Study in Documents
Doughty on the Use and Utility of Government Information and Archives, 1933

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RÉSUMÉ En 1933, une commission spéciale d'enquête a soumis au gouvernement fédéral un rapport de réduction des coûts pour l'impression et la publication de documents gouvernementaux. Une copie de ce rapport a alors été envoyée à l'Archiviste du Dominion, Arthur Doughty. En réponse à ce rapport, Doughty a tenté de convaincre le gouvernement des avantages et de l'utilité des archives et des documents gouvernementaux, ainsi que d'une bonne gestion de documents. Pour ce faire, il a choisi comme instrument un récit presque sous la forme d'un monologue intérieur, dans lequel il relate de nombreux cas où le gouvernement a bénéficié des archives et des documents gouvernementaux. Doughty y défend la valeur continue et permanente des documents d'archives. Pour les personnes qui se servent présentement des archives, les critiques qu'a faites Doughty sont familières, les préoccupations qu'il avait sont bien connues et ses pensées sur la valeur d'une bonne gestion de documents auraient pu être écrites aujourd'hui. En fait, certains de ses commentaires peuvent tout aussi bien s'appliquer aujourd'hui à la reproduction numérique. Les observations de Doughty ne se limitent pas à son époque et les archivistes d'aujourd'hui seront facilement d'accord avec ses opinions sur le niveau de salaire approprié, la conservation des documents et la valeur des archives.

ABSTRACT In 1933, a Select Committee of Inquiry submitted a cost-cutting report to the federal government on the topic of government printing and publications. A copy of the report was sent to Dominion Archivist, Arthur Doughty. In his response to this report, Doughty attempted to convince the government of the benefits, uses and utility of archives, government records, and good information management. He did so through an almost stream-of-consciousness narrative, reporting on the many times that archives and government records had benefited the government. Doughty argued for the continued and continuing value of archival holdings. The criticisms he levied are familiar to modern users, the concerns he uttered are well-known, and his comments on the value of good records management could have been written

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today. Indeed, some of his comments are just as applicable to modern digital copying. Doughty's commentary speaks across the generations as archivists will easily agree with his views on appropriate pay, records preservation, and the value of archives.

Introduction

When considering the world of Canadian archives, the name of Sir Arthur Doughty reigns supreme as the pre-eminent figure in Canadian archival history. In 1904 he succeeded the late Douglas Brymner,[1] with the new title of "Dominion Archivist and Keeper of the Records," the title marking the previous year's unification of the Department of Agriculture's Archives Branch with the Records Branch of the Department of the Secretary of State. This was a position he would hold for the next thirty years, moulding and forming Canada's archival milieu.[2] His actions became instrumental in preserving Canada's history and heritage, and his most famous aphorism on the importance of archival preservation – "Of all national assets archives are the most precious; they are the gift of one generation to another and the extent of our care of them marks the extent of our civilization"[3] – has been quoted worldwide.

Arthur George Doughty (1860–1936), was born and educated in England. He immigrated to Canada in 1886 and worked in various ventures before joining the Quebec public service in 1897. There he became head of the Legislative Library and seven years later moved to Ottawa when he was named Dominion Archivist.[4] While holding that latter post, he became deeply involved in many different aspects of recording Canada's history, including encouraging the development of Canada's archives.

In 1912 he was named as a commissioner to investigate the state of Canada's public records. He and the other commissioners issued a report in

1 Douglas Brymner (1823–1902), sometime politician, journalist, and civil servant, was appointed in 1872 to a position as Clerk in Charge of Archives with the Department of Agriculture. He held this post for the rest of his life, and is counted as Canada's first national archivist. Glenn Wright, "Brymner, Douglas," *Dictionary of Canadian Biography,* vol. XIII, 1901–1910 (Toronto, 1994), pp. 118–21.

2 See Ian E. Wilson, "'A Noble Dream': The Origins of the Public Archives of Canada," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982–83), pp. 16–35. For general information on the National Archives and Doughty's place in its history, see Danielle Lacasse and Antonio Lechasseur, *The National Archives of Canada 1872–1997* (Historical Booklet No. 58) (Ottawa, 1997), pp. 6–9.

3 Sir Arthur Doughty, *The Canadian Archives and Its Activities* (Ottawa, 1924), p. 5. It has been pointed out to the editors that the sentiments expressed by Doughty are similar to those previously expressed by Joseph Howe: "A wise nation preserves its records, gathers up its muniments, decorates the tombs of its illustrious dead, repairs its great public structures, and fosters national pride and love of country, by perpetual references to the sacrifices and glories of the past." See Joseph Howe, *Poems and Essays* (Montreal, 1874), p. 277.

4 Wilson, p. 24.

1914 in which they recommended the creation of a Public Records Office to ensure that the records of the nation be preserved. They further recommended that the collected departmental reports (known as blue books for the colour of their binding),[5] should be held in a central departmental library where all could benefit from the research reflected therein. In 1924, angered perhaps that nothing more had been accomplished, even though yet another Royal Commission of Inquiry was held in 1919 to investigate certain issues surrounding the Government Stationery and Printing Office,[6] Doughty and his colleagues once more published their own report calling for better management of the government's information.[7]

Within a few years the government, now driven by the Great Depression to seek cost-cutting measures, once more addressed the issues of public documentation with the establishment of yet another committee: the Committee of Enquiry on Printing and Stationery.[8] The Committee issued a report in March 1933, which they then sent to Doughty for his comments. The comments, which were addressed to the Honourable C.H. Cahan, Secretary of State, but bound with the Committee's report, clearly lay out Doughty's feelings toward the use and utility of government records, archives, and publications.[9] What follows is a complete reproduction of Doughty's report. The editors have not altered or changed any parts of the documents, although contextual information has been provided.[10]

5 M.V. Higgins, *Canadian Government Publications*, vol. 1 (Chicago, 1935), p. 8.

6 The issues dealt with in this Commission were concerned primarily with the physical control of government printed matter. The Commission was launched after a study had recommended the disposal of a great deal of surplus publications held by the Department of Public Printing and Stationery. The publications were offered to various libraries across Canada, but prior to the orders for surplus publications being filled, it was discovered that they had all been destroyed. The 1919 Commission ensued. James Murray Whalen, *Records of Federal Royal Commissions (RG 33)* (General Inventory Series), vol. II (Ottawa, 1994), pp. 244–45.

