

provenance, primary research values, collection level organization, researcher access, and conservation ethics. Their advice combines both practical and theoretical concerns; acknowledging resource constraints, they provide guidelines for setting priorities and collecting policies. Legal issues of ownership and reproduction are introduced, though from an American perspective.

The manual is a compilation of essays by Mary Lynn Ritzenthaler, Gerald J. Munoff, and Margery S. Long. It begins with a discussion of the nature of the photographic record, its sources and functions in historical research, and the biases of the medium. A concise outline of the history of photographic processes follows. From the daguerreotype — the first popular application of photography introduced in 1839 — to contemporary photographic materials, the chemical composition and physical appearance of photographs are described. Pointing out the kind of information inherent in physical form, it encourages the archivist to consider the original photograph as artifact as well as document. Preservation and handling problems posed by the various photo types are thoroughly discussed in a separate chapter.

Least convincing is the chapter addressing appraisal. It applies such archival criteria as evidential and informational values, but makes no attempt to deal with factors affecting monetary appraisal and the relationship of market value to institutional collecting. Furthermore, it makes some questionable suggestions — stressing the acquisition of images of good technical quality to facilitate researcher requests for reproductions, and the acquisition of copy prints when the source prefers not to part with the original. On the basis of previous chapters, the reader should be well aware that archivally significant photos may not be technically excellent and that copy prints lack essential artifactual information.

Approaches to organization and description at the group or series level are described, and the possibilities of subject arrangement and indexing are discussed at the individual collection level; however, subject cataloguing within an institution's overall holdings and research tools which direct users to appropriate collections are not. As well, the importance of original indexes or finding aids generated by the source during the creation and maintenance of the collection should have been stressed. Their role at the acquisition, organization, and access stages could have been indicated.

*Administration of Photographic Collections* is strongest in the description of historical photo processes and collection organization. Inconsistencies and omissions are few, although the manual would clearly have benefited from a chapter on the operation of reference services for photographic collections. Nevertheless, concise format, effective illustrations, a glossary, and bibliography combine to make this a welcome and functional resource.

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**Camera Workers: The British Columbia Photographers Directory, 1858-1900.** DAVID MATTISON. Victoria: Camera Workers Press, 1985. x, 270 p., illus. ISBN 0-9692029-0-3 (v. 1) \$18.00.

Through *Camera Workers* David Mattison shares his comprehensive, computer-generated database of information on over five hundred nineteenth-century

photographers, retouchers, printers, and ancillary workers who eked out a living from the photographic arts in British Columbia. A number of amateur practitioners, whose activities were mentioned in textual resources which Mattison painstakingly examined, are also recorded.

Each directory entry includes personal and business names, variant name(s), life dates, place of birth and death, location(s) where active, business, and home address(es), year(s) of occupation, work interval, type of photographer and biographical summary. Where convenient, institutions holding collections of a photographer's work are identified, although the author avoids any commitment to providing this information by referring researchers to the *Guide to Canadian Photographic Archives*. Bibliographic references are cited for each entry. A bibliography at the end of the volume primarily lists publications, some of which are not sources for the directory information but are of related interest. It is apparent from the few unpublished manuscript materials listed that extant personnel and business papers generated by photographers are meagre indeed.

Directory information is well indexed by date, variant names, and geographic locations including street names. A special index to Chinese and Japanese photographers and women in photography is also provided. The directory is illustrated with reproductions of photographers' advertisements and mount imprints. Unfortunately no samples of photographs are included.

*Camera Workers* is an on-going information project. The author solicits corrections and additions to this issue through a reporting form included with the volume and is planning a subsequent volume to examine the period 1900 to 1929. The project stems from Mattison's passionate interest in British Columbia's photographers. His intent is "to provide as much information as possible about commercial landscape and portrait photographers who worked in or visited British Columbia." As far as this is possible, *Camera Workers* is successful.

Scarcity of incisive source material, however, makes it impossible in most cases to grasp "a picture of a photographer's life" from this information. The author has had to rely heavily on business directories, voters lists, and newspapers. Many of the directory listings are so incomplete that they simply record that a certain individual had an involvement in photography on a certain date in a certain place. The author's claim that "what *Camera Workers* does is to add the dimension of the photographer to the identification and dating process" is only true for a few, well-known photographers.

While the directory strives to include "information ... relevant to providing a picture of a photographer's life" it does little to enhance our knowledge of the economics of working conditions encountered by these photographers. The inclusion of retouchers and technicians, while mindful of their contribution to photography, sheds no light on their lives or livelihood. Mattison provides no interpretation of the information he has gathered other than to point out, in a short discussion in the introduction, the difficulties of obtaining pure water and the ill effects of darkroom work, and that the average period of photographic activity was less than three years in duration. As today, serious photography attracted many and rewarded few. This is as much understanding of early British Columbia photography as *Camera Workers* provides.

*Camera Workers* is a presentation of shreds of evidence which chronicle the appearance and movements of photographers. Those few archivists, scholars, and

collectors who require the biographical details of *Camera Workers* will be grateful for Mattison's diligence and willingness to share his findings. However, the value of this directory is limited. Those who seek an insight into the history of photography or photographers in British Columbia will have to wait for further study of these and other shreds of evidence and a critical analysis of the wealth of extant photographs produced by the province's "camera workers."

**Donald J. Bourdon**

Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies

**Sometimes a Great Nation: A Photo Album of Canada, 1850-1925.** EDWARD CAVELL. Banff: Altitude Publishing Ltd., 1984. 207 p. ISBN 0-919381-13-8 \$49.95.

Our perception of the world around us has, since the nineteenth century, been confined to a visual straitjacket. One might paraphrase Kipling in asking the question, "What should they know of photographs who know them only as printed black-and-white reproductions?" Very few people other than photographers and curators have had the opportunity to appreciate the full tonal range of vintage monochrome photographs: the browns, grays, blacks, golds, yellows, blues. Photo editor Bruce Bernard has written, "I had seen no original nineteenth-century prints of high quality, and because all photographs were reproduced either in black and white or a uniform 'sepia', I could not tell what I was missing."

Bernard's *Photodiscovery: Masterworks of Photography, 1840-1940* can already be seen as an influential work which set high standards of reproduction. Collector Sam Wagstaff predicted, "It is doubtful that the lover of photographs will ever be satisfied with less again." Published in 1980 and reviewed in *Archivaria* 11 by Andrew Birrell, *Photodiscovery* has inspired such books as *Masterworks of American Photography: The Amon Carter Collection* (1982), *The Golden Age of British Photography* (1984), and *Private Realms of Light: Amateur Photography in Canada, 1839-1940* (1984). *Photodiscovery* was, in Ed Cavell's opinion, the first book to treat photographs with respect, as intrinsically beautiful objects. Realizing that there existed enough material for a Canadian counterpart, he began to examine what he has called "the labyrinth of Canadian photography collections" at twenty-four institutions in nine provinces in Canada.

"A subjective exercise, the selection is occasionally logical; quite often it's emotional," writes Cavell. He recalls, "Reduction from 2000 to 1000 images was a simple matter; reduction from 1000 to 600 images was problematic; the reduction from 600 to 200 images was a desperate affair." He is happiest about "the sense of joy of photographs" conveyed by the images he selected for publication.

The book has avoided what Sam Wagstaff describes as "all those professional tricks of how to catch our conscience with low-status subjects, vernacular excitement, and useless but fascinating information." Cavell admits, however, that "the whimsical and the sensational have had a definite influence."

Exaggerated, self-deprecating postcards such as "The Way We Harvest Wheat" (p. 147) may tell us a great deal about our national psyche. Indeed, many of the book's