

# *The Origins and Aims of the Master of Archival Studies Programme at the University of British Columbia*

by **TERRY EASTWOOD**

In September 1981, an inaugural class of ten students enrolled in the Master of Archival Studies Programme at the University of British Columbia. That class, which graduates in 1983, is the first ever in this country to study archives and prepare for professional archival work in a separate program of studies for aspiring archivists. How the program came about and what it is trying to do are matters of no small concern to Canadian archivists and archives.

For several years prior to the inception of the program, the Canadian archival community was aware that something was brewing at the University of British Columbia. Few archivists knew exactly who was doing the brewing and what intoxicating academic drink they had in mind, for universities tend to consult whom they will when they judge they have a need in order to fulfil their mandate. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, a great many courses of study were established in Canadian universities to meet society's need for trained professionals but, despite approaches from the archival community, no school or program of archival studies surfaced anywhere in North America, though the literature on the subject does not lack discussion of, and proposals aimed to meet, the educational requirements of the archival profession.

Before turning to an examination of the origins of the Master of Archival Studies Programme, let us look at the stance towards education taken by the profession in Canada and the United States in recent years. Leaving aside in-service training programs, short institutes for working archivists, and other efforts at continuing education, all of which have their rightful place in a national scheme of education and training of archivists, we are left with the issue of pre-appointment education for aspiring archivists. In that realm, recent Canadian experience stands in contrast to that in the United States.

In June 1976, after several years of debate in the archival community, the newly-formed Association of Canadian Archivists (ACA), which was a transmutation of the Archives Section of the Canadian Historical Association, adopted a document drafted by Hugh Taylor and Edwin Welch entitled "Guidelines Towards a Curriculum for Graduate Archival Training Leading to a Master's Degree in Archival Science." Perhaps because the matter of archival education had been on the agenda of Canadian archivists for so long and the majority of archivists at the first annual meeting of the ACA agreed on the need for a university-based education for archivists, the guidelines passed with little debate. Whether through modesty,

penury, or oversight, the guidelines were never published and hence are accessible only with great pain. They are published as an appendix to this article. The authors of the guidelines, who were members of the Education Committee of the Association of Canadian Archivists, consulted with their fellow committee members and with members of the Education and Professional Development Committee of the Society of American Archivists (SAA). In a prefatory note, the authors spoke of “the substantial measure of agreement” then existing between the two societies, which nevertheless issued separate guidelines. Whatever the scope of agreement, the two sets of guidelines differ on a vital issue.

The ACA’s guidelines were constructed so as not to restrict initiatives to establish a separate program of studies leading to a master’s degree in a Canadian university. The guidelines called for a program extending over “a maximum of 30 weeks full time or its equivalent part time” with an additional “operational assignment of 3 months,” in effect, virtually a full year’s study. Taylor and Welch made no firm recommendation as to where in the university the program should be located, whether in a library school, history department, or even a school of management studies — the three places they mentioned — but recognized that the crux of the matter involved finding “a type of program acceptable to the university as well as to the profession.” Following approval of the guidelines, a number of universities quietly investigated establishing a program of professional education for archivists with greater or lesser degrees of consultation with the profession, whether through the ACA’s Education Committee or less formally. Meanwhile, evidence began to accumulate that Canadian archivists had indeed reached a consensus about the need for a separate, university-based program of studies for aspiring archivists. In August 1978, the Consultative Group on Canadian Archives asked the heads of Canadian archival institutions which of the several options for educating archivists then being canvassed in the profession they preferred. The response showed “a strong preference for a master’s program in archival science.”<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that no Canadian library school or history department, or any other body for that matter, came close to offering a program of studies to meet the guidelines, and that the great preponderance of Canadian archivists currently holding professional positions have university degrees in history, very often at the graduate level. In essence, the profession pronounced its own preparation for archival work inadequate to the task and called for change. Where C.P. Stacey had called for trained historians to staff public archives in his report for the Massey Commission published in 1951,<sup>2</sup> thirty years later the very people he called forth judged that something else was required.

In the United States, the SAA eschewed giving support in its 1977 “Guidelines for a Graduate Minor or Concentration in Archival Education”<sup>3</sup> to the concept of an autonomous program of education for archivists. In the society’s view, “the most appropriate education is the master’s degree level or above, with specialization in history or archival administration.”<sup>4</sup> That judgement reflected the conclusion of the

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1 *Canadian Archives: Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada by the Consultative Group on Canadian Archives* (Ottawa, 1980) p. 78.

2 C.P. Stacey, “Canadian Archives,” *Royal Commission Studies: A Selection of Essays Prepared for the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences* (Ottawa, 1951), pp. 238, 240.