7 Canada, *Report of the Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire into the State of the Records of the Public Departments of the Dominion of Canada (in 1912)* (Ottawa, 1924); Whalen, vol. I, pp. 34–35.

8 Canada, *Commons Debates*, 21 March 1933. There is no evidence that the Committee's report proposals were acted upon.

9 The bound copy of the report, including Doughty's response, was found by one of the editors when moving into a new Library and Archives Canada (hereinafter LAC) office in Gatineau. Evidently a prior occupant of the office had had possession of the report, perhaps to carry out some task linked to a new description system that had recently come into use at LAC. After consulting with a colleague, the two archivists decided the issues described in the report deserved wider distribution; this paper is the result. The report and Doughty's response are held by LAC in R776-139-3-E, vol. 1.

10 The following description is found on the LAC website for the collection held in R776-139-3-E (formerly RG 35-2): "The Committee of Enquiry on Printing and Stationery was established by Treasury Board minute T-147371 on December 15th, 1932. It was created to investigate the printing practices of government departments and to make policy recommendations to the Treasury Board on making government printing more cost effective. Watson

Arthur Doughty's Report

Memo for the Secretary of State[11] *on the following report*[12]

Sir,

A report of the Committee of Enquiry on Printing and Stationery consisting of 115 pages has been addressed to me by the Treasury Board, with a request that I make comment on the various recommendations; and with an intimation that absence of comment will imply approval.

The Report for the purpose of consideration by the Archives may be divided into two classes:

1. Equipment and commercial printing, such as the printing of railway forms, telegraph blanks, circulars and other material, the indefinite preservation of which is not contemplated.
2. Documents both printed and written which naturally form the basis of a permanent record.

It is with this latter class that this memorandum is particularly concerned.

The document may be termed a partial enquiry into the cost of manufacturing a record of government. The trend of the enquiry seems to have been to devise means to cheapen the cost of production.

The whole question naturally concerns your Department as Secretary of State for Canada, and has a very special interest for you in your capacity as Keeper of the Records of Canada.

Little, if any, consideration appears to have been given of the object of the

Seller, Comptroller of the Treasury, was appointed Chairman of the Committee. The rest of the committee was made up of public officers. These were: Laurent Beaudry, C.H. Bland, L.L. Bolton, Karl Chamberlain, A.T. Charron, Fred Cook, P.T. Coolican, F.C.C. Lynch, and B.J. Roberts. Fred James served as Secretary. The Committee was struck after concerns were raised in the Treasury Board that printing and stationery in the government incurred extravagant spending. Many departments used their own printing machines despite the presence of a government Printing Bureau. The Committee recommended to the Treasury Board that government printing needed to be better coordinated within the government. The report suggested the creation of a General Printing and Stationery Committee to accomplish this. The Committee also stressed the need to overhaul the *Public Printing and Stationery Act*, which mandated the Printing Bureau. The recommendations also included the need for better accounting practices within the departments for their printing and stationery costs. Printing practices of the Houses of Parliament were not included in the enquiry, as parliament had a Standing Joint Committee on Printing in place." Doughty would have been consulted on the report as both the Public Archives and the Printing Bureau reported at that time to the Secretary of State. Higgins, vol. I, p. 77.

11 Charles Hazlitt Cahan (1861–1944), was a staunch and influential Conservative and candidate for the party leadership in the 1927 leadership convention. For a political biography, see J.K. Johnson, ed., *The Canadian Directory of Parliament 1867–1967* (Ottawa, 1968), p. 87.

12 Material in italics in the text represents handwritten additions to the Doughty report, which is otherwise typewritten. It will be noted that Doughty's use of quotation marks is somewhat idiosyncratic.

government in creating this record; of the use that is to be made of it at present, and for all time, or to the very important question of its disposition.

WITHOUT DOCUMENTS THERE CAN BE NO HISTORY; the past would be a blank. The early part of the magnificent story of Canada which we are only now beginning to grasp, is due to two things, the quality of paper and the quality of ink in MSS and print. All that will be known of Canada 300 years hence will be due to these two materials. There is abundant evidence to show that documents of statesmen within the present century are now in a state of decay owing to the quality of paper supplied by the government. The Department of Public Archives some twenty years ago discarded cheap paper for making transcripts in England and in France, because hundreds of volumes written on cheap paper previous to that date were already showing signs of deterioration.[13] Canada has spent infinite patience in deciphering these documents in a fair hand. This boon to Canada has been appreciated by the Province of Quebec. For fifteen years copyists have been employed in Ottawa re-transcribing these records for the Archives of Quebec, and students have crossed the ocean to consult them because more work can be done on them in a month than could be done in a year or more in deciphering the originals. The advantage of this duplication of records is great. It insures another copy in case of fire and may relieve the Department of many enquiries.

Besides the mere use of old papers in building up the story of the nation, there is the enormous monetary value of discarded material to governments, business corporations and private individuals. I could cite a number of cases within my own knowledge during the last thirty years where after exhaustive and costly investigation documents have been produced by the Archives.

Sir Walter Cassels[14] paid a visit to the Archives while the case of Maxwell V. the King was before him, inquiring for documents that would show Bedford Basin to be within the Harbour of Halifax. In the Exchequer Court Reports 1917, p. 101, these words occur "It is admitted by counsel for the Crown and for the Supplicant, both of whom have devoted a great deal of time to the investigation that no records are in existence either before or after Confederation showing the geographical limits of the harbour as such by statute, or by any other way shape or form". The Archives produced a document entitled "Nautical Remarks and Observations on the Coasts and Harbours of Nova Scotia, surveyed pursuant to orders from the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for the use of the Royal Navy by

13 In 1878, Brymner began a program of having records relevant to Canadian history calendared and/or copied from repositories in Britain and France to make them available in Canada, a program his successors continued. Wilson, pp. 19–34.

