

He received his appointment as Librarian, University of British Columbia in 1940 and held the post until the end of 1948, during a period of vast expansion in the Library and University.

Dr. Lamb was appointed Dominion Archivist in the fall of 1948, and took up the Ottawa post late in that year. In addition he was made responsible for preparations leading to the establishment of the National Library. When this materialized, he was given the additional appointment of National Librarian as from 1 January, 1953. He carried on this dual role until late in 1968 when on 21 November he left Ottawa with Mrs. Lamb to spend the winter on the Riviera. His formal retirement became effective on 15 January, 1969.

During the twenty years in Ottawa, Dr. Lamb made contributions of such magnitude that we will not know their full import for many years to come. A vigorous, active, friendly, unflappable man, Dr. Lamb has been hard at work in recent months bringing to publication stage longtime editorial projects which he has had to set aside from time to time in the interest of archival and library administration. We can rejoice in, and find profit from, his "busman's holiday".

- John Andreassen

"OTTAWA 1968 - SOME PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS"

By John Bovey, Provincial Archivist of Manitoba

on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of the Society of American Archivists at Ottawa, September 30 - October 2, 1968.

(NOTE: Because the conference has been reported in depth in the American Archivist, a personal viewpoint was felt to be appropriate here. Ed.)

This meeting of the Society was the first I had ever attended, and I suspect that most of the Canadian delegates were in the same position. Thus the conference had a somewhat paradoxical character, for while the majority of American delegates were strangers to Canada, the host Canadians were personally strangers to the visiting organization. Perhaps this fact even contributed to a generally stimulating and interesting conference.

My greatest and most lasting impression of the event was simply the sheer bigness of the United States of America as reflected in the number of American archivists present; their wealth in respect to holdings, equipment and budgets; the variety and often high degree

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specifications prepared by W. J Barrow already need updating. There is a possibility that the Library of Congress Information Bulletin may carry supplements in future designed to serve as a clearing house for information in this area.

5. Verner W. Clapp makes the point that "permanent" papers and "permanent/durable" papers are not the same thing. " 'Permanent' paper is non acid or alkaline paper, but may be very weak - in fact is undoubtedly weak. 'Permanent/durable' paper is a paper which combines neutral or alkaline pH with good strength. The fact is that good strength is necessary for permanence, because the papers with less strength deteriorate to zero just that much faster than strong papers (see Permanence/Durability of the Book page 22 and Fig. 1)."

6. I have in my files a 2 page analysis of two Canadian and one U. S. produced catalog card stock produced at the Abbaye Saint Benoit, St.-Benoit-du-lac, Québec, entitled "Fichiprim Présente et Analyse Trois Cartes à Fiche".

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of specialization of their professional background. While an impressive number of Canadian archivists journeyed to Ottawa, they still only numbered 25 out of a total of 330 registered delegates.¹

The Canadian archival community seems altogether more cohesive, familiar and homogenous than the American one. Canadian archivists, like the generality of Canadian academics until very recent years, are still few enough to know one another personally. This does not seem to be the case "south of the line".

From conversations with American delegates I concluded that there are very wide discrepancies between the archives of various states. The best may approach superlative standards, but those at the bottom of the scale are undernourished almost to the point of extinction. The archival scene perhaps again reflects aspects of the current poverty crisis in The Great Republic. By comparison, Canadian provincial archives today seem to be relatively closer to some median standards of policy, outlook and salary scales. These comments, I must emphasize, are conversational garnerings and nothing more.

No doubt delegates to every large conference which presents a varied program face the problem of selecting which papers or workshops they should attend. Certainly this proved to be a problem at the S.A.A. Meeting. At times, four workshops of almost equal interest

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¹These figures are mine, and approximate. Ed.

"We are slowly moving towards a Canadian archival methodology. We need a teaching base where we can inculcate professional techniques and a professional attitude. This would at once strengthen the archives section and immeasurably strengthen the archival profession in Canada".

- Wilfred I. Smith

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were scheduled at the same hour. Which one to chose? The ideal solution is for each institution to send a four-man (or woman) delegation, but few Canadian archives can afford that solution. Yet again, paradoxically, the staff of the small, unspecialized archives, simply have to be concerned about a wide variety of specialized subjects, such as church records, business records, government records, preservation techniques, automation, oral history and photography. Staff members of larger institutions with specialized departments perhaps do not feel the same compulsion to try and take in something of everything. When a conference like that of the S.A.A. concludes one is left hoping that the bulk of the three out of four papers one did not hear may soon be published someplace by someone.

