

MINUTES OF THE ARCHIVES SECTION BUSINESS MEETING  
FOR 1963

by

Miss Sandra Guillaume

Present: J. Atherton, R.S. Gordon, J.P. Heisler, J.M. Inch and B. Weilbrenner, Public Archives of Canada; A.M. Willms, Public Archives Records Centre; W.R. Bennett, Public Archives of Manitoba; Miss C. Blackstock, University of Toronto; J. Bovey, Archives of Northwest Territories; H.A. Dempsey, Glenbow Foundation; C.B. Fergusson, Public Archives of Nova Scotia; Miss S. Guillaume, Ontario Archives; G.W. Hilborn, Department of External Affairs Archives; A.D. Ridge, McGill University Archives; G.W. Spragge, Ontario Archives, and A.R. Turner, Saskatchewan Archives.

The business meeting of the Archives Section of the Canadian Historical Association was held in Room 134 of the Faculty of Medicine Building, Laval University, Quebec, P.Q., on June 5, 1963. The Chairman, Hugh A. Dempsey, presided and opened the meeting by welcoming those present, after which members introduced themselves. On the motion of Mr. Gordon, seconded by Mr. Willms, the minutes of the 1962 meeting were approved as circulated. Mr. Dempsey read his report as Chairman, reviewing the year's activities. He then requested reports from the institutions represented. The following reports were received:

Public Archives of Nova Scotia: Mr. Fergusson reported that the year had been an active one for his institution. The number of researchers using Archives facilities had increased, as had the number of written inquiries received. The Archives co-operated with federal, provincial and private agencies in providing documentation on historic houses, as well as providing material of historical interest for the Nova Scotia Display of Arts. Reorganization of the manuscript room and the basement area enabled the Archives to provide storage facilities for the Nova Scotia Museum of Fine Arts. The Archives was involved in preparations for the Centennial celebrations. Mr. Fergusson spent five weeks in England doing research on fortifications in Nova Scotia. The Archives annual report was published, and three other publications, a pamphlet, a paperback, and a hard-cover book were issued.

Ontario Archives: Dr. Spragge reported that a program for government records management was going forward, although the plans for the use of a small building as reported in 1962 had been dropped, with a view to establishing a full records centre and program. Work on a special repair and restoration laboratory had been completed and a technician was already at work repairing and restoring documents in the Archives. During the year, the Archives accessioned the William Colgate Collection, which included manuscript and other material relating to Canadian art and artists. The Osler family papers were received, including many letters written by members of the family during the 1840's and 1850's, as well as B.B. Osler's correspondence and exhibits collected during the Riel trials. For some time, the Archives had custody of the records of the Communist party seized by the Attorney General's Department during the 1930's. Through the kindness of an active party member, his private collection, including all of Tim Buck's pamphlets and newspapers had been acquired, to supplement the Archives holdings. Dr. Spragge stated that the Archives was receiving an increasing number of requests for genealogical information, particularly from the United States, and that replying to these inquiries required extensive staff time. He was interested to hear what services other institutions were providing for genealogists.

McGill University Archives: Mr. Ridge explained that the manuscript and other materials of historical interest were housed in either McCord Museum or Redpath Library, and that his particular job was the care of the University's officially-created records. Since his appointment in August, 1962, he had been attempting to locate records in the administrative and faculty offices and assess what records had survived, how they had been kept, and how to control the currently-created records. In his researches, he had also attempted to create interest in the problems of current and non-current records amongst University personnel and also to establish periods of retention and a records scheduling program. Mr. Ridge hoped that accommodation for the Archives might be found in the proposed new Administration building, but at present, the Archives had been allotted 1,200 feet of stacks in the older section of the University library.

Public Archives of Manitoba: Mr. Bennett reported that Mr. Bowsfield had been granted a year's education leave to complete necessary research for his doctoral dissertation. As more space became available, Manitoba's public records

had gradually been shelved, catalogued and organized for greater accessibility. Among the manuscript papers deposited during the year were those of the Henderson family, one of the Red River Settlement and Winnipeg's most prominent families. The calendaring of the E.L. Barber papers was continuing.

University of Toronto: Miss Blackstock reported that progress had been made in the cataloguing and sorting of several large gifts received during past years. Considerable work had been done on the J.B. Tyrrell papers; the cataloguing of the Rowland Burr and William Tyrrell sections of this collection and preliminary sorting of J.B. Tyrrell's own papers had been completed. Some work had been done on the James Mavor papers, which included general correspondence and manuscript material on the Doukhobor emigration to Canada, on the Barr Colony in Saskatchewan, and other fields of interest. The sorting and cataloguing of the Wordsworth Memorial Collection, the archives of the CCF party, had been completed. Gifts received during the year included William Snaith's record of personal income and expenditure over a period of 40 years, and letters of the Elmsley family. Recent literary accessions included the correspondence of Mazo de la Roche and manuscripts of her books. Typescripts of three of Hugh McLennan's novels had also been received. The University Archives were already a part of the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, and the University hoped to announce the appointment of a University Archivist in the near future.

