

So, here it is: a weighty, comprehensive, and expensive work of scholarship, one of the only documentary collections of personal writings ever published for *any* Canadian public figure, and one of the few scholarly document collections of any kind published on a Canadian historical topic in the last decade. Was it worth it? To put this question is to raise a much broader question: are documentary histories in general worthwhile? If they are, should we not invest our time and money, and the talents of our most careful scholars, in assembling collections of broader interest (say, a documentary history of the Métis in general, or of the two western uprisings in particular) rather than on lone personalities — however crucial to historical action, however unique as authors, however fascinating to the general public? Should the effort not be directed to making the contents of the more inaccessible archives more generally available by funding archival finding aids for use by all scholars, rather than for producing reprints of whole documents of uncertain overall interest?

As an archivist (but one not trained in the first instance in a historical discipline) I can give only the personal opinion that insofar as I understand the state of historical and archival scholarship, the present project *was* on balance necessary, and was done so well as to lend respectability to any similar enterprise in the future. It deals with a person who is the focus of wide popular, as well as academic, attention — food for sustaining continuing financial interest. It sets a standard of archival editing and comprehensiveness that future students of western history should not be able to ignore. However, *The Collected Writings of Louis Riel* remains a specialized and an expensive work of reference. At the present price it will surely not be bought by many scholars or all libraries: these may instead decide to invest in more items from the lengthening shelf of standard or outstandingly controversial secondary works on western Canada and the Métis. If Riel's writings do not sell reasonably well (for example, if they cannot appear as moderately-priced paperbacks) will other publishers be discouraged from similar ventures and fall back to sagas on the level of *Company of Adventurers*? These are questions not easily answered. In the meantime, this particular set can certainly be recommended as one of the basic works of reference on the history of western Canada.

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**Bibliography of Newfoundland.** AGNES C. O'DEA, compiler. ANNE ALEXANDER, editor. 2 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986. xx, 1450 p. ISBN 0-8020-2402-5 \$175.00 cl.

In its last years of office, the British-appointed Commission of Government that administered Newfoundland from 1934 to 1949 contemplated raising Memorial University College, founded in 1925, to the status of a degree-granting institution. This step, however, was not taken until after Newfoundland became a province of Canada, and the creation of a full-fledged university remains a notable accomplishment of the long-lived government of J.R. Smallwood. He indeed considered the university one of the building blocks of the new province and lavished money on it, only to find in the end that Memorial bred some of his fiercest critics. But such is life, and Smallwood, a keen student of history, no doubt appreciated the irony.

For Memorial itself, the change from college to university status posed intellectual as well as administrative challenges. How could the university, as the only local institution of its type, serve the particular needs of the province while remaining true to the essential mission of all universities, that is to say the pursuit of learning for its own sake? The answer given by a gifted generation of scholars who appeared on the scene at Memorial in the 1950s was that regional work characterized by the highest standards of scholarship would *ipso facto* be of transcending interest and importance. Thus, in the interest both of the province and of learning in general, a number of major and long-term scholarly projects were started at Memorial in the 1950s, all of which have now come to fruition. In 1971, after many years of enquiry, E.R. Seary published his seminal *Place Names of the Avalon Peninsula of the Island of Newfoundland*. Eleven years later appeared the internationally-acclaimed *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, edited by G.M. Story, W.J. Kirwin, and J.D.A. Widdowson. Yet another project started at Memorial in the 1950s, namely the creation of a Newfoundland archives, stimulated the establishment of the flourishing provincial institution housed in the Colonial Building in St. John's. With the publication of the *Bibliography of Newfoundland*, the last of these big projects has now been brought to a successful and striking conclusion.

Agnes O'Dea's work on the project goes back to 1955. Her early efforts led to the creation, in 1964, of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies, of which she became head, within the Memorial University Library. In 1978, by which time the Centre had become multifarious, she was joined on the original project by Anne Alexander, who saw the bibliography through its final editing stages and eventual publication. The accomplishment of the compiler and editor, and of the Centre for Newfoundland Studies which nurtured their work, is truly monumental. Agnes O'Dea is a pioneer of modern Newfoundland studies while Anne Alexander, who now resides in England, leaves behind her a major contribution to Newfoundland letters.

The bibliography covers books, pamphlets, government documents, unpublished theses and reports, letters, diaries, and films to 1974. The listing is chronological and there is a separate list of "Annuals" arranged alphabetically. There are also invaluable author, title, and subject indexes. The bibliography will not only facilitate enquiry but will suggest subjects for possible research. In sum, it is by definition an indispensable reference work for students of Newfoundland and Canadian history. One is on the Trans-Canada Highway of the Newfoundland past, and the view is expansive. The publication of this complex and comprehensive bibliography is a proud achievement for all concerned, and a salutary reminder in a time of contract research of just how much can be accomplished by a university that reflects on its goals and has the courage to set its own agenda.

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**British Library Occasional Papers 1. Canadian Studies. Papers presented at a Colloquium at the British Library 17-19 August 1983.** PATRICIA McLAREN-TURNER, ed. London: The British Library Reference Division Publications, 1984.

In August 1983, the British Library hosted a three-day colloquium on Canadian Studies. This volume consists of the twenty-eight conference presentations, plus listings of items