documentary Evidence in Canada* provides both background and detail which will be of interest to archivists.

J. Douglas Ewart's book is written for lawyers and contains the usual legal shorthand, tables of cases, and concordance of statutes. Fortunately it is also well written, so that it is readable by those outside the legal profession. It is also understandable without the numerous case citations on almost every page.

The basic evidentiary problem about documents is that, so far as evidence of the truth of their contents is concerned, they are hearsay and are usually not admissible without

being accompanied by the person who made the record. Over the years exceptions have evolved, most, but not all of which, reflect common sense. Ewart provides a brief introduction to the hearsay problem and newer problems created by photocopies and computer copies but the bulk of the publication is devoted to the statutory and common law exceptions to the hearsay rule which allow for the introduction of documents into court proceedings.

The admissibility of public documents is only one of these exceptions, but it is the one of most interest to archivists. Ewart details the criteria determining what is a public record as well as the procedures for the introduction of such records into court. Of some interest to those whose collections contain corporate records is the fact that under some circumstances they may be considered as public records. The book is thankfully not an exhaustive treatment of the public document question and Ewart deals in twenty-six pages with a subject that the multi-volume *Wigmore on Evidence* takes over 350 pages to cover. Additional chapters deal with business and banking records, and an appendix contains provisions of provincial and federal evidence acts referring to documents.

Cases involving documents which have been held in an archives have not been frequently before the courts and it is therefore not surprising to find little mention of the question in this publication. For archivists who have confidence in the importance of their collections it comes as a bit of a shock to read a comment in a 1905 case that has been favourably received by Ontario courts. In speaking of the common law requirement that a public record introduced into court be a permanent record Lord Watson stated: "No doubt the document survives, but the mere fact that a document intended for a temporary purpose of this kind, is found, after a long lapse of years in the archives of a Government office, does not constitute it the authority of a register." (p. 156)

While this is not a necessary volume for every archives library, its value (should you or your documents have to go to court) is such that it would be a useful acquisition for the collection of your legal advisor. The price may seem steep for those unfamiliar with the cost of legal texts but it is well within the expected range for a volume of its type.

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Le labyrinthe du monde. Volume I. Souvenirs pieux. MARGUERITE YOURCENAR. Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1974. 369 p. \$4.95 pa.

Le labyrinthe du monde. Volume II. Archives du Nord. MARGUERITE YOURCENAR. Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1977. 374 p. ISBN 2-07-037328-2 \$4.95 pa.

Marguerite Yourcenar was honoured in 1980 as the first woman to be elected to the prestigious *Académie française* since its inception in 1635. Born in Brussels in 1903, Yourcenar published her first work, a novel entitled *Alexis ou le Traité du vain Combat*, in 1928. Since then, she has produced another six novels, two plays, several works of poetry, a number of collections of essays, and translations of a variety of Greek and English works. *Souvenirs pieux* and *Archives du Nord* are the first two volumes of an autobiographical/genealogical triptych. The third volume, provisionally titled *Quoi, l'Éternité?*, has not yet appeared.