

**A Guide to Manuscripts relating to America in Great Britain and Ireland.** Edited by JOHN W. RAIMO. Westport, Conn.: Meckler Books, 1979. xxv, 467 p. (British Association of American Studies) ISBN 0 930466 063 \$79.50.

**Britain and the Dominions. A Guide to Business and Related Records in the United Kingdom concerning Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa.** CHARLES A. JONES. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1978. xviii, 253 p. (Reference Publication in International Historical Statistics) ISBN 0 8161 8153 5 \$59.50.

**The British Insurance Business, 1547-1970.** An Introduction and Guide to Historical Records in the United Kingdom. H.A.L. COCKERELL and EDWIN GREEN. London: Heinemann, 1976. viii, 142 p. ill. ISBN 0 435 32211 7 \$13.75 (Available from the Book Society of Canada, Box 200, Agincourt, Ont., M1S 3B6.)

The history of Canada cannot be written without reference to documentary resources available in Great Britain and Ireland, an axiom which has equal applicability for all of the English-speaking world and many nations beyond. Fortunately for foreign researchers, a number of broad, systematic inventories of relevant documentation in the British Isles have been compiled over the last two decades. Even more fortunately, considering the neglect on the part of our archivists and scholars, three guides have recently appeared which have direct relevance for Canada.

John W. Raimo's *A Guide to Manuscripts Relating to America in Great Britain and Ireland (Revised Edition)* is the successor to the pioneering reference work of the same name published in 1961 by Bernard R. Crick and Miriam Alman. The changes on the British archival scene in the last two decades fully justify Raimo's revision of the Crick and Alman *Guide*. Since the 1960s local and county record offices in Great Britain have grown rapidly both in size and professionalism. Increasingly systematic efforts have been made to provide researchers with suitable handlists and indexes which have helped make larger collections more accessible. Much material which formerly was in private hands has passed into the public domain. Apart from the bulk of documentation which has become available since 1961, there has been a relative change in the type of material uncovered. While the original Crick and Alman *Guide* was strongest in the field of political history, the majority of new accessions listed in the revised guide more frequently relate to the fields of economic, social and immigration history, a reflection both of the widening interests of scholars and the broader acquisition priorities of archivists.

The new guide reflects the growing diversity of British resources by its increase in size; it is a full 65 per cent longer than its predecessor and it contains new listings for more than 100 institutions, many of which were not in existence two decades ago. Canadians can be thankful that the *Guide* covers not only manuscripts related to American history, but also Canadian material "of even marginal relevance to the American colonies or the United States" up to Confederation. Indeed, the *Guide* occasionally steps over the qualification of "marginal relevance" to cover matters of purely internal Canadian interest. Such coverage, however, is erratic and seems to depend largely upon the submissions made by individual archives. In the case of the Devon Record Office, for instance, the *Guide* does mention its Simcoe Papers and the correspondence in its collection of Sidmouth Papers covering negotiations with the U.S.A. concerning the Canadian boundary. It does not, however, mention the extensive official and personal correspondence of Sidmouth with Simcoe, Selkirk, Desbarres, Macdonnell or Hunter. The *Guide* also does not cover the Devon Record Office's Carwithen Manuscripts which contain 236 letters concerning Terry's Plantation, Newfoundland, nor the Studly Family of Waddleton Court—muniments which hold 25 letters and documents relating to property in St. John's. In a day's searching in the record office, I found sixteen additional small collections of which the

greater part concerned Canadian businesses and the fisheries. Raimo's *Guide* cannot be treated as an exhaustive listing of Canadian material, nor is it intended to be.

One matter in which Raimo has diverged from Crick and Alman has been in his heavy reliance upon the knowledge of British archivists. Whereas entries for the 1961 *Guide* were compiled during a field survey by a team of archivists and scholars versed in American history, the revised *Guide* has relied upon correspondence with appropriate individuals and institutions. The tactic was originally adopted as a matter of economy, but Raimo is inclined to make a virtue of necessity: "early in the project we discovered that the familiarity of archivists and librarians with their own holdings meant that in many cases documents which might have been overlooked by a less knowledgeable researcher were instead brought to our attention." My own interest in visiting thirty British repositories looking for Canadian material is that extensive searches of this kind must be a reciprocal effort between those with a specialized knowledge of the collections held and those who possess a general knowledge of the type of material being sought. Many British archivists who initially believed they had no material of Canadian relevance subsequently could produce substantial amounts when reminded of the possible relevance, for instance, of local municipal, customs and poor law records, papers concerning transatlantic trade, and material public and private relating to local emigration.