14 Justice Cassels served as President of the Exchequer Court of Canada (now the Federal Court of Canada) and was ad hoc Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. Ian Bushnell, *The Federal Court of Canada: A History, 1875–1992* (Toronto, 1997), pp. 93–103.

J.W.F. DesBarres 1778." "This document was discovered by the officers of the Archives as a result of careful enquiry by consent of Counsel of both parties it has been marked exhibit"."

"He describes Halifax Harbour, otherwise called Chebucto. He gives directions how to approach the Harbour from the east. He described Bedford Basin" "at the head of Halifax harbour, and Sackville River at the head of Bedford Basin in the Harbour of Halifax." "This Report differs from a mere statement of someone who may have described it as suitable as a harbour. It is official". A map was discovered showing that Bedford Basin was a part of the Harbour of Halifax. In 1919 the Sisters of Charity of Rockingham brought a claim against the government for lands expropriated, amounting to Five hundred thousand dollars. In the Report of this case Judge Cassels said "I had occasion in the case of Maxwell V. the King to consider the question of whether or not Bedford Basin was a public Harbour at the time of Confederation. I came to the conclusion, for reasons set forth in that case that Bedford Basin at the time of Confederation formed part of the Harbour of Halifax and became part of the property of the Dominion by virtue of the British North America Act. Held that no title to water lots could pass under a provincial grant. On the claim for $500,000, $7,628 was awarded."

In 1907 the Government of the State of Michigan took action to dispossess the inhabitants of Harson's Island, claiming they had no title to this Island which once belonged to Canada.[15] Attorneys of the State came to Ottawa to ascertain whether land had ever been granted on the Island. In the proceedings of the Land Board of the District of Hesse for 1783, the application of Jacob Harson is noted and the refusal of the board to grant his request. The attorneys returned in a happy state of mind. It is only through a knowledge of the past that one is able to appreciate the value of papers.

One of the greatest assets that Canada possesses today is its collection of original maps made by the Surveyors General of Canada and the Royal Engineers between 1760 and 1850, due entirely to the personal investigation of Lord Minto.[16] About thirty-five years ago when the question of the site of the Battle of the Plains was discussed in the House, a meeting was held in Ottawa at which a resolution was proposed to urge the government to prevent the

15 This island is part of the area known as the St. Clair Flats. In 1907 the Supreme Court of the United States declared the area to be the property of the State of Michigan. Federal Writers Project, *Michigan. A Guide to the Wolverine State* (New York, 1941), p. 453.

16 Gilbert John Elliot-Murray-Kynynmound, Earl of Minto (1845–1914), served as Governor-General of Canada (1898–1904). *Dictionary of National Biography* (*DNB*), 1912–1921, pp. 172–74.

desecration of the Battlefield.[17] The Prime Minister of Quebec[18] recommended caution on the ground that the Hon. Thos. Chapais[19] had expressed doubt as to the site. A member of the society proposing the resolution replied "We do not need a French Canadian to tell us where the Battle of the Plains of Abraham was fought." The Prime Minister returned to Quebec, said he had been insulted by a charlatan, that he was determined to ascertain the exact site of the battle, and ordered me, much against my inclination, to investigate the subject. It was manifestly a question of the interpretation of plans. Finding nothing for my purpose in Quebec, I came to Ottawa, pestered all the departments without results. I then turned to England and asked the help of Lord Aberdeen,[20] who had just finished his term. The War Office stated that Lord Lansdowne,[21] (I think the Minister of War) had sent to Canada a large quantity of original maps of Canada from the tower of London, and in these I would probably find what I required. With this letter I returned to Ottawa and sought the aid of the Minister of Militia, the Minister of Justice and the Prime Minister. One department said that if they ever came to Canada they were of no use. Another, wrote confidentially, that they were probably burnt in a departmental fire. Research was continued in England and map of value discovered in the British Museum and another in France, which enabled me to proceed with my work. One day Lord Minto called at the Library of Parliament and said he would return with General Ian Hamilton,[22] to consult plans of the citadel. He wished to locate an old French powder magazine. When he came I told him that I could find nothing on the subject. He seemed annoyed, and said, it is the same story in Ottawa, whenever I ask for an old document it cannot be found. You do not know your business. I replied that at least I had made an effort, and pulled out of a pigeon hole my correspondence with the War

17 The discussion which follows concerning the site of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham is one which was near and dear to Doughty's heart and the subject of his article on the topic, "The Probable Site of the Battle of the Plains of Abraham," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Second Series, vol. V, Section II (1899–1900), pp. 359–425.

18 Félix-Gabriel Marchand (1832–1900), served as Premier of Quebec (1897–1900). *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. XII, 1891–1900 (Toronto, 1990), pp. 692–97.

19 Sir Joseph Thomas Chapais (1858–1946), was a noted politician, historian, and writer, who served as a professor of history at Laval University (1907–1934), head of the Canadian Historical Association (1925–1926), and sat in the Canadian Senate from 1919 until his death. He also held a number of posts in various cabinets in Quebec. *The Canadian Directory of Parliamen*t, p. 111.

20 John Campbell Hamilton-Gordon, Marquess of Aberdeen and Temair (1847–1934), served as Governor-General of Canada (1893–1898). *DNB*, 1931–1940, pp. 347–49.

21 Henry Petty-Fitzmaurice, 5th Marquess of Lansdowne (1845–1927), served as Governor-General of Canada (1883–1888), and later as Britain's Secretary of State for War (1895–1900). *DNB*, 1922–1930, pp. 667–75.