3 The guidelines were published in *The American Archivist* 41 (January 1978): 105-06.

4 *SAA Newsletter* (March 1982) p. 3, under the heading “What is an archivist?”

society's Committee for the 1970s that "our best interests as a profession are not served by attempts to develop separate degree programs in our universities and colleges for archives administration."<sup>5</sup> And, to some extent, that viewpoint reflected Robert Warner's argument that the profession should begin its deliberation about education with the premise that "at present the archival discipline is too narrow a base on which to build a comprehensive educational program."<sup>6</sup> The SAA's decision in effect endorsed the several programs then in existence which offered a graduate minor in archival study. It would seem that the existence of vested interest within universities, which was virtually absent in Canada, and the great diversity of the American profession caused the SAA to temporize once again on the question of separate education, as it had done in the past.

Now, it cannot be said that the Canadian guidelines led directly to the Master of Archival Studies Programme. The best that can be said is that Canadian archivists through the ACA sent a clear signal to the universities. With such an equivocal signal from the American profession, it is little wonder no separate master's program has surfaced in the United States. Universities will naturally be loath to institute a program apparently not wanted by the profession. The great virtue of the Canadian position was that it did not act as a deterrent to the establishment of a program of education for archivists suitable to both the university and the archival profession.

It is not possible now, if it ever will be, to tell the full story of the origins and development of the Master of Archival Studies Programme, but the salient details are clear. Someone always has to take the initiative in these matters. It was the then Director of the School of Librarianship, Professor Roy Stokes, now retired, who first bruited the idea of a program of studies for archivists at the University of British Columbia. No doubt influenced by his English background, Professor Stokes' interest in establishing archival studies began with his desire to see paleography taught on the campus, but from that starting point he and his colleagues went on to justify a program which in the final outcome somehow broke the skein of controversy, false starts, and disappointment which has been the history of archival education in this country. Ironically, paleography, which along with other so-called auxiliary sciences of history gave European archival education a ready entrée in the university, did not become part of the curriculum of the program as it finally appeared because paleography is not a subject of practical use to the majority of Canadian archivists

Professor Stokes initiated discussions with departments which had an interest in archival studies, and eventually a steering committee made up of Professors Jean Elder and David Breen from the History Department and Richard Bernard and Stokes himself from the School of Librarianship was formed. After consultation in the university and with professional archivists, the committee made a proposal to the Faculty of Arts Curriculum Committee for a one-year diploma program, which was returned with the advice that it be improved and expanded or abandoned. After more consultation inside and outside the university, another proposal for a two-year

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5 Philip F. Mason, "The Society of American Archivists in the Seventies: Report of the Committee for the 1970s," *American Archivist* 35 (April 1972): 209.

6 Robert M. Warner, "Archival Training in the United States and Canada," *American Archivist* 35 (July-October 1972): 358.

master's degree program made its way through to the Senate Curriculum Committee. Along the way, the proposal received the kind of probing examination given all new programs. For various reasons — opposition to the program, university politics, and no doubt uncertainty about exactly why archivists needed to be educated at the university — the Senate Curriculum Committee recommended that the program *not* be approved. Professor Stokes was in the audience when that recommendation was considered by the Senate. Before the Senate ruled on the recommendation, he was asked to speak on behalf of the proposal. What he said had no small part in the Senate's remarkable decision to reject the recommendation of its Curriculum Committee and approve the program. Later the Universities Council of British Columbia, which must approve all new courses of study requiring additional funding, recommended to the provincial government that the program be funded, which it was. Neither is it possible nor would it be seemly to rehearse the travails of the proposal in the university and archivists' reaction to it, but it is possible and instructive to examine the program as it now stands in light of the needs of the profession and the capabilities of the university.

The Master of Archival Studies degree is jointly administered by the School of Librarianship and the Department of History, but students and faculty involved in archival studies are part of the school. The school also offers the Master of Library Science degree, but the two programs are separate save in the sense that students from either program may elect certain courses in the other program when it is deemed appropriate. Like the Master of Library Science, the Master of Archival Studies degree is a two-year, full-time program. The location and administration of the archival program dictates that it accommodate itself to the academic and administrative milieu of the school and, to a lesser extent, to the academic milieu of the History Department. There is a certain logic and much that is practical in allying archival studies with library and historical studies. Archival and library studies share a professional orientation, and archival administration is infused with an historical perspective. In a practical sense, archival studies had to find a locus in the university. A completely separate school for archival studies, given the scale of the program, was simply impracticable. If practical considerations to some extent ruled the placement of the archival studies program, determining and implementing the curricular relationship between archival studies and library and historical studies presents the real challenge.

