

The Researcher's Guide to British Columbia Nineteenth Century Directories: A Bibliography and Index. JOHN S. LUTZ, ed., GEORGE YOUNG, comp. Victoria: Public History Group, University of Victoria, 1988. 162 p. ISBN 0-92127800-4.

Social historians have long been interested in records that provide background historical information of a systematic and accessible nature. As the introduction to this guide notes, however, there has been reluctance on the part of both professional historians and antiquarians to make use of directories as a source of historical data. This perception persists, in spite of the fact that directories often feature regular publication dates, are widely distributed, and reflect a strong editorial commitment to the presentation of comprehensive and organized primary material. The drawbacks to the use of directories — they are difficult to locate in repositories, provide only periodic coverage and are often not published over an extended period of time, are difficult to use, and are frequently unreliable — seemingly remain uppermost in the minds of historical researchers.

This guide substantially minimizes a number of the deficiencies that make directories such a cumbersome research tool. Two sections of the guide index 140 directories relating to nineteenth-century British Columbia, first by year of publication and then by place name and subject. In the first section, directories are listed chronologically for each year for the period from 1860 to 1900. Each entry provides a wide range of information which allows researchers to make effective use of the directory. Brief descriptions are included of each directory's most salient features, for example, a list of businesses or voting lists. Also featured are names of editors and compilers, place of publication, publishing company, number of pages in the publication, and depositories where the directory can be found.

The second section, forming the bulk of the guide, is a detailed index to the bibliographic entries identified in the first section. Access is obtained via a thorough list of geographic place names and subjects. Cross references are provided to the appropriate directory, year of publication, and page number. It only remains to be noted that, while the range of the guide might be expected to encompass all provincial holdings, the emphasis is on directory holdings at the Universities of British Columbia and Washington, and at the National Archives and National Library in Ottawa.

This guide serves a number of functions, not the least of which is its usefulness as a valuable historical research tool. Related works in the future will not only give greater insights into the structures and shapes of British Columbia's communities, but they will also play an important part in the re-creation of towns and communities which no longer form a part of the province's material heritage.

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Literary Archives Guide. National Archives of Canada. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1988. v, 126 p. Text in English and French with French text on inverted pages. ISBN 0-662-55424-8.

This guide provides brief fonds-level descriptions of 145 major literary collections from the post-Confederation period acquired by the Manuscript Division of the National Archives before 30 September 1987. The records included in the guide reflect the breadth and scope of the Manuscript Division's acquisitions policy, which, as is explained in the preface, is to collect and preserve "private manuscripts documenting all aspects of Canadian life for historical research." This reflects the overall policy of the National Archives itself, which is to collect records of national significance. While there has been much controversy over the precise meaning of "national significance" (especially when it overlaps with regional significance), it must be said that this guide is a very valuable bilingual finding aid, intended to be the first point of consultation for the researcher using the division's literary collections.

The descriptive entries for these literary collections have evidently been prepared with great care and attention to descriptive standards currently being developed in Canadian archives. The entries are arranged alphabetically by provenance heading and are consistently described, with the same descriptive elements appearing in all the entries — provenance heading, accession number (which is unfortunately referred to as "call number"), a biographical/historical sketch, types of material, dates covered, physical extent, finding aids (if any), microfilm copies (if any), scope and content, and references to related material also held at the National Archives. The descriptions are concise and specific, indicating the types of records (such as correspondence, notebooks, rough drafts) and significant subjects discussed in these records.

Looking through the guide, one quickly realizes how wide-reaching and diverse the Manuscript Division's holdings are, and how rich and multi-faceted Canadian literature has become. Among the authors represented here are Emily Carr (who wrote short stories and autobiographical works in addition to creating her well-known paintings), Pauline Johnson, Stephen Leacock, John McCrae (author of the First World War poem "In Flanders Fields"), Marshall McLuhan, and Gilles Vigneault. The guide also includes such organizations as the League of Canadian Poets, the Association for Canadian and Quebec Literatures, and the Ottawa Little Theatre. In addition, many less well-known writers are included, some of whom are immigrants (such as George Faludy from Hungary and A.M. Klein from the Ukraine, to name but two), thereby reflecting Canada's increasing multiculturalism. The entries reveal some of the more colourful aspects of the authors' lives. For example, we are told that a group of Toronto poets awarded Milton Acorn the "People's Poet Award" after his book of poems, *I've Tasted My Blood*, failed to win the Governor General's Award in 1970, and that William Kirby's papers include a memorandum from his sister, Hannah Servos, in which she complains, "I worked for months copying this manuscript [Kirby's *The Golden Dog*] for which work I was never paid one penny ..." (p. 32).

The guide, however, is not without its drawbacks. It is (by the compilers' own admission) already out of date; it does not include, for example, an entry on Robertson Davies, whose papers were acquired in the fall of 1988. A more glaring omission is the guide's lack of an index. The guide's compilers may have felt that an index was not warranted because of the guide's small size, but an index to names and subjects would still have been very helpful. Most obvious is the scarcity of information regarding access. The only mention of possible access restrictions occurs in the

introductory section, "Research in the National Archives of Canada," in which researchers are advised to write or call in advance (but no phone number is supplied!) to enquire about any restrictions placed on particular records. This blanket statement is better than nothing, but it might have been more helpful to include specific information about access to each collection as part of the descriptive entries.

Overall, however, this is a fine guide which not only provides researchers with the "big picture" of the National Archives' holdings of literary papers, but also complements the guides now being produced by other institutions across the country.

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Guide to the Canadian Manuscript Collections in Victoria University Library.
DEBRA BARR, Project Archivist. Toronto: Victoria University Library, 1988. iii, 388 p.

This guide, prepared with the assistance of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, represents twenty-four Canadian manuscript collections held by the Victoria University Library (comprising some twenty-seven metres in linear extent and including noteworthy collections such as the Northrop Frye papers). The Guide contains essentially two descriptions for each collection. There is a relatively brief "guide" description, "compiled in accordance with Steven Hensen's revisions of Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules" (*Archives, personal papers and manuscripts: a cataloguing manual for archival repositories, historical societies, and manuscript libraries*). This is followed by a more detailed and standardized inventory description which includes a biographical sketch, series descriptions, and the like. In some cases, items of particular interest or import (correspondence with prominent individuals, for example) are highlighted. While this approach has the advantage of providing more detailed information on some valuable items within collections, it can create the impression that these lists of selected items are, in fact, exhaustive. Researchers, however, undoubtedly will be grateful for these previews. The 107-page index, providing references to particular individuals and subjects featured in the guide descriptions, will make use even easier and further enhances the publication.

With 388 pages in which to discuss only twenty-four collections, the guide obviously contains a good deal of information, and will provide those planning to use the library with an excellent first introduction to its Canadian manuscript collections. Given the size of the institution and the quantity of collections dealt with, the guide furnishes what is probably an ideal amount of detail in a suitable format and should enable potential users of the library's collections to easily identify pertinent material.

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