

extraordinary means because the Copyright Act of the time did not extend to photographic negatives or film. The companies, therefore, had to make positive print copies by contact printing the original nitrate camera negatives onto bromide paper rolls cut to the same length and width as 35mm film stock. Between 1894 and 1912, some three thousand complete motion pictures were reproduced in this manner and deposited with the Copyright Office, from which they were transferred to the Library of Congress. As most of the original nitrate film did not survive, the paper prints are an unparalleled resource for the study of early American film. However, in paper print form, the films cannot be fully used or appreciated. During the 1950s and 1960s, the Library attempted to reclaim the documents by filming the paper prints. The process required advancing, aligning, focusing, and filming every frame in the two million feet of film at a cost of \$500,000. Unfortunately, 16mm film was used. Recent tests indicate that 35mm would have given much improved image recovery. And, as happens so often when a reference copy is produced, too little attention was paid to the physical condition of the paper prints. The Library is now investigating the feasibility of reproducing the whole collection of complete and incomplete films on optical disk which might provide compact storage, rapid search, and indexing of the images.

Is optical disk the final answer to the preservation crisis, as Lawrence McCrank suggests? I doubt it.

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Whaling Logbooks and Journals 1613-1927: An Inventory of Manuscript Records in Public Collections. Originally compiled by STUART C. SHERMAN; revised and edited by JUDITH M. DOWNEY and VIRGINIA M. ADAMS with HOWARD PASTERNAK. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1986, xiv, 469 p. ISBN 0-8240-9328-3 \$80.00 (US).

Eighty-two libraries, museums, and archives collaborated to produce this list of 5,018 whaling logs and journals, unpublished documents which researchers may consult in public repositories. The result is an extensive list of sources on a colourful and controversial world-wide industry. It is also an indispensable reference work for students of the Canadian North in the nineteenth century and an instructive example of a kind of archival work which is not often undertaken.

For the history of Canada north of the tree-line, whalers' private journals and official logs have the same importance that fur traders' journals have for the sub-Arctic. Whalers established contact with the Inuit before fur traders or missionaries arrived, and they profoundly influenced the natives' lives. The quality of information in whaling logs varies, but more than two hundred of the documents listed in this volume can make important contributions to the early history of Arctic Canada.

The *Inventory* begins with lucid explanations of the project's origin and the organization of the volume. A key to repository symbols is followed by 377 pages of the inventory itself. Vessels are listed alphabetically by name, by rig, and by home port. Logs and journals are then arranged in chronological order. The remainder of each entry names the vessel's master and the log-keeper (if known), notes the whaling grounds the vessel

visited, and reports which repository holds the document. Indexes give the user access to the individual entries at five vital points of reference: home port, masters and log-keepers, year, whaling grounds, and repository.

The index by year shows one document as early as 1613, a journal of a voyage to Spitsbergen by an unnamed vessel. There are heavy entries for the 1840s and 1850s — not coincidentally the peak of American pelagic whaling. While some auxiliary steam whalers are included, the “period covered is the age of sail” (p. xi): the latest entry is a schooner voyage out of New Bedford in 1927. The index by port is dominated by the New England ports of New Bedford, New London, and Nantucket, with exotic entries from as far afield as Bremen, Dundee, Valparaiso, and Hobart. Only fourteen voyages from Canadian ports are named — two from Halifax and twelve from St. John — all between 1828 and 1846. The index by repository shows that only two Canadian repositories (the Public Archives of Nova Scotia and Dalhousie University Archives) reported their holdings. Fifteen British institutions provided reports as did five in Australia, and one in New Zealand. The rest are in the United States. Six collections in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut provided 54 per cent of the logbooks in the list. (p. ix)

Canadians in the future will probably read whaling logbooks chiefly for the light they shed on early encounters between Inuit and southerners. The impetus for Sherman's inventory, however, was provided by scientific concern about the size of whale stocks depleted by historic whaling. Australian scholars had already microfilmed numerous New England logbooks for their importance in south Pacific history, and in 1965 Stuart C. Sherman had published *The Voice of the Whaleman*, an inventory of logs in the Providence Public Library. The International Workshop on Historical Whaling Records, held at the Kendall Whaling Museum in 1977, inspired several efforts to count historic whale populations. This *Inventory* grew out of the same scholarly effort. Work was delayed by Sherman's last illness, but the New Bedford Whaling Museum brought the project successfully to completion. Some researchers were also able to use the provisional, unindexed lists, so that some of the fruits of the project were available before the inventory itself.