22 Sir Ian Standish Montieth Hamilton (1853–1947), served as the British Army's Inspector General and toured Canada in 1913. Stephen Harris, *Canadian Brass: The Making of a Professional Army 1890–1939* (Toronto, 1988), p. 82; *DNB*, 1941–1950, pp. 347–50.

Office and with Ottawa. He asked me to give him the dossier. On his return to Ottawa Joseph Pope[23] was requested to find out what had become of the plans. He examined the correspondence of different departments and found the date they were sent. But no plans could be found. An old messenger told him that in one of the corridors of the upper storey of the Langevin Building there used to be long rolls of paper, some very large. He thought that they had been taken over to the basement of the East Block. One day I received a letter from Lord Minto telling me that Pope had found nine plans buried beneath a pile of boxes of the Justice Department, some time later in another letter, that fifty-four plans had been found, and finally that so many had been discovered, that I had better come up to Ottawa, and that in the meantime they had been placed in a vault. Some had found their way to a second hand bookshelf in Toronto. *and I was only* [crossed out in original and then re-added] interested in one question, the Battle of the Plains, and soon found the original plans signed by Wolfe's chief engineer, the plan of Quebec made by a spy two years before the battle which Wolfe had when he left England. There were over 2000 of them. It was the custom for over a century to send the original to England and retain a copy in Canada. In the course of time nearly *every* plan was destroyed in the various fires in Canada. Amongst them were the earliest maps of Toronto, ByTown, Kingston, Montreal; surveys of roads, rivers, etc. The discovery of these maps led to the erection of the first Archives building in Canada.[24] The late Sir George Foster[25] became interested in the discovery and spent some time in looking over the maps. He said "I shall have something to say about this in the House". I replied "Sir, I do not think that you will say a word, it was your government that threw them away". He replied on the instant "Well! At least we had something good to throw away". Within

23 Sir Joseph Pope (1854–1926), a prominent Canadian civil servant, was employed as Private Secretary to Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, and later served as a trustee to his estate. He was appointed Assistant Clerk of the Privy Council in 1889, was appointed Under-secretary of State in 1896, and Under-secretary of State for External Affairs in 1909, a post he would hold until 1925. He took a great interest in State Papers, and was Co-commissioner with Doughty in the 1912 *Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire into the State of the Records of the Public Departments of the Dominion of Canada*. *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. XV, 1921–1930 (Toronto, 2005), pp. 842–44.

24 A discussion of these maps and their provenance, and whether or not they were actually lost as Doughty would report can be found in Robert Hayward's "'The Real Nucleus of the Map Collection': Charting Its Provenance," *Archivaria* 14 (Summer 1982), pp. 174–80. The role these maps played in Doughty's becoming Dominion Archivist is therein described.

25 Sir George Foster (1847–1931), served as a Canadian federal cabinet minister, member of parliament and senator, holding federal office as a member of the Conservative Party for more than forty-five years, and starting in 1882 sitting in the cabinets of seven Canadian prime ministers. Since the Memorandum itself is addressed to C.H. Cahan, a one-time political rival of Foster, this passage ridiculing Foster may be intended to elicit Cahan's support. *The Canadian Directory of Parliament*, p. 212.

one month after they were piled on the floor of the new building their practical use to the government was shown. The Department of Militia had ordered a topographical map of Quebec to be made, which it was estimated would cost over $7,000. General Lake[26] had once seen an excellent map in the War Office made in 1867, but it could not be found. He examined the maps on the floor and found three copies of this map; one copy is now in the Department Of National Defence. At the same time lots were advertised for sale in Nova Scotia. Sir Frederick Borden[27] told me there was a tradition that the land had belonged to the Crown, but no proof could be found. On a map in the collection, the ground was marked "King's Plot" and the land was not sold. Since that time these discarded maps have been in almost daily use. They have saved large sums for the government, for the C.P.R., the City of Montreal, for the Government of Ontario and private citizens. Mr. Aylen, Barrister of Ontario,[28] could tell you amusing stories of the use he had made of these documents, and how judgments had been reversed on the discovery of discarded papers. One remarkable case was that taken to the Privy Council by the Price Bros.[29] The amount awarded I believe was $600,000. Most of the important maps in this case were furnished by the Archives. Maps are consulted frequently of which we hear no more, but a search through the records of the *courts* [holographic change from *country*] would prove to be interesting.

There is a recommendation that cheap grades of paper should be employed, especially in inter-departmental correspondence; but the difficulty is to determine what document will be required again in fifty or one hundred years, and here I may say experience of this and other countries has shown, that in the majority of instances documents after their primary use are seldom required again during the generation to which they belong; but when all personal contact with that generation has ceased documents assume a startling importance. Records of importance so long unused, are regarded by custodians as of no importance, and the next generation will consider it a laudable service to place them in some less valuable room. I am unable to say what is the extent of the public records at the present time. It is probably very much less now than at

26 Lieutenant-General Sir Percy Lake (1855–1940), was a British officer who served as Chief of the Canadian General Staff (1904–1908) and Chief Military Advisor to the Canadian government (1908–1910). See the discussion in Harris and *DNB*, 1931–1940, pp. 521–22.

27 Sir Frederick Borden (1847–1917), served as Canada's Minister of Militia and Defence (1896–1911). *The Canadian Directory of Parliament,* p. 56.

28 The reference to Mr. Aylen is somewhat ambiguous, but may refer to Henry Aylen, K.C. of the Ottawa firm of Aylen & Duclos. R.A. Wharton, ed., *Canada Legal Directory 1914* (Toronto, 1914), p. 24.

29 *The King v. Price Bros & Co. Ltd*, 3 *D.L.R.*, [1925], 595–609.

the time of the Royal Commission,[30] appointed in 1912 by Sir Robert Borden.[31] In that year records were found in 438 rooms. There were twenty-four miles of shelving and 92,872 drawers containing records. An effort should be made, I think, to supply a better class of paper for everything except mere scribbling pads, because a very small piece of paper may mean a great deal in the future.