Recent North American literature on the subject of archival education almost always touches upon the desirability and justification of locating archival studies in either a library school or a department of history. There is little to be gained by rehearsing the arguments that have been put forward on both sides, but it is worth noting that few writers who have examined the question have expressed satisfaction with what library schools or history departments had actually been able to accomplish at any given time. In Canada, library schools have virtually restricted themselves to courses on archival subjects designed with the limited object of familiarizing people who were expected to be librarians with archival materials and procedures, although a declining job market for graduates has encouraged some schools to venture further into the field and particularly into records management, where society's needs are not nearly being met by available training. Still, Canada avoided the worst sort of growth pains that seem inevitably to occur where no clear commitment is made to archival studies. Archival concentrations in library schools

and public history programs — historians' answer to market conditions — blessedly did not take hold in Canada. An adequate job market is crucial to the success of a sound program, and nothing would be worse for the profession than competition among numerous, unsatisfactory programs.

That much said, there still remains the question of the importance of historical studies in the archivist's making, a matter of practical as well as philosophical importance in the design of an archival studies program. What are the academic qualifications required of students admitted to the program? And, what course of studies will be offered? In essence, many North American writers on the subject of archival education have called for graduate level education combining historical and archival studies. They have varied only in the emphasis they would give to each. Certainly, few have been prepared to dispense with historical studies in the education of archivists. The university's steering committee considered making the requirement for admittance to the program an honours degree in history, but eventually decided to allow a broader qualification, which was finally stated as "a bachelor's degree from a recognized university in a relevant discipline...."<sup>7</sup> However, students who lack a background in historical studies may take elective courses in history or allied disciplines with an historical dimension. In addition, all students are required to take a course in historical methods and Canadian historiography which is specially taught with their needs in mind. It is a delicate matter to assess the importance and relevance of historical studies in the overall education of archivists. For both practical and principled reasons, the Master of Archival Studies program was designed as a compromise between what we have had, archivists with historical studies who serve an apprenticeship, and a course of purely professional studies, much like what exists in the library profession.

Before turning to an outline of the curriculum of the program, there is the question of teaching faculty, aims and methods. Taylor and Welch recognized that we suffer what British archivist and archival educator Michael Cook has called "a world shortage of academic archivists."<sup>8</sup> Hence, the guidelines encouraged universities "to attract experienced archivists with some teaching experience who are prepared to develop their teaching skills.... The problems can only be overcome when archival teaching is recognized as a separate branch of teaching." The university made one full-time faculty position available to the program. Some courses are taught by existing faculty in the school or other departments, and others by sessional or adjunct faculty. Lack of knowledge of archives clearly limits the contribution of faculty in other disciplines, and part-time faculty, however knowledgeable they are, cannot be expected to make the same order of contribution as full-time faculty. To some extent there is a conundrum here. To acquire more faculty with the specialized knowledge necessary to teach in the program requires that the program be a success, and to be a success the program will need more specialized faculty. Some writers about archival education have attempted to catalogue the various disciplines upon which full-blooded archival studies ought to call. The experience of the first two years of the program suggests that seeking relevant elective courses in other disciplines is problematical. Though students are

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7 For the full text, see Appendix 2.

8 Michael Cook, "The Planning of an Archives School," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 5 (April 1972): 243.

often disappointed in their search for relevant courses, the need for direct relevance must not be exaggerated. Strenuous cries for relevance are the sign of the growth of professional blinkers. In our effort to create autonomous professional education, we need not discard a regard for learning we will need if we are to avoid becoming mere technicians. In the long run, however, the solution will not be found in more efficient shopping in other curricula. Archival studies faculty members must incorporate the desired elements of other disciplines' learning and methodology in their own curricula. In that way, we shall create what we so earnestly seek, a discipline worthy of study in its own right.

In that vein, the first purpose of professional education, a purpose which ought to permeate everything students are asked to do, is to inculcate a body of general principles, a theoretical framework, if you will, which supports and guides the actual practice of the profession. Knowledge of the guiding principles of the archival profession prepares students for sound practice. Students must be made to ask why things are done, not simply how they are done. They must critically examine how and why professional practice has evolved as it has. Where principles do not apply or need amplification or modification, they must see why. The whole exercise in fact requires students to distil from reading, study, and practical work the framework of ideas that will guide them in their day-to-day work as professional archivists. Were this not the prime purpose of university education for archivists, we would be better off with some version of an apprenticeship plan, which is what we have had and what we increasingly find unsatisfactory. Coming to grips with the principles which ought to guide professional practice and with the nature, purposes, and uses of archives is, to judge by the limited experience of the program, just as demanding of students' intellect as any study they have done at university. We should not be betrayed by the practical aspects of administering archives into thinking education for archivists is primarily an osmotic process of learning how it is done. Indeed, students will hone their professional skills in proportion as they learn to analyse what is being done and why it is being done. In this regard, Francis Blouin suggests a revealing comparison between early legal education and the recent history of archival education.<sup>9</sup> In much the same way that the legal profession initially resisted the case method of educating lawyers because that method supposedly removed law from a high philosophical plane, our profession in North America has resisted rigorous professional education based on a study of the practice of archival administration, in the broadest sense of administration, because it was feared we would lose the intellectual substance and status we derive from our roots in historical study. At bottom such thinking is a disavowal of the breadth and depth of principle that archivists have striven to build into their practice and of the quality of thought that they must exhibit in their day-to-day work. It is not a case of denying or discarding the perspectives with which the profession has been built, but rather a case of building a rounded professional discipline with its own distinctive perspective. To a large extent that perspective already exists, which, to my mind, is the explanation of why we in Canada finally have a course of studies for archivists in the university.