Whaling Logbooks and Journals helps researchers locate original manuscript material. It very properly directs them to the institutions which acquired and conserved the original documents, and cared for them. Researchers should, if they can, read this material in the excellent marine libraries and museums which hold most of the logs in Sherman's list. This is not always possible, and the “Guide to Repositories” (pp. 455-68) identifies microfilm holdings which may be borrowed from the holder on interlibrary loan. The *Inventory* is silent, however, on a number of points which researchers should know.

Logs and journals are not the only sources of information on individual whaling voyages. Voyage accounts and crew accounts can be valuable, especially in recording the terms of trade with natives and in documenting voyages for which no logbooks survive. Much material of this kind was microfilmed in the 1960s for the International Marine Archives (IMA), a now defunct organization whose collection is held by the New Bedford Whaling Museum. The *Inventory* lists only those IMA materials that are logs or journals and that are not held in public repositories. Thorough researchers will still wish, therefore, to consult the seven thick pamphlets that make up the catalogue of the IMA's microfilms. The *Inventory* also does not make it clear that some important logs in British repositories are easily available in North America through the IMA collection.

Unavoidably, users following the career of one vessel will find that small changes in her rig or port of registry may throw her records out of chronological order. Researchers should also remember that published whaling narratives are as valuable as manuscript ones, though far less numerous and now, ironically, less easily traced. Furthermore, the distinction between whaling and general trading voyages was blurred in the Canadian Arctic after 1900 and not all repositories treat these voyages the same way: since *Finback* (1919) and *Ernest William* (1912, 1913) are included, the fine run of Sabellum Trading Company voyage records in the Dartmouth College Library might equally well have been listed. There is no avoiding such anomalies: they merely underscore the fact that researchers are ultimately responsible for finding and sifting the material they need.

The disappointing coverage of Canadian holdings also throws Canadian researchers, to some extent, back on their own resources. The *Inventory* mentions some forty micro-filmed logs at the Scott Polar Research Institute; the originals, in fact, are in the National Archives of Canada. Other logs in the National Archives are not mentioned at all, and neither are valuable items in the Provincial Archives of Manitoba, in the Hudson's Bay Company Archives, in the Glenbow-Alberta Institute and, doubtless, in other places.

The editors of the *Inventory* sensibly brought the work to press while knowing there was still room for "further expansion of the inventory [which] will have to be undertaken at another time." (p. viii) In the meantime, they have produced a valuable and impressive work, a tribute to the possibilities of international collaboration among archives holding similar types of material. Judith Downey and Virginia Adams compliment Howard Pasternack's computer expertise, which "made the impossible possible." Equally impressive, however, is the collaboration of so many institutions in setting aside their local priorities long enough to fulfil Stuart Sherman's dream of a union list. *Whaling Logbooks and Journals* will give important aid to researchers in several disciplines, with interests spanning many oceans and shores. In Canada, it should be on the reference shelf of every library and archives used by students of the North.

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A Guide to the Medical Archives of British Columbia. JIM LEWIS. Vancouver: British Columbia Medical Association, 1986. iv, 43 p. \$12.00 pa.

Research on the history of medicine in British Columbia was given a dramatic "shot in the arm" in the fall of 1986 with the publication of *A Guide to the Medical Archives of British Columbia*. Practitioners, administrators, historians, and archivists, particularly those interested in the evolution of medicine and its professional organizations in the province, will benefit from this welcome addition.

The *Guide* is the result of a 1986 summer project conducted under the auspices of the BC Medical Association (BCMA). A grant obtained from the BC Heritage Trust enabled the BCMA to hire Jim Lewis, a Master of Archival Studies student, to arrange and describe the textual holdings of the Medical Archives. The *Guide* was compiled to establish control over the existing collection and provide a framework for future expansion. It was also decided that it should serve as both a resource for researchers and a staff finding aid. It has successfully achieved both goals.