There are so many ways of effecting economies in the use of paper. As an example of waste in the Archives I may give an example. In order to meet the convenience of the King's Printer, so that he may make better time, all printer's copy is typewritten, although any job printer would be happy to accept author's manuscript:

> In a book of one thousand pages –
> 3000 pages would be used in writing the matter
> 3000 pages in typewriting it
> 3000 pages for the translation
> 3000 pages for typewriting [*sic*] it

In addition to the cost of six thousand sheets of paper there is the service of a typewriter in typing 6000 sheets, the service of a person for comparing these sheets with the author's manuscript, and probably considerable time on the part of the author to convince himself that his manuscript has been accurately transcribed. Another example may be mentioned. There has been an enormous waste in printing public reports so far as this Department is concerned. Bundles of these reports are delivered to us tied up with rough cord and the top and bottom copy of each bundle rendered useless. Some of these Reports have cost a considerable amount per copy soon become out of print. In a large edition of a book this means a large number of useless copies. Another form of waste is the imperfect copies that are found in an edition. We have, for example, just to mention a few cases, books returned from All Souls College, Oxford, from Birmingham Library, from the State Library at Ohio, from Vienna, on which a heavy postage has been paid. In one volume owing to bad folding part of the print is chopped o*ff* on certain pages, in another case the paper has slipped during printing and the type is all blurred so that it cannot be read; in another whole sections are missing; in another instance sections misplaced and so on. Now this not only causes annoyance and extra postage but correspondence, because we have to apologize for sending out such material. The last volume printed by the Bureau is not cut square and in binding the height will be reduced so that in a collection of Archives reports on a shelf, it will appear as a dwarf. I have other examples of books that have

30 *Royal Commission to Inquire into the State of the Records of the Public Departments of the Dominion of Canada*, 1912–1914. The report was issued in 1914, and reissued in 1924.

31 Sir Robert Borden (1854–1937), was Canada's Prime Minister from 1911 to 1920. *The Canadian Directory of Parliament*, pp. 56–57.

been printed on fairly large paper but the cover having been cut too small, has reduced the height by over one inch; the width by half an inch. In future to be certain of good copy we shall have to examine each book that is sent out because it is a disgrace to any country to put out publications of this kind. We are forced to send these publications to the King's Printer except in a few instances. A large book was published about four years ago, it is in Spanish, Portuguese and French, with a translation. The book bears the imprint of the King's Printer in Ottawa, but as the author lived in England and the expense would be great in sending proof, we asked permission to have it set up by the King's Printer in Ottawa and he was asked to estimate on the book. He gave his estimate as $3740. The estimate of the King's Printer in London was $1415. The Minister decided to print it in London.

Until recent years Canadian history aroused little interest. A straw vote was taken at a leading University a few years ago on the relative popularity of different subjects of study. The History of Canada was the lowest; and in another University Canadian history was *not* [original "nor" corrected by hand] required for matriculation. A Professor of McGill told me some ten or twelve years ago that if he remained in the country he would ask for the creation of a Chair of Colonial History, but that Canadian History was far too small a subject. The reason for this is that all the French officials used to take back their papers with them at the close of their administration. This was also the custom of British officials, Governors and other persons appointed by England. Then the Public Record Office refused access to any documents after the year 1840. Lord Minto succeeded in having the date for Canada extended to 1860, and a parliamentary committee after sitting ten years in England recently ordered the records to be thrown open to the public, practically up to date, but Canada has never had the means to copy material, even up to 1860. In fact it is not complete up till very little after 1840. So that the writers of history in the past have had little opportunity to draw from sources in Europe and practically no means of deriving information in Canada that would give life and colour to their story. The History of Canada is more absorbing than the history of any comparatively new country.

From 1760 to 1860 the Canadian people and their characteristics were better known in Europe than between 1860 and 1914. Amongst the Imperial troops stationed in Canada, there were always men of culture who wrote home. More than sixty per cent of the beautiful drawings of various parts of Canada were made to send home to friends in Europe, and many were reproduced. An old bookbinder in Quebec told me that his father employed as many as twenty book-finishers during the residence of the troops. I doubt whether there are six today. It was *then* [original "there" corrected by hand] that the Quebec Historical Society was founded. It is still living on its reputation of a hundred years ago. Fresh troops would come and the connection kept up. With the withdrawal of the troops interest began to wane and as years passed people talked

of the wheat fields of Canada and the mines, but little of the Canadian people. In 1922 I was made a member of the London Library, the largest outside the British Museum. They had long lists of geological and mining reports but few books beyond those of Gilbert Parker.[32] I asked the Librarian why he had so little on Canada. He said their agents in New York were unable to obtain them. Canada had no regular publishing House, many of the very best books are usually published by the author himself, and sold by subscription. It is difficult even today to get Canada books. The printer generally tells you to apply to the author. It is only recently publishers like the University Press, Oxford; Dents, MacMillans, Nelsons have established branches in Toronto and a large proportion of books are novels. Unfortunately education is not a Dominion affair. There was quite a serious discussion of this point in 1906 between Viscount Bryce,[33] Lord Minto, the Minister of Justice[34] and the Prime Minister.[35] The all important question Lord Bryce said was to make known to Canada the wealth of its historical material as a basis of history. And it was on his suggestion that the collection of documents relating to the Constitutional History of Canada was published.[36] All documents were to be published without any attempt at interpretation.

The most important factor in the development of a national spirit is a knowledge of one's country. It is only in a department like this one discovers appaling [*sic*] lack of knowledge and of interest in the country, in places far removed from big centres. This is a sample of hundreds of cases that might be quoted. A teacher in Glace Bay, Nova Scotia, wrote that she could not arouse any interest in Canada amongst the children, could we help her in some way with pictures. I had at one time in my possession between sixty and seventy thousand plates from books of my own illustrating Canada, many of them coloured. I sent to her a collection of about seventy-five different plates. She wrote to me a few weeks later that on receiving the pictures she pinned them

32 Sir Horatio Gilbert Parker (1862–1932), was a Canadian-born novelist who set a number of his novels in Canada. During the First World War he sat as a Conservative member in the British House of Commons. *DNB*, 1931–1940, pp. 671–72.

