GN 13 (Department of Justice) and GN 38 (Secretary to the Commission of Government). Taken together with A Guide to Government Records of Newfoundland, this inventory is a valuable tool for students of Newfoundland studies.

M. Stephen Salmon
National Archives of Canada


In this study, James Parker describes the role of a major fort in the history of the North American fur trade. Fort Chipewyan, situated near the southwest end of Lake Athabasca, appeared in various manifestations between 1778, when Peter Pond first explored this region, and 1821, when the Northwest Company and the Hudson’s Bay Company amalgamated. Both companies used the general location of present-day Fort Chipewyan to spearhead their efforts to dominate the fur trade in the northwest. Beginning his study with the early exploration of the region, Parker examines the role of the fort(s) in the fur trade to 1835. By this time, he contends, the fur trade had stabilized under the monopoly conditions of the Hudson’s Bay Company.

Emporium of the North is based on Parker’s master’s thesis, completed in 1967 at the University of Alberta. The research is based on published journals and travel literature of the area’s early explorers and traders, as well as the fort’s journals, reports, and accounts held mainly, but not exclusively, by the Hudson’s Bay Company Archives. The book contains chapters on the locations and various structures of the forts; how Fort Chipewyan maintained its link to the eastern section of the fur trade circuit; and the individuals involved in the trade, white and native. Within his general framework, Parker analyses the effects of competition and monopoly on the Fort Chipewyan region. Patricia Myer adds a bibliographic essay which assesses in general terms the last twenty years of fur trade historiography.

Nancy McMahon
National Archives of Canada


This publication was prepared by Janet Michael for the Yukon Archives to provide researchers with an overview of the administrative development of the Yukon government from 1948 to 1979. In 1948, the commissioner was once again installed as the head of the Yukon administration. The author chronicles the slow evolution of government from that date to the 1979 landmark when a fully elected cabinet first entered office. In eight chapters, she discusses the emerging government, the federal takeover of health care, the development of a corrections program, the reorganization of government, the beginning of devolution, the maturing of government, and political maturity. She also provides some excellent appendixes, the most useful being an administrative outline which lists chronologically a short description of
governmental activities. The title of this work reflects two divergent decisions made by Supreme Court judges Justice P. Meyer and Justice J.H. Sissons. In 1962, Justice Sissons labelled Yukon a “crown colony” whose “legislation and administration are controlled by the Dominion Government.” By 1986, Yukon’s political evolution had progressed so far that Justice Meyer ruled Yukon was an “infant province with most but not all the attributes of a true province.” Researchers interested in Yukon’s political evolution will find this publication a fascinating information source which appears at a time when interest in the constitutional development of the territory is particularly high.

Lesley Buchan
Yukon Archives


This reference tool is one of Yukon’s contributions to the Decentralized Program for Canadian Newspapers. The program, an initiative of the National Library of Canada, is a cooperative effort by the provinces and territories to establish bibliographic control of their newspapers, to ensure their preservation, and to improve public access to this rich body of information. The first step in achieving these aims is to identify all newspapers, past and present, within each jurisdiction, and to locate extant copies.

Yukon, a sparsely populated territory with a brief history, has had few commercially published newspapers. For many communities, news of purely local interest is captured only in amateur newsletters (often sporadic) and in the bulletins of special interest groups. The checklist includes all such ephemeral titles identified to 1987, as well as the “mainstream” territorial press. Some 120 titles are listed. Publications of special interest include the native press, school newspapers, and the newsletters of a variety of organizations — social, political, labour, athletic, and cultural.

Primary arrangement is by community of publication, with cross references from titles and names of sponsoring bodies. Most titles are held only by the Yukon Archives, but other locations are noted for major Klondike and Whitehorse newspapers. Microform titles are identified.

Response to the checklist has been positive. Not only is it proving to be a useful reference tool, but it is also serving to generate interest in preserving Yukon’s newspapers. Since publication of the checklist, Yukon Archives has received issues missing from its collection (including copies of a few hitherto unknown titles) and additional holdings information from repositories outside Yukon. Some of the information compiled for the checklist has been incorporated in the National Library’s recently published Union List of Canadian Newspapers.

Eileen M. Edmunds
Yukon Archives