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9 Francis X. Blouin, Jr., "The Relevance of the Case Method to Archival Training," *American Archivist* 41 (January 1977): 37-44.

The second purpose is to give students the opportunity to acquire knowledge of a host of subjects they will find useful and a variety of matters they will have to deal with when they get a job. Primarily, they must have a knowledge of the nature of records, record-keeping, and archives, and the dimensions of basic archival functions, but they will be expected to study the use of archives, the development of the profession, and as much as possible about the world and workings of archivists and archival institutions. In the end, however, it is as important for students to know what they will need to know and how they may learn it than it is to insist upon comprehensiveness. Efforts to detail curriculum to the nth degree sometimes read as a parody of education.

The third purpose, and the one most troublesome in a university setting, is to build skills. A surgeon must know how to use a scalpel, a dentist a drill, and a lawyer a law book. An archivist must know how to identify a series of records, construct an inventory, arrange a body of manuscripts, describe a photograph, or preserve a map. Certain tasks can be brought to the classroom, but skill-building removed from a practical setting is fraught with dangers. Despite the shortcomings of the classroom, students must acquire a repertoire of basic skills that will allow them to be productive the moment they enter an archives to work as archivists. Employers will expect no less, and no amount of high-minded theorizing about the purposes of education will get around that.

Each profession must develop an effective means to mesh the learning of principles and theory with knowledge and skills. Many archivists have felt that nothing could substitute for a structured apprenticeship. The suggestion that archival education is best located in some sort of institute closely connected with an existing archives in order to combine the elements of theory, knowledge, and skill building misjudges both universities and archival institutions. Universities are places of inquiry. They are dedicated to the extension of knowledge as well as its spread. To be sure, professional education in other disciplines puts students in touch with practice, but our thriving professions are all dedicated to the extension of knowledge, as surely archivists ought to be in their own sphere. Our archival institutions are places primarily of practical mission. The difficulty they have training their own staff suggests they would find it enormously difficult to transcend the bounds of their normal mandate to encompass an educational function. Canadian archivists' window on the university will permit students, faculty, and, one hopes, practising archivists to benefit from inquiry into archival activity in all its facets.

Some of the themes already touched upon will come into further relief in an analysis of the curriculum of the Master of Archival Studies Programme. A full outline of the program appears in Appendix 2. It should be noted that courses in the program carry values of three or one and one-half units. Three unit courses are of approximately twenty-six weeks duration with three instructional hours per week. One and one-half unit courses are of thirteen weeks duration with three instructional hours per week. Let us say that three unit courses comprise eighty instructional hours and one and one-half unit courses forty hours. To complete the program students must successfully complete thirty units.

The curriculum may be broken down into two broad categories, archival subjects and non-archival, primarily elective, subjects. Students spend a total of approx-

imately 320 hours in the classroom studying archival subjects. Two courses (ARST 500 and 600) of eighty hours each, one in each year, together aim to give instruction in the basic principles and practices of all facets of archival work. Students study archival literature and terminology, examine the available written instruments of archival practice, visit archives, and generally strive to acquire the habit of mind of an archivist. These two courses take the student progressively from consideration of general principles and basic functions to study of specialized areas of archival work not treated in other courses. Students study the basic concepts and practices every archivist ought to know. The approach is decidedly generalist. The program cannot educate specialists as such, although there is enough flexibility in the whole program to allow students to develop special expertise if they wish. As the only full-time archivist on the faculty, I teach these two courses. They are meant to provide focus to the whole program, so as well as covering the basic ground of archival study they must also relate the subject matter of other courses to archival practice in general.

Three more specialized courses, each of forty hours, have been developed. Every student must take a course in records management (ARST 510), one in archives and automation (ARST 520), and one in conservation of archival materials (ARST 600). Each of these courses aims to instruct students in the basic concepts and practices that are applicable to an archivist's duties. All three courses could easily be expanded were there the resources to do so: records management because increasingly archivists are realizing the life cycle concept by actually working in a truly integrated records management/archives environment, particularly in smaller organizations; automation because archival institutions themselves are automating and the records that will be archives in the future are rapidly being automated throughout society; and conservation because thorough knowledge of the basic aspects of preserving both paper records and the variety of other modern records is far more complex even from the archivist's perspective than can be addressed in a single course of thirteen weeks.

