

Watson designed her personal Canadian albums to tell a story different from the one she presents in *Romantic Canada*. Rooney also claims that the images were difficult to date. Yet of the photographs in both the *Rediscovery* catalogue and *Working Light*, exact dates are provided in the former publication, but left out in the latter. Apart from a brief and general treatment of Watson's place in photography in her time, as well as some commentary on her compositional techniques, there is little critical examination of the images, save for the one page that discusses minor details about the photographs.

Despite all of the valuable factual information *Working Light* provides, it did not raise, for me, the questions and answers that the front end flap summary promised. Although in *Working Light* Rooney claims to want to encourage further research on Watson, this may prove difficult for other researchers because of a lack of clear references. By neglecting to discuss the photographs critically, by changing their size for publication, and by imposing an order and unknown selection process on a small number of Watson's Canadian images, Rooney presents only part of Watson's story. Rooney explains that she had originally planned to make the book "a full-length biography with twelve photographs," but that she settled instead on its current format because "a book about Edith—especially the first book—that is all tell and almost no show would clearly be going about the whole thing backwards" (p. viii). I would have preferred greater insight into a more select group of photographs. Such a book would have allowed readers to come to know Watson in context. This book may be good as a popular biography, but Rooney's statement that her book is not as "academic" as other books (p. viii) does not excuse the fact that she has made it difficult, even for a member of the general public, to get a full picture of Edith Watson, her life, and her work. Rooney claims that the format she chose for the book was a "tradeoff" that was "worth it" (p. viii). Ultimately, I question whether it was worth it for the reader or for the legacy of Edith S. Watson.

Rita S. Mogyorosi
University of Victoria

Guide to Oral History Collections in Canada/Guide des fonds d'histoire orale au Canada. NORMAND FORTIER. Ottawa: Canadian Oral History Association/Société canadienne d'histoire orale, 1993. Text in English and French. 402 p. Index. ISBN 0-9697895-1-3.

Samuel Johnson, arguing the case for oral history as a way of documenting the 1745 rebellion, once stated, "You are to consider, all history was at first oral." Events documented by oral history would often be documented less thoroughly, if at all, in other forms. This is especially true of aboriginal cultures. To

preserve or collaborate in creating oral history places the archivist squarely in the political arena, at the most extreme choosing whether to become actively involved in the creation of the historical record, or allowing potentially valuable historical information to disappear forever. This book illustrates the value of the former position.

The Canadian Oral History Association's *Guide to Oral History Collections in Canada* fills a huge gap in the need for organized access to the vast amount of material available in repositories throughout the country. This compilation includes "recorded recollections relating to any aspect of an interviewee's life." In general it does not include oral tradition material, or radio and television interviews. It is also naturally limited by those who responded to the questionnaires – 661 out of 1035 – although all major repositories appear to be included.

In his preface to the book, reviewer Richard Lohead notes that "it was the archival community which was instrumental in the creation of an oral history association." The archival hand is certainly far more evident in the arrangement of this book than others covering similar material. Allen Smith's *Directory of Oral History Collections* lists by repository, and Ellen Wasserman's *Oral History Index* lists by interviewee or collection title. The book under review lists by *fonds* or collection title, which makes for some difficulties in access, but provides a good foundation for resolution of these difficulties in future versions.

My first question as I looked through this book was format – would this not be more useful as part of a database, perhaps attached to a library system? Space in the current version allows for a subject index, but not a name index. Locating material on a particular person or organization can only be done by a laborious search through individual entries. An electronic version would greatly facilitate searching and ultimately lead to the possibility of exploring links to related material in other media, when at least *fonds*-level descriptions of all archival records are made available electronically. In his introduction Normand Fortier notes that an electronic version is a future possibility.

E-mail addresses of institutions would also be useful; perhaps future questionnaires for repositories could be revised to include requests for these. An easier addition would be the inclusion of a list of repositories responding to the questionnaire. While they are listed in the context of the guide, a separate list would facilitate a quick and useful check.

Considerable difference exists in the level of detail and manner of reporting from different repositories. Some entries are listed under the name of interviewer, some the interviewee. Some names are in natural order, some with the last name first. Standardization of descriptions may still be a distant dream, but a book of this comprehensiveness highlights their desirability.

No doubt a few Studs Terkels and Barry Broadfoots are already working on projects that this book facilitates. For this we have Normand Fortier and the Canadian Oral History Association, who nurtured the development of this

book, to thank, as well as the many others whose industry and foresight resulted in the gathering and preservation of the material that this book describes. I look forward to future versions of this project.

Francis Mansbridge

North Vancouver Museum & Archives

A Guide to the Fonds d'Archives and Collections in the Holdings of the York University Archives. BARBARA L. CRAIG and PETER D. JAMES. Toronto: ECW Press, 1995. 636 pages. Index. ISBN 1-55022-229-5 9 (hard-cover).

A Guide to the Fonds d'Archives and Collections in the Holdings of the York University Archives is a guide to the corporate archives of York University as well as the private archives deposited there as of 31 December 1993. It is arranged in four parts: the introduction, which explains how to read the entries, how to access the material, and how access might be restricted; listings of the archives of York University including the records of faculties, departments, and administrative offices; listings of the private *fonds d'archives* and collections that comprise the archives of organizations and of individuals not directly associated with York, which were acquired to support research and teaching programmes; and ten appendices which provide additional information about standards, procedures, and information systems at York.

The 452 entries on 567 pages are described using the *Rules for Archival Description (RAD)* of the Bureau of Canadian Archivists. The fonds entries are broken down, where necessary, into separate entries for fonds groups and fonds record series. As these are listed in alphabetical order according to the title of the fonds, I found the table of contents difficult to read. The hierarchical order of the records would be more readable if the titles of the fonds groups and fonds record series were indented from the primary fonds entry and if a bold font was used on the surname or key alphabetized word. An index by name and an index by subject at the back of the guide do aid the user in searching the material. It is explained that new fonds and accruals to existing fonds acquired after 1993 can be found at York University on the Archives database, which is regularly updated, and further details can be found in the finding aids available in the Archives and Special Collections reading room.

The entries are informative, giving a brief history or biography of the creator of the fonds, scope and content notes, and references to related records in the York University Archives. Private records include the fonds of Robert Borden, George Brown, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Margaret Laurence, Ben Wicks, and several Canadian historians. A drawing and quotation from the bill bissett fonds have been used to introduce the guide.