Personally I found the papers on "special subject collections" particularly interesting, and indeed frequently entertaining. Particularly so was John A. Popplestone, Director of the Archives of the History of American Psychology at Akron, Ohio, who described himself as "the attic keeper of America's mind" (!) if I remember accurately, and opened an interesting exchange on acquisitions policy and methods. The other three speakers, Howard Applegate of Syracuse University on "Industrial Design Collection", Tino Balio of the University of Wisconsin on "Theatre Research Collection", and Rudolph J. Vecoli on the "Immigration Studies Collection" at the University of Minnesota also gave illuminating accounts of their activities and plans. The only pity, from the Canadian point of view, was that "fellow Canadians" who could have most benefited from exposure to these talks were not attending the conference, e.g., psychologists, designers, the Canadian Manufacturers Association, representatives of the theatrical world and the ethnic societies.

The workshop on Preservation Methods was well presented and I found Robert Wagner's paper on the "Preservation and Restoration of the American Film Heritage", which aptly included a film on the dangers of old nitrate stock, the new machinery for the restoration of damaged film, and the production of safety film copies, particularly informative. In the aftermath of this presentation it is encouraging to hear that the Public Archives has begun to build up a

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cited can be greatly reduced. I do nearly all the interviewing myself, although in the Toronto Press project, I hope to be able to engage a freelance interviewer or perhaps a graduate student, someone who is good at interviewing, personable, and knows his stuff, and who can take on some of that work for me. I would pay that person of course. I think that we would all want to hire interviewers from time to time for special projects to get the experts who have access to the respondent and perhaps know him and know something about the subject already, so that they can go right in to the work in a much better fashion than an archivist who would have to prepare himself."

NOTE: Attention is drawn to A Bibliography on Oral History by D. J. Schippers and A. Tusler, 1967, being Miscellaneous Publications Number 1 of the Oral History Association.

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Canadian Film Archives under the supervision of Mr. Bill Gallaway. A good many Canadian archives have extensive picture collections, but few, to my knowledge, have yet begun to collect moving film in sizeable quantities.

Despite the interest in the general workshops the sessions on purely Canadian subjects seemed to be the liveliest and most bracing of the whole conference. (Or is this parochialism or chauvanism or whatever?) They included "French Canada - The Archival Situation" and "Developments in Canadian Business Archives".

Quebec boasts the motto "Je me souviens", but the panelists and the audience all sadly agreed, without dissent, that the archival situation in Quebec, if not all French Canada, is generally deplorable. Those present at the workshop were also treated to an exposition of M. Laurier Lapierre's somewhat novel archival theories.

The panel on Canadian Business Archives chaired by Mr. James C. Bonar opened one of the first general public discussions of this significant and hitherto untilled field. It was unfortunate that Willard Ireland, Provincial Archivist of British Columbia, was unable to be present to deliver his scheduled paper. However, John Archer of Queen's University ably adapted his remarks to survey the situation as a whole, and stimulated what became the liveliest discussion I heard during the conference; a discussion which may indeed be

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CONFERENCE COVERAGE C.H.A.

systems or in becoming a member, should contact George Lawson, Comptroller, Quebec Hospital Services Association, 550 Sherbrooke Street West, Montreal, P. Q."

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continued across the country for some little time to come. May Business Archives yet prove to be the Pandora's Box of the Canadian corporate, or archival, worlds?

The recent addition of public relations personnel to the Public Archives of Canada became quickly apparent at the S.A.A. meeting. Has Ottawa, or any other Canadian city, ever been so aware of an archival conference in its midst? The facade of the Chateau Laurier was decorated with a "Welcome American Archivists" banner, and the local papers, thanks to the leg-work of Mr. Bob Roswarn, carried stories and pictures every day. Perhaps the Canadian archivists should try to maintain a similar degree of exposure whenever they meet in future.

Social events, planned and spontaneous, are never the least significant feature of any conference, and so it was at Ottawa. The planning committee did an excellent job of arranging band concerts, movie films, tours of the national capital district and the new Public Archives Building, the Gatineau Hills (for ladies only) and a post-conference expedition to Upper Canada Village.

However, at least for the Canadian delegates, the social event of greatest significance was the October 1st luncheon addressed by the Dominion Archivist. Dr. Lamb was introduced by the Secretary of State, the Hon. Gerard Pelletier, who in the course of his remarks announced with regret that Dr. Lamb would soon be retiring. Thus the luncheon speech became unexpectedly a valedictory by the Dominion Archivist, although fortunately not the last time archivists can hope to hear Dr. Lamb speak. The reception that same evening before the presidential dinner became an animated but slightly sad au revoir party for both Dr. and Mrs. Lamb. None the less these two events made an important Canadian occasion out of the 1968 Annual Meeting of the Society of American Archivists, and they alone would have made the journey to Ottawa worthwhile for all the Canadian delegates.

- John Bovey
Provincial Archivist of Manitoba

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