Given the nature of his survey, it is not surprising that there is less standardization in Raimo's entries than in Crick and Alman's, but in general his entries are more laconic and less informative than the earlier ones. Many entries are lists of selected documents and suffer from a lack of exegesis which would place them in the larger context of their collections. Footnotes are numbered separately for each entry, but grouped all together at the bottom of the page, a rather confusing procedure. The editor has made a Herculean effort to reference printed editions of manuscripts in the footnotes and to indicate published works and theses which have made extensive use of various collections. Rather surprisingly, however, published inventories of collections are not always mentioned. The double columns of print used in the book and the small typeface are undoubtedly space savers, but the very comprehensive index lists only page numbers and one must often expend substantial amounts of time searching for references. The *Guide* suffers as well from the lack of a general introduction to each repository giving details of the organization of its reference systems.

These criticisms, however, are minor when placed against the substance of what this volume and its editor have achieved. Raimo's *Guide*, like its predecessor, is going to be a bible for British-American scholarship for at least the next two decades.

Charles Jones has produced an inventory which is more modest in scope than Raimo's, but impressive in its accomplishments. Jones, a professor in the Department of International Studies at the University of Warwick, has compiled *Britain and the Dominions: A Guide to Business and Related Records in the United Kingdom concerning Australia, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa*. Jones defines business broadly as encompassing not only industry and commerce, but following earlier usage, agriculture, pastoralism and even mere ownership of land. The guide has no pretensions to definitiveness: the editor has compiled it himself in the incredibly short period of two years and has of necessity ignored many firms and repositories which might contain material. Still, what he has accomplished is imposing. In addition to working through the relevant repositories listed in the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts' *Record Repositories in Great Britain* (London, 1973), together with libraries in larger towns and cities, Jones contacted more than 500 firms known to have substantial trading or investment links with the Dominions. By my count, he has produced listings for 215 repositories, a sizeable 45 per cent of which are company or personal archives. Jones gives 650 entries, of which 55 per cent are of relevance to Canada. The general style of entry is detailed and informative. Jones often presents a brief history of the company or individual whose records he is

summarizing. Like Raimo, Jones omits any general introduction to the inventories and indexes of the repositories he lists, although this is less serious in his case since so many of the archives of concern to him are not intended for general public access and would not have developed reference systems.

The first two books mentioned in this review are designed as inventories of defined groups of documents; the third, H.A.L. Cockerell and Edwin Green's *The British Insurance Business: 1547-1970* is a much more complex and sophisticated undertaking. Cockerell and Green claim that, with some exceptions in the instance of fire insurance, British insurance records are a totally neglected source for the study of social and economic history. The authors undertake to rectify this neglect not only by listing available material, but by explaining the function and potential uses of these records. The first half of the book consists of five essays, one each on marine, fire, life, and accident insurance with a final chapter on the financial framework of British insurance. Each essay contains a summation of the historical development of a specific sector of the insurance business, designed to give the researcher general background on the market, growth and changing specialties of the various companies over time. The essays offer, too, basic information on the size and significance of the major companies and the linkages among them. Various types of documents are reproduced in the essays and their functioning carefully explained so that a researcher may use them with confidence. Extensive suggestions are made of research possibilities not only in the area of business history but for such fields as demography, group biography, science of technology and architectural history.

In keeping with the high calibre of the essays, the four inventories at the end of the volume are quite detailed. The first inventory lists alphabetically the history and surviving records of some 300 British insurance companies, operational or defunct, giving the date of establishment, the type of insurance offered, the geographical market served and "linkages"—a section which traces changes in ownership and name, amalgamation and acquisitions of other companies and lists sister companies who share the same board of directors. Records to the companies are classified in nine major groups, including, for example, accounts, actuarial records, and claim registers. Also inventoried in separate sections are marine insurance underwriters' risk books with their present location, the records of local insurance agents and the records of insurance institutions and associations. Given the heavy involvement of British insurance companies in the Canadian market, there is much in these listings to interest Canadian researchers. British fire insurance companies, just as an instance, had captured two-thirds of the Canadian market by 1900.

