

nationwide guides to holdings reveal the difficulties besetting such a goal. Shortcomings underline needs; the comments of the producers and users of these works will prove to be informative as the profession works towards descriptive standards.

**Shirley Spragge**  
Anglican Diocese of Ontario

**Resources for Canadian Mennonite Studies: An Inventory and Guide to Archival Holdings at the Mennonite Heritage Centre.** LAWRENCE KLIPPENSTEIN, MARGARET FRANZ, and ADOLF ENS, eds. Winnipeg: The Mennonite Heritage Centre, 1988. 136 p. ISBN 0-921258-00-3 \$7.50.

Most archivists, regardless of their area of specialization, participate directly in replying to inquiries from the general public related to their own holdings. This activity requires, on the part of archivists, lightning-speed ability to find relevant information on any given subject, and insofar as possible, in the most concentrated form possible. Upon receiving many of these requests, archivists usually cry, "Ah, if only there were a comprehensive guide/inventory/bibliography on that subject to be consulted!"

Where Canadian Mennonite history is concerned, archivists have just such a tool in *Resources for Canadian Mennonite Studies*. It is the first published survey of the holdings of the Mennonite Heritage Centre (MHC) located in Winnipeg, Manitoba. A slim volume, it nonetheless contains a wealth of information on the holdings and activities of the Centre, as well as on its connections with other Canadian and international Mennonite study or research facilities.

Each of the four sections in this publication is designed to shed light on different aspects of Mennonite research. These are, respectively, a guide to the Mennonite Heritage Centre, an inventory of a selection of its archival holdings, a select bibliography, and an index. The first section offers a short general description of the institution and its holdings. This description is divided into eleven subheadings, nine dealing with types of records and two with the centre's facilities and outreach activities. Information that is usually available only after an initial visit to a repository is provided. For example, the subsection entitled "Archival Materials" identifies holdings from 1902 to the present relating to the first Mennonite organizations in existence in Canada: the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization, the Mennonite Central Committee, and the Conference on Mennonites in Canada. It is further indicated that material antedating such organizational records relates mainly to the eighty local congregations and individuals in various communities, leaders and members alike. Whenever possible throughout the volume, links between the material found at the MHC and the history of Mennonites in Canada, the United States, the Soviet Union, and South America are indicated. Curiously, this subsection does not include audio-visual materials, maps, newspapers, or photographs as archival. These are listed in separate categories. Whereas in the first section the term "Archival Materials" does not include microforms or a number of other types of documentation, the second section, the "Inventory of Selected Archival Collections," does include audiotapes as well as microfilm.

The reading room of the MHC provides the public with direct access to reference publications, catalogues and finding aids, microforms, bound periodicals, vertical files, and other such materials. Unassisted access to these allows the small staff to devote its time to answering requests for information on specific limited topics. Among outreach services provided by the centre, the major one is the quarterly publication of the *Mennonite Historian*. Begun in 1975, the periodical became, in 1987, a joint project of the MHC and the Centre for Mennonite Brethren Studies. Other activities of the MHC include book sales, heritage or art exhibits, and sponsorship of seminars or lectures, often in conjunction with the work of other historical and archival organizations.

By providing an overview of the holdings and services of the MHC, the first section of this publication is useful to novices seeking concise information relating to Mennonite history and relevant archival institutions. The second section, entitled "An Inventory of Selected Archival Collections," is designed for the experienced researcher requiring specific information on a number of topics. It has two distinct parts, the first being a detailed description of twenty-four collections and the second, brief descriptions of seventy-nine others. Both detailed and brief descriptions are subdivided under the headings "Organizations and Institutions and Individuals." Detailed descriptions of organizational records and papers of individuals include title, summary of contents, historical or biographical sketches, provenance, and scope and content. Historical and biographical sketches are lengthy, including significant dates throughout and appended, topic-specific reading lists. If holdings are extensive, scope and content entries contain descriptions of records series within collections. The existence of finding aids is also indicated where applicable.

Brief descriptions prepared for the seventy-nine collections in the second part of this section are seldom more than a few paragraphs in length. However, concise information such as titles of entries, outside dates, extent, type and language of material is once again provided, as are appending reading lists where reference works are available.

Published information on topics related to aspects of Mennonite history can be found in the reading lists, as well as in the "Select Bibliography." While entries in the latter are in English only, the suggested readings on specific topics include titles in German. As one would expect, the majority of selected readings, reference works, general and topical studies, theses and dissertations, whether in English or German, are Canadian in origin. Besides older comprehensive bibliographies on the subject such as Bender, Krahn, and Gingerich's *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, the editors have taken care to include more recent editions of works such as Henry C. Smith's *Smith's Story of the Mennonites* (1984), as well as unpublished papers such as that of Jacob Peters, "Organizational Change Within a Religious Denomination: A Case Study of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada 1903-1978" (1987), a doctoral dissertation from the University of Manitoba.

Guides or inventories containing information in several languages present special problems when indexes are included. The editors of this volume have, without cross-indexing every entry in the German language to its English equivalent, arrived at a workable compromise for the index in the fourth section. Most entries in German have English equivalents immediately following in parentheses:

"*Maedchenheim (Girls' Home)*." The equivalent entry "*Girls' Home*. See *Maedchenheim*" also exists. Other entries, such as "*Aeltestenkomitee (Committee of Elders)*" for example, do not have English equivalents. Titles of newspapers such as *Der Bote* are not translated, thus requiring a certain amount of prior knowledge on the part of the researcher.

With its broad range of information on Mennonite history, a volume such as *Resources for Canadian Mennonite Studies* should appeal to both novice and experienced researcher alike. It will undoubtedly become a valued addition to many Canadian archives' reference libraries. Copies of the inventory are available from the Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4.

**Marie-Louise Perron**  
Saskatchewan Archives Board

**Planting the Garden: An Annotated Archival Bibliography of the History of Women in Manitoba.** MARY KINNEAR and VERA FAST, compilers. Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press. 1987. 314 p. ISBN 0-88755-140-8 \$35.00 (cloth).

*Planting the Garden* is an exhaustive survey of primary records relating to women's history in archival repositories in Manitoba. The introduction is well written, analytical, and readily dissects the shortcomings of traditional approaches to the history of women that have focussed on exceptional women and their activities. In an effort to redress this imbalance, compilers Mary Kinnear and Vera Fast have attempted to identify archival collections which delve into the "everyday lives" of women. In so doing, they have sought out and included new kinds of records that provide us with a wider range of women's experience. Particularly refreshing is the inclusion of a large number of oral histories which provide much needed alternative sources of information given the limited existing written documentation on women's daily lives.

The book, however, is not without problems. The criteria for inclusion of collections is not clear. Nowhere in the introduction is it explained how the compilers made their selection. Does the book cover major collections relating to women or any collection that has any reference to women? Some elaboration on how such decisions were made would have been useful.

The organization of the material is confusing. The bibliography is divided into three main categories: identity, work and activities, and mentality. Although these categories are seemingly logical, according to the compilers' explanations, they are extremely arbitrary and it soon becomes apparent that archival collections do not lend themselves well to such divisions. Given the quality of the subject index, the imposed categories become somewhat limited and unnecessary. Had the entries been listed in alphabetical order from beginning to end without these artificial groupings, the use of the bibliography would be more straightforward. As it is, the comprehensive index makes the book more purposeful and easier to use.

The annotations are brief and informative but not always consistent. In most instances the annotations provide succinct descriptions of the relevant material; in other cases, the annotations are very general and provide little useful information. This is particularly evident with the photographic collections.