These five courses make up the core studies of the program. A sixth course in directed reading (ARST 615) was introduced during the first year of the program in order to give students the opportunity to read extensively in an area of archival study, most often, it is expected, allied to thesis research. Classroom archival study is complemented by the practicum and the thesis.

The practicum (ARST 530) carries the value of a one and one-half unit course, and requires the student to spend one month in a recognized archives under the supervision of an experienced archivist. In fact, most of the first class was placed in an archives to combine study and work for three months in the summer between the first and second years of the program, and all students in the second class will spend three months studying and working in the summer between the two years. It is not possible to say how long such arrangements can be repeated, but the students themselves, many archivists in the field, and the university all recognize the virtue of an extended work experience as part of the program. For the moment, the official requirement for the practicum has not been altered, but, should it not prove feasible to place students in what amounts to summer jobs where the host institutions take special pains to augment the students' learning, a decision will have to be made whether to limit the practicum strictly to one month, which would leave students time to work where they might to defray their university expenses, or to demand three months without any remuneration for the student. Much will depend on



whether or not enough potential host institutions can find a way to accommodate students. Whatever happens, students need practical experience under the guidance of professional archivists to help them build skills and knowledge. More than that, students need to experience actual working circumstances to test the ideas they have struggled with in the classroom.

Technically speaking, the thesis (ARST 620) is given the value of six units, in effect one-fifth of the total course load of the program. As thirty units study are required to complete the program and the program is in effect fifty-two weeks long (twenty-six weeks each year) exclusive of the practicum, the thesis may be thought of as about ten to eleven weeks' work, say three months. In fact, most students are not clear of heavy course commitments until half way through the second year. In such circumstances, it appears most students will carry thesis preparation beyond their fourth and final term in residence, perhaps no more than one to three months in most cases. No one has a desire to see completion of the program delayed beyond the summer after the second year, least of all the students.

Why is there a thesis in the program? We have seen many history departments and other disciplines abandon thesis work at the master's degree level. Few Master of Library Science programs have even an optional thesis on the books. Extensive research in professional fields is usually done only at the doctoral level. Canadian archivists strongly voiced their opinion that the program should include a thesis to help the archival community extend its knowledge of Canadian archives and archival practice in general. Writing a thesis provides students with an opportunity to bring their learning about archives to bear on a topic of study of some interest and importance to the archival or research community but, given the time available to the students and the state of research in archival subjects, most theses in the early years of the program are likely to be generally rather than narrowly defined, pieces of exposition rather than oriented to the profession's acknowledged need to advance the frontiers of its knowledge and practice. Still, there is room for students to demonstrate new approaches to the study of the nature, scope, and place of archives in society. At this stage, before any students have graduated, the thesis may be seen as a challenge and opportunity for the program to help archivists demonstrate that there is a research component to professional archival work.

The required course in Canadian historiography and historical methods, which carries a weight of three units, is part of the core of studies in the first year. It is in fact an offering of the Department of History, which has also developed a course in oral history and genealogy which students in the program may elect. Elective courses, which may be taken from among any courses for which students are eligible in the university, amount to about one-third of the total course load. Students tend to elect courses in history or library science, but they may take courses in other subjects if such courses contribute to their program of archival studies.

The Master of Archival Studies Programme is the only one of its kind in Canada, and is in fact not matched by any program in the United States. As the only such program in Canada, it is equally open to students from any part of the country, and it exists to serve Canadian archives and the archival profession across the country. The first few years of the program will no doubt be a time of flux as we search for the best way to fashion a disciplined and effective education for our future archivists. Canada now has a program of professional studies for archivists. It aims to

contribute to the betterment of the profession, perhaps not cure all its ills, but improve its effectiveness, perhaps not turn out exemplars of this or that vision of what an archivist should be, but give Canada thoughtful, dedicated, and competent young archivists to help the profession meet the challenge of administering archives in the late twentieth century.

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#### APPENDIX 1

### *Association of Canadian Archivists: Guidelines Towards a Curriculum for Graduate Archival Training Leading to a Master's Degree in Archival Science, 1976.*<sup>10</sup>

by HUGH A. TAYLOR and EDWIN WELCH\*

#### 1. Introduction

In preparing these guidelines we set out to provide a basic programme leading to a graduate degree for graduates with a limited amount of archival experience. We have not considered the problem of providing more senior archivists with a professional qualification. We envisage archival education as a continuing process, and the one year course outlined here as the first stage in that process. We have not dealt here with the later stages which will provide specialized training.

In planning any programme of archival training there are a number of difficulties, not all of which are self-evident. Any programme will inevitably be a compromise between what is desirable and what is possible.

#### 1. Location

The initial problem is the need to attach the programme to a suitable institution which can provide an appropriate academic level of training. In the past courses have been attached to universities, colleges or archives.