The interest in inventoring manuscripts in Great Britain relative to other nations is reflected by the wide range of institutions and associations which have sponsored the publications under review. The *Guide to Manuscripts Relating to America* . . . is a project of the British Association for American Studies, funded by the American Embassy in London and the United States-United Kingdom Educational Commission and housed by the Department of American Studies at the University of Manchester. *Britain and the Dominions* . . . was financed by the British Social Science Research Council and centered at the Institute for Commonwealth Studies at the University of London. Many of those associated with it are also active participants in the British Association for Canadian Studies. Finally, *The British Insurance Business* was sponsored by the British Insurance Association with the encouragement of the Chartered Insurance Institute and the Business Archives Council. One wishes it were possible to say that these inventories represent a new trend to which Canadians will be quick to respond. Unfortunately for the trend is a very well established one. In addition to the classic guides to American material produced at the beginning of this century, inventories of relevant records in Great Britain have been published for South and Southeast Asia (1965), Africa (1971), Australia, New Zealand

and the Pacific (1972), the Caribbean (1973) and the Far East (1977).\*

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**Guide to the Modern Records Centre.** Compiled by RICHARD STOREY and JANET DRUKER. Coventry, England: University of Warwick Library, 1977. 152 p. ISBN 0 903220 01 6 \$4.00.

**The Taff Vale Case: A Guide to the ASRS Records.** Compiled by CHRISTINE WOODLAND, edited by RICHARD STOREY. Coventry, England: University of Warwick Library, 1978. 28 p. ISBN 0 903220 02 4 \$1.00.

**The Osborne Case Papers and Other Records of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants.** Compiled by CHRISTINE WOODLAND, edited by RICHARD STOREY. Coventry, England: University of Warwick Library, 1979. 48 p. ISBN 0 903220 03 2 \$1.25.

**A Guide to Labour Papers in the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.** Compiled and edited by F. GERALD HAM and MARGARET HEDSTROM. Madison, Wisc.: State Historical Society, 1978. 137 p. ISBN 0 87020 177 8 \$5.00. (Available from SHS, 816 State Street, Madison, Wisc. 53706)

In 1973 a group of academics at the University of Warwick in Coventry applied to the Leverhulme Trust Fund for a grant to finance the establishment of a Modern Records Centre (MRC) devoted chiefly to the collection of Labour records in the West Midlands region of England. The University of Warwick Library's second Occasional Publication, *Guide to the Modern Records Centre*, is a summary listing of the material obtained during the first four years of the Centre's existence. Perhaps the most notable aspect of the *Guide*, given the brevity of the collecting period it represents, is the sheer bulk of the records described. No less than 136 principal holdings are listed, and although extent is seldom specified in the entries, it is evident that the Centre has managed to assemble a most impressive collection of records pertaining not only to national and local unions, but also to political parties, pressure groups, businesses, individuals, and other sources.

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\*Charles M. Andrews, *Guide to the Materials for American History, to 1783, in the Public Record Office of Great Britain*. 2 vols., Washington, D.C. 1912-14; Charles M. Andrews and Frances G. Davenport, *Guide to the Manuscript Materials for the History of the United States to 1783, in the British Museum, in Minor London Archives and in the Libraries of Oxford and Cambridge*. Washington, D.C. 1908; Charles O. Paullin and Frederic L. Paxson, *Guide to the Materials in London Archives for the History of the United States since 1783*, Washington, D.C., 1914. N. Mathews and M. Wainwright, *A Guide to Manuscripts and Documents in the British Isles Relating to South and South East Asia*. London: Oxford University Press, 1965; N. Mathews and M. Wainwright, *A Guide to Manuscripts and Documents in the British Isles Relating to Africa*. London: Oxford University Press, 1971; Phyllis Mander-Jones, *Manuscripts in the British Isles Relating to Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific*. Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1972; Peter Walne, *A Guide to Manuscript Sources for the History of Latin America and the Caribbean in the British Isles*. London: Oxford University Press, 1973; N. Mathews and M. Wainwright, *A Guide to Manuscripts and Documents in the British Isles Relating to the Far East*. London: Oxford University Press, 1977.