Department of External Affairs Archives: Mr. Hilborn reported that four undergraduate and two graduate students had been employed to assist with archival work.

Glenbow Foundation: Mr. Dempsey reported that the main collecting emphasis was still placed on Alberta material. The Foundation employed researchers on a part-time basis to work on the records of Mormon families, families which had moved from the prairies to the coast, and irrigation. One researcher was checking United Kingdom records on fur trade and settlement, while summer employees had worked on Hutterite records dating back to the 16th century, which had been microfilmed. The Archivist had been approached by the Alberta government to advise on records retention. It had formerly been the policy of the government to destroy records if accompanied by Orders-in-Council, but now the recommendation of an archivist must accompany the Order. The records of the Western Stock Growers Association had

been completely catalogued, and the records of the Alberta Liberal Association had been accessioned and were being processed. R.O. Harrison, museum consultant, had asked Mr. Dempsey to draw to the attention of the meeting the competition for Director of the proposed Alberta Archives.

Public Archives of Canada: Mr. Weilbrenner reported an increasing attendance of researchers particularly because of the work being done on the Louisbourg restoration project. The William Lyon MacKenzie King papers were shortly to be opened to 1922 and microfilm copies of the Sir John A. Macdonald papers made available on an inter-library loan basis. Some Baby papers and those of the de Lotbiniere Joly family were on loan to the Archives for microfilming. An agreement had been reached between the Archives and the Canadian National Railway to have the Archives act as repository for C.N.R. records. The first stage transfer of records of companies preceding the C.N.R. had commenced, some four hundred feet of material being already in Archives custody. The Archives had received the records of Wordsworth House, party headquarters of the CCF-NDP which are open, subject to permission from the party. Several sets of ministerial papers from the Diefenbaker cabinet had been deposited in the Archives. The report of the Glassco Commission had resulted in an increasing flow of records from the departments to the Records Centre.

Saskatchewan Archives: Mr. Turner reported that the Saskatchewan Archives biennial report had been tabled and published. Mr. Turner had been appointed Provincial Archivist and Douglas Bocking Assistant Archivist. Congestion in the Regina office had been somewhat relieved by the acquisition of space in the Regina Court Office, but access to the material stored there was difficult. Mr. Turner was hopeful that the situation would be alleviated with allotment of space in the new Wascana Centre complex.

A continuing flow of public records was being accessioned; the most recently accessioned material included the records of the Deputy and Associate Deputy Ministers' offices of the Department of Natural Resources, 1930-60. Over a ton of the papers of the Rt. Hon. James G. Gardiner were being arranged by the Archives staff and microfilmed. The original papers were to be returned to the family, while the Archives would retain the microfilm on deposit. The papers provide documentation over a period of sixty years, and are of particular interest during the 1920's, as the Archives has very little available from this period. These

papers are closed. Increasing use was being made of the Archives, particularly in the preparation of local histories in connection with the jubilee celebrations. The Archives Oral History Program was progressing; some interviews with pioneers had proven very productive in that the interviewees had possessed items of historical interest and value. In addition to contacting pioneers, the Archives had continued to supplement its private papers collection with taped interviews. The Archives had also acquired tapes of broadcasts and telecasts in connection with the 1962 Medicare crisis in Saskatchewan, including an interview with Lord Taylor, the mediator.

Public Archives Records Centre: Mr. Willms reported that the Centre, like many other agencies of the federal government, was attempting to meet increasing demands for service with a smaller staff. The first general schedule applying to the administrations of departments and agencies had been issued and the Centre was now receiving the records of forty-two agencies. Approximately one-third of the records intake was now being destroyed. Reference service in particular had shown a large increase. The Centre had been allotted 120,000 square feet in new buildings, as the Treasury Board had become convinced that dormant storage was worthwhile. A manual on the retention of provincial and municipal records had been incorporated into the Emergency Measures manual and during 1963, the Centre's staff hoped to prepare a similar manual on essential industrial records. The records and papers of Robert Bell, former head of the Geological Survey, which had been stored in a house that had recently burned, had been removed to the Centre for evaluation. Dr. Lamb was in the process of drafting a new records act.

Northwest Territories Archives: Mr. Bovey reported that as yet, he had no building to accommodate archival material and that he was still searching out relevant material and trying to acquire it in the name of the Northwest Territories. A great deal of material had been discovered in American maritime museums concerning whaling, anthropology of Eskimos and scientific information. As it was unlikely that an archives building for the Territories would be constructed for some years yet, an inventory of departmental files and material available in the Public Archives Records Centre was being prepared. The government of the Yukon Territory was a separate entity and was considering the establishment of a records centre in which would be housed the Dawson City records and records relating to the gold rush. Some preliminary surveying of available material had

been done by the Public Archives of Canada in 1958-59 and material discovered, except for that of purely local interest, had been transferred to the Archives.