33 James Bryce, 1st Viscount Bryce of Dechmount (1838–1922), was a prominent British politician and historian. In 1906, when this event happened, Bryce was Chief Secretary for Ireland, a post he would leave the next year to become British Ambassador to the United States. *DNB*, 1922–1930, pp. 127–35.

34 A Cabinet shuffle in 1906 in the Laurier government meant either Sir Charles Fitzpatrick (1853–1942) or his successor, Sir Allen Ayleworth (1854–1952), was the Minister of Justice referred to in the report. Both were prominent jurists as well as politicians, Fitzpatrick having served as Chief Counsel to Louis Riel at his trial, and later sitting as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada. *The Canadian Directory of Parliament*, pp. 204 and 16.

35 Sir Wilfrid Laurier (1841–1919), was Prime Minister of Canada in 1906 (1896–1911). *The Canadian Directory of Parliament*, p. 327.

36 Adam Shortt and A.G. Doughty, eds., *Documents Relating to the Constitutional History of Canada, 1759–1791* (Ottawa, 1907; new and revised ed., 2 vols., 1918).

round the school house, and that now the only subject the children wished to study was the History of Canada.

We have a summer school here every year for teachers, conducted by Queen's University, and in addition some twenty or thirty Professors of History spend their summer vacations in the Archives, equipping themselves for teaching during the coming winter. The result is that usually one or two books appear on different subjects after their visit, such as the book of Professor Innes [*sic*], *on* "*The Fur* Trade in Canada".[37]

Now the government, through its publications, is doing a great deal to enlighten the public. From my own experience of the use made of these publications I would think that the revenue derived from the sale is nothing compared with the advantage that might be derived from an intelligent distribution of these documents. I would not for one moment suggest that the distribution be made by the King's Printer. It should be remembered that this experiment was once tried; it proved most costly, disastrous and occasioned irreparable loss. Take the Year Book.[38] It is perhaps the most useful book in existence on the conditions of Canada today. No writer on economic subjects can dispense with it unless he is prepared to spend a vast amount of time in seeking information elsewhere. We have had experience in the use made of this book by students in history, and frequently recommend enquiriers [*sic*] to obtain it. There are a few additions that could be made to render it still more valuable, but any attempt to curtail it should in my opinion be resisted. The suggestion that it should be published every five years would destroy its usefulness.

The recommendation that the King's Printer be instructed to challenge any publication that is considered by him to be outside the sphere of the department concerned; to be unduly elaborate or excessive as to the number of copies, seems to me to be usurping the authority of the Minister. The King's Printer would scarcely be qualified to decide whether a publication was too elaborate, or whether the number of copies order [*sic*] was excessive. He must first be in a position to know what use is to be made of the publication and the number that will be required, not immediately, but in the future.

Another example is the Reports of the Geological Survey. A man making a Report knows very well that no immediate use will be made of his work because it passes through inaccessible lands, but he is fully conscious that some day all the indications he has given of mines, or minerals, etc., will be made use of. He wisely prints a number beyond for future use. It was the lack of knowledge of the value of government publications to the future that led the

37 Harold Adams Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada* (New Haven, 1930).

38 Now the *Canada Year Book*, issued by Statistics Canada, it started as the *Yearbook and Almanac of British North America for 1867; Being an Annual Register of Political, Vital and Trade Statistics, Tariffs, Excise and Stamp Duties …*; it is published annually.

efficiency experts from Chicago to send over a hundred tons of Blue Books to the dump. It must be remembered that Canada is still a young country, every year colleges, schools and institutions are being opened up in many directions. The first thing they demand is a set of Blue Books of the country. A report made in 1840 of a journey to the Yukon, published by this Department, less than 100 pages, is now eagerly sought for at $15. a copy; some of the Statutes of Canada cannot now be purchased for $100 a copy. The King's Printer should have no voice in determining what publications should be issued. Such decision should rest with the Minister who would probably ask the advice of his Deputy.

On the subject of Educational Queries. I am not competent to speak on the practice of other departments in giving out information to children from twelve to eighteen years of age, but I should think it evidence of the desire of these young people to obtain information regarding their country; the boy of eighteen soon becomes the man of twenty-one, and the knowledge he has obtained may be useful. Children come in parties of thirty or forty with their teachers. Fifteen different schools were here last year; one from St. Lambert; St. Mary's College, Montreal; The Seminary, Stittsville, Ashbury, Hull, etc., and this year a still greater number have come from outside. If they can manage to make their visit on Saturday after office hours I usually spend the afternoon with them. The teachers tell me that this is a great help to them, and that all the children have great interest in the history of Canada. I have many enquiries during the year from children whose ages I presume to be between those mentioned. To these I always write myself and tell them where they may get information on the subject they require.

Whether it may be desirable or not, as recommended, to suggest to Provincial Governments that they issue a suitable explanatory text to be circulated among teachers for the purpose, I suppose, of discouraging juveniles from making enquiries of the Dominion Government, is a matter on which I am not competent to give an opinion.

Mailing List and Distribution.

It appears to me that the first question to consider is by what means public documents can be distributed to the best advantage. If it is to be by the means suggested in the report, then all documents must be removed to the Printing Bureau, and the practice might be repeated, which proved so disastrous. The custom in this Department is to send out a card with every volume. In the great majority of cases the card is returned; but to remove an institution automatically from the list because the card was not answered would not be prudent. In such cases before the issue of another volume attention is called to the fact that no acknowledgement has been received of the last report. At the moment I do not recall any institution, unless it has ceased to exist, that does not require the publications sent out from this Department. Changes of course

are constantly happening in the cases of individuals, and those not returning cards are in most instances removed from the list.

