

Sources for the History of Women at the Public Archives of Canada

Tom Nesmith

Documentation pour l'histoire de la femme aux Archives publiques du Canada.

Recent interest in the study of women in Canadian history has accompanied the movement of historical study into the fields of labour history, business history and urban history to cite but a few examples. The arrival of women's history has been the source of more controversy than any of the other new approaches to the past.

One of the leading historians of women, Veronica Strong-Boag, wrote in 1973 that 'Apathy and ridicule traditionally greet investigations of female experience.'¹ By 1978 she could comment that while complaints about the validity of the history of women 'survive still ... such carping is on the wane.' Strong-Boag wanted no one to think that the history of women had won unqualified acceptance; rather, she widened her critique of the historical profession's response to the field by drawing attention to the need for more archival activity in the area. She asked for 'a positive commitment on the part of archives at every level' to the preservation of historical sources for the study of women. At the Public Archives in particular, she noted that no one had as yet been assigned to coordinate an archival program in the history of women.²

Since coming on staff in the Manuscript Division at the Public Archives in November, 1978, I have been responsible for just such a program. Three aspects of the work have concerned me most. First of all, contacts made with potential donors of archival material but not fully explored by others interested in the field at the Public Archives before November, 1978 had to be renewed. Secondly, information about women in sources elsewhere in the Manuscript Division had to be given more prominence, and finally, archival activity in fields

closely related to the history of women called for attention.

Significant additions have been made to the nucleus of manuscript material related to the history of women acquired by the Public Archives before November, 1978. Two of the most important are the papers of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and those of the Canadian Girls in Training National Association. The Public Archives now maintains the papers of many of the most prominent women's organizations in Canada starting with the National Council of Women and including la Fédération de femmes canadiennes-françaises, Canadian Nurses Association, Victorian Order of Nurses, Canadian Federation of University Women, Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, the Media Club (founded in 1904 as the Canadian Women's Press Club), Young Women's Christian Association of Canada, International Council of Women and a number of others like the Canadian Library Association, Canadian Teachers' Association and the Canadian Council on Social Development which concern professions in which women are heavily represented.

In order to centralize information about historical sources in the Manuscript Division for the study of women a *Thematic Guide to Post-Confederation Sources in the Manuscript Division for the History of Women/Guide thématique des sources postérieures à la Confédération conservées à la Division des manuscrits sur l'histoire des femmes* was prepared and placed in the division's Reference Room as finding aid 1069. The *Guide* contains copies of inventory entries for manuscript collections which

make any reference to women. A revision of the *Guide* now under way will bring the number of inventory entries it contains to about 300. The *Guide* indicates that manuscript collections of interest to historians of women housed outside my own section of the division, the Social and Cultural Archives, include the papers of the women's division of the Ukrainian Canadian Committee in the National Ethnic Archives section and those of the National Federation of Liberal Women, Grace MacInnis, Agnes Macphail and the Massey family in the Public Affairs Archives section.

The third aspect of my work has resulted in the development of an acquisition program in the field of the history of the child. A *Thematic Guide to Post-Confederation Sources in the Manuscript Division for the History of Children and Young People/Guide thématique des sources postérieures à la Confédération conservées à la Division des manuscrits sur l'histoire des enfants et des jeunes* was compiled and placed in the division's Reference Room as finding aid 1068. After revision in March, 1980 it contains inventory entries for 133 manuscript collections possessing information related to childhood. Among collections of interest to historians of women are the papers of the Montreal Society for the Protection of Women and Children, the Dominion Council of Health, Charlotte Whitton, and OMEP-Canada (l'Organisation mondiale pour l'éducation préscolaire). ☉

Notes

1. Veronica Strong-Boag, "Cousin Cinderella": A guide to Historical Literature Pertaining to Women, p. 263. Marylee Stephenson ed. *Women in Canada* (Toronto, 1973).
2. Veronica Strong-Boag, 'Raising Clío's Consciousness: Women's History and Archives in Canada', *Archivaria* 6 (Summer 1978): 71.

Recent Publications in Canadian Women's History

Compiled by Beth Light

Only six months ago the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) published the first book-length bibliography in Canadian women's history (Beth Light and Veronica Strong-Boag, *True Daughters of the North: Canadian Women's History — An Annotated Bibliography*. Toronto: OISE Press, 1980). That resource is witness to the growing body of literature dealing with the contributions and experiences of women in the Canadian past. The continuing vitality of research in the field is further evinced by the following listing which identifies publications that appeared after *True Daughters* went to press.

BOOKS

Barss, Beulah M. *The Pioneer Cook: A Historical View of Canadian Prairie Food*. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1980.