As this completed the reports from the institutions represented, the meeting then turned to the question of services to genealogists. After considerable discussion, Mr. Dempsey suggested that the matter could be left to the incoming executive, who would contact institutions and survey the services offered to genealogists, and then circulate the results of the survey.

The possibility of opening the Public Archives Records Centre records management course to other than federal personnel was mentioned. Mr. Willms replied that, for the present, the enrolment was limited but that he hoped in future to be able to accept registrations from provincial and industrial personnel.

The question of an Archives Training Course was discussed. Preliminary announcements had already been issued by Carleton University which was willing to go ahead with plans for the course, although concerned about the number of applicants. It was decided after discussion that the incoming executive should circularise institutions to obtain firm commitments as to numbers of prospective students.

The Chairman then requested a report on document cases from Dr. Spragge. Dr. Spragge said he had been able to obtain document cases made in Canada at a price comparable to that charged for American-made cases. He could give no estimate as to the probable life of the Canadian-made cases, but there was also no estimate for the American cases. At the request of the meeting, Dr. Spragge supplied the name of the supplier of the boxes, Collett-Sproule Boxes Ltd., 1997 Kennedy Road, Scarborough.

The Treasurer then reported concerning the Section's finances. It was explained that the Section had received a grant-in-aid of its activities from the Council for 1962-63. The amount was not to exceed \$50.00. During the year consideration had been given to the publication of papers presented to the meetings in the past; it was decided, however, that the publication of a completely revised "Survey of Archivists' Positions in Canada" should have priority, and this was done. The Glenbow Foundation defrayed the costs connected with the Survey, and therefore the grant remained

unused. As the possibility of publishing papers was likely to be feasible in the coming year, the meeting suggested that the Section apply for a renewal of the grant-in-aid. The Treasurer moved, seconded by Mr. Weilbrenner, a vote of thanks to the Glenbow Foundation for defraying the costs of publishing and distributing the Survey. Carried unanimously. Mr. Weilbrenner moved, seconded by Mr. Willms, that the Section apply to Council for a renewal of the grant for 1963-64, and that the Secretary-Treasurer deduct any administrative disbursements from this sum. Carried. As it was necessary that the Section be represented at the Council meeting, at which Messrs. Gordon, Heisler and Weilbrenner would be present, they were asked to report to Council for the Section.

The Chairman reported that the Survey had represented more institutions than ever before and that it had met with a very favorable response. One hundred copies were printed and seventy-six had already been distributed.

The meeting then turned to new business. Mr. Turner spoke briefly, stating that he wished to record formal recognition of the services to Archives, scholarship and the Section's predecessor, the Archives Committee, of Dr. Spragge, whose retirement as Archivist of Ontario was imminent. After applause, Dr. Spragge replied.

Mr. Gordon reported on the progress of the Union List of Manuscripts in Canadian repositories. Some 162 repositories had agreed to co-operate in the survey; 65 of these had already completed their returns and over 5,000 returns had been received. 3,500 master index cards and 3,200 cross-reference cards had been prepared from these returns. Although the Public Archives was unable to proceed as quickly with this project as hoped, due to austerity, publication of 12,000 entries appeared likely for 1964. It was anticipated that an offset printing process would be used with 10-12 cards to the page with a resulting 1,000 page volume accompanied by a 200 page index. The Union List was to be a continuing project with revisions to be published at four or five year intervals.

Mr. Ridge had submitted a list of topics for discussion, among them the preparation of lists of document repairers and suppliers of archival equipment. After discussion, the preparation of such lists was referred to the incoming executive for action.

The question of the advisability of holding the business meeting of both Archives and local history Sections at the same time was raised. It was moved by Mr. Turner, seconded by Mr. Bovey, that the Section's wish, that, if at all possible, the scheduling of both business meetings at the same time be discontinued, be transmitted to Council, along with the suggestion that the Section would be willing to schedule the presentation of its papers at another time.

Dr. Spragge raised the question of business records and the difficulties of storing them. It was suggested that one archival institution be designated to act as a central repository or alternatively one institution per geographical section, for business records. It was the feeling of the meeting that, if possible, such a repository should be connected with a University School of Commerce or Business Administration.

The Secretary reported that the resolution passed at the 1962 meeting concerning the microfilming of theses had been transmitted to the National Librarian.

The report of the Projects Chairman which had been filed for re-presentation was read. As several of the points had already been acted upon, discussion centred on the possibility of the Section's charging its own fees, and forming a separate association. The feeling of the meeting was that the matter should be thoroughly discussed at the 1964 meeting.

The meeting then proceeded to the election of officers. The following were elected:

Chairman: Hugh A. Dempsey  
Vice-Chairman: Allen R. Turner  
Secretary-Treasurer: Sandra Guillaume

Mr. Fergusson thanked the outgoing executive for their services. The meeting then adjourned.