from the most important fonds. Finally, the photographic fonds are indexed; researchers are provided with access to the collections by either a limited number of subject areas, by place name, or by creator or surname.

Similarly, the Guide to Manuscripts provides detailed descriptions of approximately 500 fonds and collections organized in alphabetical order by creator. Reproductions of photographs, letters, drawings and sketch maps drawn from the archives’ manuscript holdings illustrate the text of the guide. Microfiche copies of the inventories of the archives’ two most important collections, the Alpine Club of Canada and the Catherine Robb Whyte Collection, are also included in this publication.

This is a welcome and finely-crafted addition to the body of reference material available to researchers working in a variety of disciplines. One can only await the next publication from this ongoing programme with eagerness and anticipation.

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This publication comprises an annotated bibliography of some travel literature written about Canada up to 1900. The preface and introduction set out some of the criteria used by the bibliographers in choosing entries for inclusion in their work. Generally, only published works are included and, for some reason, these works must include observations by the author on more than one region of the present geographic entity recognized as Canada. It is clear from a brief perusal of the volume, but not stated explicitly in the preface, that only works published in the English language are included. As a result, while this bibliography represents a massive amount of work on the part of the contributors, it is a narrow one, both in terms of subject and source.

Each of the entries in the bibliography includes a critical synopsis of the work. The entries are ordered chronologically by date of publication. The contributors include an author/title index as well as a subject index. This work would be of use to students interested in travel literature as a genre or, in fact, to anyone interested in Canadian history looking to buttress primary research with published works which may or may not be available in this country.

The introduction to the bibliography attempts to make some generalizations about the literature included in the volume. It includes a questionable statement regarding the more empathetic perception of aboriginal people by writers of travel literature on Canada as opposed to that written by white Americans in the nineteenth century. While Elizabeth Waterston’s statement may be correct insofar as it concerns Anna Jameson’s Winter Studies and Summer Rambles, it is unlikely to be defensible when one considers the variety of authors, relative quality and time span assumed in the notion of “travel literature about Canada.”

The contributors to this work created a data base which includes more extensive bibliographic information concerning the topic of travel literature. The INMAGIC data base is available and accessible through the University of Guelph library.

Travel literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has long been a popular source for historians wishing to depict and analyze foreign perceptions of Canadians. The most familiar examples of the genre have been written by American, British and French authors or diarists. In many instances, such travel literature was originally written for the purpose of encouraging others to visit or emigrate to Canada. Johan Schröder’s volume on his experience in North America, published in the 1860s, fits this categorization. What makes his work unusual — particularly in the context of travel literature from the period which survives — is that it was intended for a Scandinavian audience.

Orm Øverland, who both edited and translated the work, provides an extensive analysis of Schröder’s writings. Øverland’s analysis represents the most useful aspect of the publication because it is contextual. He includes biographical details of Schröder and places his experience within the context of Norwegian immigration to North America in the nineteenth century. Schröder himself was most interested in describing and assessing the agricultural possibilities of the Canadian colonies, although there are references to aboriginal people, aspects of parochialism and the like. His opinion of the colonies was at best mixed. Schröder ended by settling in the American mid-west.


McGill University began to highlight its special collections in the first volume of Fontanus. In this, the second volume, the general editor, Hans Möller, includes articles on a variety of unique or special items held by the university’s libraries as well as an assessment of the career of Margaret Ridley Charlton, a McGill medical librarian and student of medical history. Perhaps of most interest to Archivaria readers is an essay by Raymond Klibansky entitled “Hidden Treasures at McGill: A Survey of Manuscripts and Historical Documents.” Klibansky provides an overview of manuscripts held by McGill University in a variety of locations. For the purposes of description, the manuscripts are subdivided into two main categories: oriental and western. The western category is further sub-divided by geographic location of origin subject, and time period. What is perhaps most fascinating about the survey is the number and variety of non-Canadian items held by the McGill, including Arabic and Muslim manuscripts, medieval European works, Greek papyri, etc. Klibansky stresses the importance of ensuring that such archival and special collections are well described and publicized. He calls for a detailed catalogue of the university’s special collections and manuscripts.

Fontanus also includes a brief description of archival and special acquisitions made by McGill during the course of the previous year. This is a striking and unusual publication of bibliographic and antiquarian curios, featuring tasteful graphics and superior paper.

In 1969 and 1987, the University of Manitoba received the papers of Charles Gordon (Ralph Connor) from his children. The archive described in this finding aid reflects the man’s interests and vocation. Both the preface and the biographical sketch included in this published inventory of the papers underline the importance the university’s library places on this record of Gordon’s life. An ordained Protestant minister, Gordon sought to influence society both by his own example and through the fiction he penned under the name Ralph Connor, which received a wide audience in Britain and North America prior to the First World War.

The papers run to forty-eight volumes (no indication of measured extent is provided) of textual material and ten folders of photographic material. The textual material is divided by subject into several series to reflect Charles Gordon’s private and business life, his career as a minister, his literary work and the like. A partial index to the archive, which lists names of some of the individuals with whom Gordon corresponded, is also included. Maura Taylor Pennington and Susan Bellay, who arranged and described the archive, have also thoughtfully provided a listing of the repositories throughout the country where one will find related Gordon (or Connor) material.

This guide is published through the assistance of the Social Science and Humanities Research Council. It is crucial that large and textured archives, like Charles Gordon’s, receive sufficient financial support to ensure their description and conservation. The finding aid to such an archive is published and disseminated, one may assume, to ensure that the papers are used. In a time of increasing automation but shrinking resources, it is a surprise — albeit a pleasant one — to find publications such as this one.


In 1986, to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the creation of the office of Queen’s Printer, the Department of Supply and Services commissioned a book on the history of official printing in Canada. The resulting publication, written by Hana Aach, is a highly readable and anecdotal portrait of government printing. While it is obvious that the author has spent some time researching the subject, this is not a scholarly work in the conventional sense. No exact source notes are included. As a result, it is impossible to link specific statements in the work to primary or secondary sources, be they textual or oral testimony.

In general, this story is presented in chronological fashion, depicting the origins of printing in the Canadian colonies through monopoly printing and finally to the establishment of the Queen’s Printer as an office of government. Nonetheless, this book actually begins with a description of the printing of the contemporary Hansard. While interesting, its presence is slightly jarring in a publication which claims to cover only the years to 1900.

The narrative flow of the work is broken visually throughout the publication by side bars which contain short accounts of interesting individuals or events related to the
main story line. This volume was published in 1990, shortly after the one hundredth anniversary of the opening of Canada’s Printing Bureau. In line with government printing policy, the work is also available as Impressions: la petite histoire de l’Imprimeur national, de l’époque des pionniers à l’année 1900.

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