Traces the development of food patterns during the fur trade period and their changes to the First World War. Contributes to the understanding of the household production patterns in which women played a central role on the prairies.

Binnie-Clark, Georgina. *Wheat and Woman*. Introduction by Susan Jackel. Social History of Canada Series No.30. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979.

The author of this 1914 work made her contribution to women's rights in early 20th century Canada through her advocacy of the admission of single women to homestead rights and through her practical experiment in independently establishing a farm in Saskatchewan. *Wheat and Woman* argues her case for female property rights, summarizes her personal experiences in agriculture, and diagnoses the reasons for her failure.

Brown, Jennifer S.H. *Strangers in Blood: Fur Trade Company Families In Indian Country*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980.

Studies the fur traders of the Canadian North West and their families. Their backgrounds, social patterns, domestic life and later generations of the families provide the evidence for the study of themes of societal change in the 18th and 19th centuries and of comparison between the attitudes of the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company traders.

Brownridge, Violet. *My Heritage, or, Jottings*. Halton Hills, Ont.: Esquesing Historical Society, 1979.

The author recalls her rural 20th century childhood through a series of brief comments on daily topics as diverse as berry picking, Sunday School and wheels and whips.

Cobb, Myrna and Morgan, Sher. *Eight Women Photographers of British Columbia*. Victoria: Applied Communication Program, Camosun College, 1979.

Gathers together the work of eight women photographers from British Columbia in a 100-year photographic anthology. The book includes a biographic sketch and reproduces examples of the work of each of the following women: Hannah Maynard, Mary Spencer, Mattie Gunterman, Helen McCall, Estelle Dickey, Ulli Steltzer, Marian Penner Bancroft and Holly Devor.

Doyle, James. *Annie Howells and Achille Fréchette*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979.

From the time of their marriage in 1877, Annie Howells and Achille Fréchette were at the centre of cultural and literary life in Ottawa. The story of their lives and times and of their individual literary careers is told in this fascinating biography.

Enns, Helga M. and Le Francois, Bev. *Story of a Woman's Centre*. Port Coquitlam, B.C.: Port Coquitlam Area Women's Centre, 1979.

Founded in 1974, the Port Coquitlam Area Women's Centre's initial consciousness-raising role has since expanded to serve women in this area of British Columbia in a variety of ways. The expansion of the centre, its diverse problems and interests over five years and the women involved are the subjects of this history.

Fair, Myrtle. *I Remember the One-Room School*. Cheltenham, Ont.: Boston Mills Press, 1979.

Based on oral interviews with pupils and students and her own recollections and diary, the author explores the nature of education and its experience in the one-room school in 1890-1960 Ontario. Unfortunately we cannot tell the identities of the speakers from the interview quotations.

Harrison, Phyllis. *The Home Children: Their Personal Stories*. Winnipeg: Watson and Dwyer Publishing, 1979.

Through reminiscences, the occasional contemporary document and the stories of their offspring, the experiences and tales of the male and female children who immigrated to Canada under the auspices of late 19th century British philanthropy are told.

Hauck, Philomena. *Sourcebook on Canadian Women*. Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 1979.

Annotated references to materials on Canadian women organized under the titles: Women's Rights, Women and the Law, Work and Day Care, Health and Fitness, Biography, Literature by and about Women, Books for Liberated Children, Audio-Visual Material and General Bibliographies and Information Sources.

McCallan, N.J. and Roback, Katherine. *An Ordinary Life: Life Histories of Women in the Urban Core of Vancouver*. Working Papers. Ottawa: Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 1979.

Used oral interviews to examine the lives of women who live in and use Vancouver's urban core and to show the value of their contribution and the richness of their lives.

Moncton Council of Women. *Sharing Responsibility, 1920-1980: Diamond Jubilee History*. Moncton, N.B.: Moncton Council of Women, 1980.

Documents the 60-year history of the Moncton Council of Women. Describes in detail affiliated groups, changing concerns and prominent members of this New Brunswick women's group.

Norris, J.A., comp., *The Book of Giving: A History of the Ontario Handweavers and Spinners, 1956-1979*. Toronto: Ontario Handweavers and Spinners, 1979.

Explores the formation, organization and history of the Ontario Handweavers and Spinners in post-Second World War Ontario. The organization, which was composed mainly of women, promoted its craft through adult education.

Piva, Michael J. *The Condition of the Working Class in Toronto — 1900-1921*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1979.

Analysis of the working life and social conditions of women and men, of family structure, and of the life of poverty may be found in this study of working class Toronto, 1900-1921. Particularly concerning women are items on hours and wages, employment in the clothing and service industries, and their situation as white collar workers.

Roger, Gertrude Minor. *Lady Pancher*. Saanichton, B.C.: Hancock House Publishers, 1979.