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10 EDITOR'S NOTE: *These guidelines are published here with the permission of the Executive of the Association of Canadian Archivists and of the two authors. They have not been edited (except in matters of spacing) to conform to the journal's style, in the interests of presenting the guidelines in the format and wording approved by the ACA in 1976.*

\* The authors wish to extend their warmest thanks to the Education Committee of the ASSOCIATION OF CANADIAN ARCHIVISTS and the Education and Professional Development Committee of the SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS for the patient and very significant input by members of these committees in this unique joint venture. The substantial measure of agreement has been most encouraging but the two Societies have agreed to differ on some issues and separate GUIDELINES have therefore been prepared.

In universities it has been usual to place archival training either in a school of library studies or a department of history, but there is no reason why it could not be part of a school of management sciences. Wherever it is situated it will be necessary to offer a type of programme acceptable to the university as well as to the profession.

## *2. University Requirements*

If it is to be the equivalent of a one year post-graduate programme then it will probably lead to an M.A. and will have to meet the academic standards prescribed by the university. The university may well suggest or require subjects of study which archivists may not consider relevant for training. It will be most important when working out the details of a programme that university requirements do not seriously affect the needs of the profession and the students.

## *3. Programme Content*

The next problem which arises is whether the training shall be basic or specialized, or a combination of both. At present, in the absence of any other training and because of the lack of suitable teachers, there is a tendency to include single lectures about every possible subject. The results, particularly in a summer school, institute or workshop are not always very successful. It is undesirable to include church, business, university or other specialist archives as separate subjects when there is insufficient time to discuss the philosophy of such archives and the practicalities of their organization.

When the subjects to be included in the programme have been agreed it is vitally important that they should be taught in a logical sequence. It is impossible, for example, to discuss archives developments in different countries before first establishing the basic terminology for archives. In fact, the two must be taught in a coordinated manner even though they are taught by different professors.

It would be desirable to have an introductory overview of the programme which would point out the need to integrate all aspects of archival work and to emphasize that the course is only arranged in "streams" for convenience of teaching.

## *4. Interdisciplinary Studies*

There are likely to be courses available in other departments, more especially in the field of information management, which would be required or made optional. Enrolment in these courses, where appropriate, should be encouraged in order to build an interdisciplinary environment for information management in the future.

## *5. Programme Duration*

This outline of basic training (see CURRICULUM below for details) is formulated on the assumption that the programme will extend over a maximum of 30 weeks full time or its equivalent part time. There will in addition, be an operational assignment of 3 months (see 12 below).

## *6. Enrolment*

We have assumed that almost all the students will have a strong background in history, but we do not wish to see graduates in other subjects or special students with

professional experience completely excluded. Both may find the programme more difficult than history graduates, but will be able to contribute to it in other ways.

We strongly recommend that the students spend a minimum orientation period of three weeks working with staff members in an Archives before the programme begins. The equivalent of a year's practical experience would be even more desirable.

### 7. *Class Size*

We recommend not less than 5 and not more than 30 students. The basic teaching responsibility should rest with the full-time teaching staff and not only with guest lecturers or coordinators. We recommend the employment of two full-time professors (or the equivalent) for 30 students in addition to guest lecturers.

### 8. *Teaching Staff*

Having established an academic base for the training programme, its content must inevitably be affected by the availability of suitable teachers. There is at present, no body of full-time teachers of archives on whom we can draw, but it should be possible to attract experienced archivists with some teaching experience who are prepared to develop their teaching skills in a manner most appropriate to archival training (which differs in many ways from the traditional method of teaching history, for instance). The problems can only be overcome when archival teaching is recognized as a separate branch of teaching which requires specialized skills.

### 9. *Teaching Methods*

Since archives is not an "exact science", it is important that different theories and practices shall be freely discussed. We would expect a teacher to consider in detail theories with which he is not in agreement. For this reason we believe it essential that archival teaching should be socratic and open ended.

Course work should incorporate a judicious mixture of lectures, seminar discussions, assigned readings, research papers, practical demonstrations and field trips. Teachers should recommend preparatory and subsequent reading but should resist the temptation to prepare well rounded written lectures in the traditional sense (unless there is nothing available on the subject) which could in any case be distributed before the session and should not be regarded as definitive. We feel the practice of good archival teaching involves dialogue and involvement as teacher and students explore the various subjects together in a creative way. We would suggest that introductions to sessions should be short, incomplete and controversial, otherwise passive acceptance of *obita dicta* could well become rather arid.

We further recommend that there should be a teaching approach whereby two teachers should be present at appropriate sessions to help develop a dialectic and differences of opinion when this is valid.

Academic teaching shall also be supplemented by *practicum*, i.e. practical demonstration, experiment and exercises (which may also involve simulation and role playing among the techniques employed) within an archives on, or close to, the campus of the university. Such *practicum* should amount to about 25 per cent of the course content and should not be confused with the operational assignment (see 12 below) which is additional.