The Use that might be made of Archives.

This perhaps is a delicate question but one, I think, worthy of consideration. Is it not desirable that before the government or any department of the public service begins any historical investigations relating to Treaties, Fisheries, Boundaries or other subjects, a demand be made upon the Archives for a list of all documents, maps or printed matter in its possession. I noticed a man some years ago in the Library of Parliament copying papers. He had a trunk of them. He told me what he was doing and he was advised that all the papers regarding the negotiation of the Treaty in question, were in the possession of the Marquis of Lansdowne, and that we already had begun to copy them. The originals have since been sold to the United States.

The want of knowledge of the whereabouts of public papers has proved most costly. From 1872 to 1903, Canada employed copyists in England transcribing from copies in London, the originals of which were in Ottawa. A few weeks ago some one telephoned to me, I presume from the Prime Ministers [*sic*] Office, for a memorandum of Sir Mackenzie Bowell[39] on Newfoundland, addressed to Lord Aberdeen, which could not be found. We could not trace it in the papers of Sir Mackenzie Bowell acquired a few years ago. The papers relating to Canada for the last forty or fifty years are deposited in Cambridge. We wrote to England; permission was obtained for Lord Aberdeen's papers to be sent to the Public Record Office, and a copy was sent to the Prime Minister. Its value is of no concern of mine. I did not even read it. You will have observed in the case of Maxwell, the Crown admitted that no documents of any kind existed that would connect Bedford Basin with Halifax Harbour. Every day there is an average of six enquiries that involve research. Research can only be made by those of long experience. It takes years to find one's way about amongst the millions of documents here, and to learn possible locations of papers. Those who could be of service are either dead or retired on account of age. My own time must necessarily be short. I am forced to work at home every night from eight to twelve or two o'clock in the morning on historical matters. Even this memorandum could not be written in the office. I am sure that today there are thousands of documents between 1840 and 1920 that could have saved the government enormous sums even in the search for them. But with the present limited staff of the Archives for copying they will not be in Canada for fifty years.

39 Sir Mackenzie Bowell (1823–1917), a prominent Conservative politician, served as fifth Prime Minister (1894–1896), being appointed following the death of Sir John Thompson. Biographical entry for the Bowell Fonds, LAC, R118050-0-5-E.

I do not think that any useful purpose can be served in commenting further on this report at the moment. There is so much machinery to be set up to give effect to it, and so many duties imposed upon the King's Printer. It seems only a few years ago that the whole service was reorganized by efficiency experts, but I have never been able to discover any good but much harm as a result from the costly experiment, such as the absurd grading of the service. The business of this department was held up for six months because the difference between the rate of pay of a French instructor and a French translator was $40. There is a regulation that no one can be transferred from one position to another except the salary is equal. In the meantime translations were demanded on all sides, Dr. Roche said the only solution was to raise the pay of one grade to that of the other. This was done by an Order-in-Council and the next day an Order-in-Council was passed reducing the salary of the one that had been increased. No one could possibly determine why one service was worth $40 more than the other. The grading in the Public Archives has prevented any proper application of a merit system. In olden days a man looked to the Minister through his Deputy for promotion and he was always anxious to maintain efficiency. A man started at say $2000, in a year or two if his work was good he might be given an increase of say $50, and in ten years his salary might be increased by $500 and in twenty years by $1000 or more. There was always the hope of making some slight increase. Under the present system the maximum is reached in a very few years and the man knows that he will remain there as long as he lives, until there is an opportunity to promote him to another position with a higher salary. He has probably, in the course of his fifteen years service become an expert in his particular line, of great service to the government and to the public. The Deputy Minister cannot conscientiously recommend him for promotion to another branch because of his usefulness to the government, to the Deputy and to the public service. Under the old system men were anxious to return after office hours to complete their work, but when a man has reached his maximum, knows the value of his service to the public compared with the usefulness of other positions at a higher rate of pay, he may be inclined to watch the clock. I pointed out to the efficiency experts the qualifications necessary for a man in charge of manuscripts, and what would be expected from him. He said you pay the head sorter of letters a higher salary in the Post Office. He said, yes my dear man but this sorter has so many million letters passing through his hands during the year.

I call your attention to page 66, where the duties of a Minister are defined and page 67, where the Deputy would be unwilling to leave himself vulnerable to a criticism that he was withholding details which might be of concern to one or more members of Parliament.

It seems to me to be a question worthy of consideration of how far departments should concern themselves with the history of their department. There

is a temptation to gather all that can be found of the subject they are interested in, but they seem to overlook the fact that there is probably more to be found on the subject in manuscripts. Nor have they the facilities for acquiring all that is printed. During arbitration of the Grand Trunk, the committee came to a standstill for want of information as to the small railways acquired by the Grand Trunk. The railways had not even the first reports of their own road. About fifty pamphlets out of the collection of 10,200 singly bound pamphlets in the Archives, were lent to them and more important material in manuscripts.

I believe that a solution for the problem of departmental libraries might be found in the creation of a Blue Book[40] and general Departmental Library.[41] If two copies of each Blue Book were bound, and indexed on printed cards as in Washington, subjects often running through several departments would be brought together and greatly facilitate public business. This card index would be deposited in the House and other centres throughout the country. It would make known to a very large number of people the contents of the volumes. Two copies of each report only would be preserved in the library and Photostat copies would be supplied of the pages required free, of course, to members of the House, but at a charge of ten or fifteen cents to other enquirers. As a rule it is only a page or two of any book that is required, but to furnish this information a whole volume is sent out. Public libraries would receive copies, but there is a large demand for books from people who do not know their contents. We have had a standing order with Washington for years for the printed cards for all books relating to Canada. From the excellent summaries made on the cards a knowledge of the book is obtained and many a volume that ouwld [*sic*] be purchased from its title is found to be of little use to us and is not bought. The librarian of the general departmental library would be in touch with the

40 "In addition to the annual reports which are presented to Parliament, and issued in a bound series called Annual departmental reports, the same report is previously published bound in blue paper, hence the term 'blue-book', which is the traditional name used by the English Government for such publications. This is published much earlier than the bound series … Also the heads of various bureaus or divisions within the department report annually to the Minister in charge. These reports are issued prior to the report of the Minister to Parliament, and are much more detailed than the report of the bureau or division that the Minister includes in his report, thus providing much valuable information not found elsewhere. Libraries usually bind these reports and carefully preserve them, both for their timeliness and for their additional subject matter. The term 'blue book' is also applied to special reports issued from time to time and similarly bound." Higgins, vol. I, pp. 8–9.