The life of a woman on prairie ranches in post-Second World War Canada is the subject of these fascinating memoirs. As a wife and later as a widow, Gertrude Minor Roger details the work she undertook in ranching.

Simard, Pierrette. *Recherche sur la femme et le travail en milieu rural*. Working Papers. Ottawa: Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, 1979.

Reports on research examining the contemporary work and roles of rural women in the seven parishes composing Charlevoix Ouest, Quebec.

Vaisey, G. Douglas, comp. *The Labour Companion: A Bibliography of Canadian Labour History Based on Materials Printed From 1950 to 1975*. Halifax: Committee on Canadian Labour History, 1980.

An alphabetical listing, by author, of materials published 1950-1975 relating to the history of labour in Canada. Includes a number of references to female workers and, in particular, to issues concerning women and trade unions. A useful subject index assists the researcher.

Wright, Helen K. *Nellie McClung and Women's Rights*. Agincourt, Ont.: The Book Society of Canada Ltd., 1980.

Traces the life of Nellie McClung in the context of the late 19th and early 20th century movement for women's rights in Canada. Extensively illustrated. Designed for use in the schools with suggested classroom questions and activities.

ARTICLES

Alphonsus, Sister Mary, 'Life on Baccalieu: The Reminiscences of the Last Teacher There, (Miss) Margaret Noonan.' *Newfoundland Quarterly*, 75 (3), Christmas 1979: 10-2.

Describes the author's three years as a teacher on the island of Baccalieu, Newfoundland, beginning in 1936. Addresses questions about the nature of island life, school curriculum and students.

Bernier, Jacques. 'Les praticiens de la santé au Québec, 1871-1921: Quelques données statistiques.' *Recherches sociographiques*, 20 (1), January-April 1979: 41-58.

The numeric evolution, density and geographic distribution of the health professions in Quebec in the period 1871-1921 are the subjects of this investigation. Documents the decline of midwifery as a female profession and the rise of nursing.

Bradbury, Bettina. 'The Family Economy and Work in an Industrializing City: Montreal in the 1870s.' *Historical Papers*. Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1979: 71-96.

Employs census records from 1871 to examine the family economy in Montreal. 'It examines how class position, cultural values and changes in the nature of production influenced the family economy in the period of early industrial capitalism.' (72)

Clarke, Harold D. and Kornberg, Allan. 'Moving Up the Political Escalator: Women Party Officials in the United States and Canada.' *Journal of Politics*, 41 (2), May 1979: 442-477.

A study of contemporary recruitment and careers of male and female party officials in Seattle, Minneapolis, Vancouver, and Winnipeg with the view 'to explain variations in the placement of men and women in the several parties into three organizational categories that we term "Elites", "Insiders", and "Stalwarts"' (443)

Collet, Paulette. 'Les romancières québécoises des années 60 face à la maternité.' *Atlantis*, 5 (2), Spring 1980: 131-141.

Through an examination of Quebec novels of the 1960s, the author assesses the principal portrayal of the mother figure. She argues that the image of mothers has shifted from the traditional generous and fertile woman to one frequently indifferent and cruel and relates this treatment to changes in Quebec society.

Crowley, Terence. 'Thunder Gusts': Popular Disturbances in Early French Canada.' *Historical Papers*. Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1979: 11-32.

Examines popular public disturbances in 18th century French Canada and the nature of the society which produced them. Of particular interest are accounts of protests by women concerning food shortages and prices.

Dumont-Johnson, Micheline. 'Des garderies au XIXe siècle: Les salles d'asile des Soeurs Grises à Montréal.' *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, 34 (1), June 1980: 27-55.

A detailed study of the salles d'asile, or day-care centres, maintained between 1860 and the end of the century by the Grey Nuns in Montreal. The author addresses questions concerning the objectives, personnel and children of the salles and uses the study of these centres to enlarge in historical problems such as the changing images of women and children in the society.

Emblem, Edith (Lawrence). 'In Her Own Words', In E. Blanche Norcross, ed. *Nanaimo Retrospective: The First Century*, pp. 147-151. Nanaimo, B.C.: Nanaimo Historical Society, 1979.

Edith Lawrence recounts her personal experiences as a young woman immigrant under an informal service contract and the early years of her marriage. Her account spans the years 1893-1897.

Feaver, George. "'Self-Respect and Hopefulness': The Webbs in the Golden West." *BC Studies*, 43, Autumn 1979: 45-64.

The article draws on the travel diary of Beatrice and Sidney Webb to analyze the Fabians' 1911 impressions of Western Canadian society.

Fox, John and Hartnagel, Timothy F. 'Changing Social Roles and Female Crime in Canada: A Time Series Analysis.' *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 16 (1), 1979: 96-104.