### 10. *Teaching Materials*

There is a great shortage of teaching materials. It is difficult (if not impossible) to explain the operation of the Public Record Office or the *Archives nationales* without access to their guides or handbooks. It is impossible to discuss workflow in an Archives without examining detailed plans of buildings but this information is often difficult to obtain. Adequate bibliographical resources in archival science are essential for the success of the programme.

### 11. *Assessment of Students*

In most training courses at present, it is usual to set examinations and possibly to ask for a thesis in addition (although at present fewer and fewer schools require a thesis). In our opinion, the alternative of continuous assessment is preferred. An examination involves the loss of at least one week for the written papers — one thirtieth of a one year programme. Its chief purpose is to check whether students have understood the lecturer, read the assigned literature and can reproduce the information from memory. For post-graduate students this process is rather wasteful. This time can be much better employed by them in studying an aspect of archives in greater detail than can be given in lectures. This and continuous assessment of the students is likely to give a more accurate picture of their abilities than a written examination.

### 12. *Operational Assignment*

On completion of the course work, each student will be expected to undertake a supervised operational assignment of 3 months duration, mutually agreeable to teacher, supervising archivist and student.

The assignment should combine a variety of functions such as appraisal, arrangement and description so that the finished work will be measurable and amenable to discussion and criticism.

On completion of the assignment, a final assessment of the student will be made and the degree awarded.

## 2. Curriculum

### 1. *General Approach*

We have compiled a list of “Elements in Existing Training Programmes” (see Appendix A) and believe that in-depth treatment of the following subjects should not be undertaken as being too advanced or specialized:

1. The communicating process ... to the sixteenth century
12. Special archives by type
- 24-27. Additional options.

No. 12 will surprise many but these are becoming highly specialized fields to be mastered in special courses and/or through exposure and experience. A student might elect to do his operational assignment in one of these fields, since there will already have been some general instruction at an elementary level under other subjects in the above list, such as 4-6, 10, 11, etc.

## 2. Elements

The remaining subjects have been grouped into four elements of 60 hours each to be taught concurrently (S.A.A. “sequentially or concurrently”) as follows:

- A The nature of archives (2, 3, 7, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22)
- B The acquisition of archives (4, 6, 8, 17)
- C The processing of archives (5, 13, 19)
- D The use of archives (9, 10, 11, 18): Half Element
- E The administration of archival repositories (20): Half Element

Throughout the teaching there would be the integrated element of *practicum* amounting to about 25% of the course work or a further 60 hours as well as the operational assignment.

This would total ten hours teaching and *practicum* a week and allow plenty of time to students for reading and assignments. A grand total of 300 hours for the academic year together with the operational assignment can be compared to archives training in other countries of a similar nature (see Appendix B).

Each element would cover the following ground:

### A) *The Nature of Archives*

1. To discuss the origins and development of archive-keeping principles and terminology, archives legislation, professional organization, and relationship with other professions in some or all of the following countries: Canada, France, Germany, U.K., and U.S.A., from which can be deduced more general principles of archival science — particularly in terminology and archives legislation.
2. Palaeography and diplomatic with particular reference to the archives most likely to be encountered. With which can be taught the relevant administration history, problems of forgery, authentication and valuation.

### B) *The Acquisition of Archives*

#### *Manuscripts*

To discuss various kinds of acquisition policy and programmes and their validity in relation to programmes of other archival institutions; personal strategy and techniques of archivists in the field; forms of agreement and other legal implications. Valuation for tax relief.

#### *Records*

To discuss acquisition policies with regard to records of the employing institution and a thorough examination of the records management process as a means of ensuring a rational flow of well controlled accessions to the archives. The importance of forms management and central registries in the creation of useful and intelligible archives for the archivist. The appraisal (selection) function.

### C) *The Processing of Archives*

Workflow in an Archives from the receipt of the records until their final storage:

1. Preliminary —  
Cleaning, sorting and arranging the records and manuscripts, with an

- account of equipment required.
2. Identification —  
The compilation of finding aids: inventories, calendars, catalogues and indexes.
  3. Conservation —  
The theory (and some practical experience) of: paper repair, lamination, binding, and map repair.
  4. Storage —  
The design of boxes, shelves and other storage units.
  5. Workflow —  
Layout of storage and processing areas and their relation to other parts of the Archives.

D) *The Use of Archives*

The archivist in relation to the *public* through reference services, research techniques, publications, exhibitions (including editing and copyright), public relations.

E) *The Administration of Archival Repositories*

The archivist as planner and administrator in relation to staff and program management through budgeting, staffing (including job description), financial commitment control and general management principles of delegation, time management, etc.

### 3. Conclusion

It must be remembered that these are essentially *guidelines* and no attempt has been made to prepare a detailed curriculum. We have simply tried to stake out the territory for a graduate programme believing that within these bounds a valuable and flexible course can be built by the teachers.