41 It appears that in this case Doughty is advocating the creation of a National Library dedicated to holding government publications. Unfortunately, it would not be until 1953 that a National Library of Canada would be created, with the Dominion Archivist of the day, W.K. Lamb, being appointed first National Librarian. See the discussion in Elizabeth Hulse's *The Morton Years: The Canadian Library Association 1946–1971* (Toronto, 1995) and in Jean Lunn, "The National Library of Canada, 1950–1968," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982–83), pp. 86–95.

Library of Parliament and with the Archives, and would soon get to know where books of a purely historical nature on any subject are to be found. There would be a great reduction in the purchase of books and in public printing. The departments of course must always have a certain number of textbooks required for practical purposes, but the libraries surround themselves with works not concerned with the history of their department. It is stated that in Departmental libraries many books are obsolete and therefore worthless, and that reports going back even to Confederation are found in some of them. There is great value in obsolete books (and the older departmental reports are eagerly sought for) but not to the departments where they are presently deposited. Take agriculture for example. Students come to the Archives to trace the development of agriculture in Canada through manuscripts and books, and it is through these old books and manuscripts and the study of similar publications in other countries that works of real value on agriculture are produced.

This is only the germ of an idea, but I have seen during thirty years many changes in libraries. On the change of a Minister the books found in the office are often cleared out and a new library started. Expensive books, some of them in Greek and Latin belonging to a departmental library found their way to an empty building on the canal. Amongst them were atlases over two hundred years old.

Regarding the figures of sales of stationery to the Archives. On page two of the Appendix where the expenditures for 1931–32 is given as $6408.33 and for 1932–33 as $1937.87, I may say that this does not represent any saving in the stationery supplied to this department. A large proportion of the $6408.33 is made up of purchase of machinery for the bindery, which will be good for at least a quarter of a century.

The suggestion made by the Committee [an "s" is scratched out] regarding tran translation [*sic*], requires in my opinion most careful consideration. It is not possible to make as good a translation from manuscript as from printed galley or the whole work. It took two years to obtain a correct French version of the Constitutional Documents. The printed English version was sent round to many scholars with requests for interpretation of certain passages. Only one man could be found familiar with English terminology of the eighteenth century. He was a notary, a professor in Laval University. The government cheerfully paid him $500 for revising the final proofs. There has been references in the press over the delay in producing this volume, but the Minister withheld it until assured that it was correct; and with reason.

A well known French writer in Paris produced an excellent book on the two races.[42] Quoting from a French Report published some twenty years

42 From the description given by Doughty, it appears that he may be referring to André Siegfried's *Le Canada, les deux races; problèmes politiques contemporains* (Paris, 1906),

before he made use of a paragraph from a letter of Lord Dorchester to the effect that it was a horrible catastrophe that the French would for all time be found on the banks of the St. Lawrence. This was seized upon by the French press in Canada as proof of the animosity of the English towards the French. The book had a wide circulation and is often quoted from. What Lord Dorchester said Was "Barring a catastrophe, horrible to think of, the French would for all time be found on the banks of the St. Lawrence." There are many misleading translations in government publications.[43]

There are many more subjects that might be referred to, but I think that I have said sufficient to show that much of the Report is connected with the Archives, under your administration.

Yours truly,
Arthur Doughty

June 17. 1933
The Honble
C.H. Cahan. KC.
Secretary of State
Ottawa

Conclusion

Any examination of the foregoing Memorandum by anyone with experience in the modern archival community recognizes the continuing strains, debates, and arguments that continue to roil about archives. While Doughty's comments may not be timeless, there is no doubt they are timely; the issues raised are familiar, from calls for better pay for archival expertise to pointing out the cost benefits of better information management; and it is surely not a far cry when reading the section on the necessity for good paper and ink, to transpose the issue into one of digitization or even data migration.

It is clear that a better understanding of the value of archives is essential for their continued existence and support. At times of fiscal restraint, it often seems that cultural institutions are among the first targeted by those who consider them frills. It is that kind of mindset that Doughty was addressing when he wrote to Cahan, a strict follower of fiscal and individual conservatism

but an examination of this work does not demonstrate any use of Dorchester's report. As of the date of publication, this work is still unidentified.

43 It may be somewhat ironic that an examination of a transcription of Dorchester's dispatch, as published in the Public Archives' Annual Report for 1888, shows that Doughty himself was in error in his quotation. According to this source, Dorchester wrote: "… barring a catastrophe shocking to think of, this Country must to the end of Time, be peopled by the Canadian Race, who already have taken such firm Root …" Guy Carleton to The Earl of Sherburne, 25 November 1767, *Report on Canadian Archives by Douglas Brymner, Archivist. 1888* (Ottawa, 1889), p. 43. This was the same wording used by Doughty in his own *Constitutional Documents of Canada*.

– explaining to him that it was not frivolous to support archives, but rather the opposite, that supporting a good program of archives and information management saved a government's resources and benefited long-term fiscal responsibility. After all, to paraphrase Doughty, without information there is no history. At the same time, it must also be acknowledged, to paraphrase George Orwell,[44] without that history, or rather without at least control over the records of our past, there can be no control over our future.

44 George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (London, 1990), p. 37.