The proposals for a training programme which we have put forward should always be considered in this light. In certain circumstances deviations from our proposals will be necessary, and even desirable, but they should never be allowed to jeopardize the standards of the course or weaken the quality of training provided.

#### Appendix "A"

### *Elements in Existing Training Programmes*

Before establishing our Guidelines we considered the curricula of the following institutions:

- The Public Archives of Canada Courses
- The NARS Courses
- The University of London Course

The Wayne State University Courses  
 The University of Wisconsin Courses  
 The University of New Brunswick Course  
 "Guidelines for archival training curricula"  
 (C.H.A. Archives Section)  
 S.A.A. Ann Arbor Conference 1973

In order to present our approach to a curriculum more clearly, we have set out below a list of subjects drawn from the above curricula in an order which might be theoretically acceptable if they were to be taught by one individual and/or a series of "guests". This, to a greater or less degree, is how many archives courses are taught at present although probably none are so extensive as to cover the whole of this list. This could be described as a "serial" approach which is usually the only kind possible if the teaching is for an isolated credit course or summer institute. There is a partial logic to this order but the subjects are taught in an isolated fragmented way which tends to lead to considerable overlapping:

1. The communicating process. History of Archives from clay tablets to the eighteenth century.
2. The origins and developments of national and regional archives in Europe and North America from the eighteenth century to about 1870 (i.e. before the modern era).
3. Archival principles and terminology (mostly post 1870).
4. Appraisal principles and techniques ancient and modern.
5. Descriptive techniques, finding aids, etc., indexing.
6. Acquisition criteria and techniques.
7. Modern palaeography and diplomatic; forgery and evaluation; authentication.
8. The philosophy of access; privacy and the right to know.
9. Application of microfilm, microfiche and other forms of reprography.
10. EDP and information retrieval.
11. Reference services, research techniques.
12. Special archives — by media, (audiovisual, oral history, machine readable archives), and by type (business, church, college and university).
13. Conservation for the archivist: The custodial and curatorial function.
14. General principles of administrative history especially at the national and local government level.
15. The immediate origins and present state of archival institutions in U.S.A. and Canada (continuation from 2 above).
16. Archival legislation.
17. Records management and the archivist.
18. Public relations; publication; editing; exhibitions; copyright.
19. Elements and work-flow in an archives building.
20. General administration of an archival programme; budgeting; organization; staffing, planning, etc.
21. The archivist in relation to the librarian and kindred professions especially interdisciplinary aspects.
22. The archival profession: professional associations, etc.
23. Practicum and internships.
24. Historical and bibliographical sources.
25. Seals and coins.



26. Law studies: company, real property, etc.
27. History and literature of science and technology.

#### Appendix "B"

### *Hours of Academic Training in Some Archival Programmes*

	Length of Programme (in months)	Hours of Teaching (per academic year)
Marburg, Germany	18	500
Munich, Germany	36	310
Potsdam, Germany	18	635
Cordova, Argentina	24	183 plus
Vienna	36	310
Ecole des Chartes, Paris	48	300
Aberystwyth, Wales	12	250
Liverpool, England	12	240
London, England	12	210
Jerusalem, Israel	24	280
The Hague, Holland	14	230
Torun, Poland	36	275
The Vatican	24	115

Most of this information was obtained from C. Kecskemeti, *La Formation Professionnelle des Archivistes* (Brussels, 1966).

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#### APPENDIX 2

### *Outline of the Master of Archival Studies Programme at the University of British Columbia*

The program is a two-year, full-time program administered by the Department of History and the School of Librarianship.

#### *Admission*

Candidates for admission to the program must possess the following qualifications:

- a) A bachelor's degree from a recognized university in a relevant discipline or in an area which is regarded as appropriate to the proposed study by an Admissions Committee which will represent both the Department of History and the School of Librarianship. Candidates must have achieved a good second-class standing in the last two years of undergraduate study.
- b) Promise of superior professional performance as attested by letters of reference and a personal interview.
- c) Reading knowledge of a language other than English and, where the native language is not English, demonstrated facility in the use of English.

*Pattern of Courses*

<i>First Year</i>		<i>Units</i>
ARST 500	Introduction to Archives	3.0
ARST 510	Records Management	1.5
ARST 520	Automation and Archives	1.5
HIST 545	Canadian Historiography and Historical Methods	3.0
	Electives	4.5-6.0

*Summer Between First and Second Year*

ARST 530	Practicum	1.5
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*Second Year*

ARST 600	Advanced Archives	3.0
ARST 610	Conservation and Repair of Materials	1.5
ARST 615	Directed Reading*	1.5
ARST 620	Thesis	6.0
	Electives	1.5-3.0

\* The Directed Reading course is elective.