'Time series data (dating from 1931-1968) on female conviction rates in Canada are examined ... to evaluate the hypotheses that female crime rate varies inversely with the rate of involvement of females in the familial role and directly with the rate of female participation in extrafamilial roles.' (Abstract)

Gaffield, Chad M. 'Canadian Families in Cultural Context: Hypotheses from the Mid-Nineteenth Century'. *Historical Papers*. Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1979: 48-70.

Uses quantitative data from the townships of Alfred and Caledonia in Prescott County, Ontario, 1851-1871, to compare and examine the nature of English-Canadian and French-Canadian families. Explores topics such as domestic organization, family structure and function, and household size.

Gottlieb, Lois C. and Keitner, Wendy. 'Bird at the Window: An Annotated Bibliography of Canadian Fiction Written by Women, 1970-1975.' *American Review of Canadian Studies*, 9 (2), Autumn 1979: 3-56.

A major research source, the detailed annotated bibliography records 74 novels, novellas or short story collections written between 1970 and 1975 by English Canadian women. An introductory essay by the compilers sets out not only their methodology for collection and annotation but also important generalizations about the nature of the fiction.

Igartua, José E. 'Le Comportement démographique des marchands de Montréal vers 1760.' *Revue d'histoire de l'amérique française*, 33 (3), December 1979: 427-450.

Through family reconstitution, research was conducted concerning the demographic elements of the lives of 92 Montreal merchants' families at the time of the Conquest. Cites and analyzes statistics about age at first marriage, family size, birth spacing and seasonal variables.

Inkster, Anne Ellen. 'To School in London.' *The Beaver*, Summer 1979: 42-49.

Reprints an account written in 1925 by Mrs. R.F. Inkster (née Spencer) describing being sent at the age of 10 with her eight-year-old sister, Edith, from their home in Fort Churchill to a school in London, England. Details their departure, voyage, and school years until their return to the Hudson Bay area in 1893.

Johnson, Elizabeth Lichtenstein. 'Recollections of a Georgia Loyalist.' *Atlantis*, 5 (1), Fall 1979: 154-182.

The second part of excerpts from Elizabeth Lichtenstein Johnston's memoirs includes her impressions of life in Nova Scotia during the first few decades of the 19th century. The excerpts provide a relatively rare record of a Canadian woman's experiences during the later years of her life.

Lavigne, Marie and Jean, Michèle. '40 ans de vote . . . et après.' *La Gazette des Femmes*, 2 (1), April 1980: 8-10.

Provides a brief overview of the history of the struggle for the vote for women in Quebec and comments on the current political involvement of women in that province.

Lee, Danielle Juteau. 'Les religieuses du Québec: leurs influences sur la vie professionnelle des femmes, 1908-1954.' *Atlantis*, 5 (2), Spring 1980: 22-33.

Using the struggle to obtain higher education for women as a case study, the author explores the relationship between Quebec's female religious communities and the social, occupational and intellectual opportunities for women in that province in the first half of the 20th century. She argues that the religieuses' position was avant-garde, traces the roots of their stance, and assesses its impact on the society.

MacDougall, Heather. 'Researching Public Health Services in Ontario, 1882-1930.' *Archivaria*, 10, Summer 1980: 157-172.

Manuscript and other archival sources for the study of public health services in late 19th and early 20th century Ontario are assessed.

Manley, John. 'Women and the Left in the 1930s: The Case of the Toronto CCF Women's Joint Committee.' *Atlantis*, 5 (2), Spring 1980: 100-119.

'It is the purpose of this paper to show that in the interwar years, women were not an inert mass in the political sphere. . . . Evidence demonstrates that at least one group of women within the CCF, the Toronto CCF Women's Joint Committee (WJC) attempted to create an autonomous agency of sexual and political struggle. Their efforts not only testify to a continuing women's consciousness in the interwar years but also illuminate political developments on the left during the Depression decade.' (p. 100-1)

Matters, Diane L. 'Public Welfare Vancouver Style, 1910-1920.' *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 14 (1), Spring 1979: 3-15.

The structure and attitudes of Vancouver relief programs in the decade after 1910 are explored. Provides fascinating information about approaches to the problems of single unemployed women and prostitutes as well as a general study of the system of relief support for other women.

Mitchinson, Wendy. 'Gynecological Operations on the Insane.' *Archivaria*, 10, Summer 1980: 125-144.

'The first section of this article examines in a very general way the increasing interest in medical history, the potential it offers

for research and the problems it may pose for archivists. The second section is a study of one episode in Canadian medical history, the use of gynecological surgery on insane women at the London, Ontario; Asylum for the Insane between 1895 and 1900, and an evaluation of the sources consulted.' (p. 125)

Mitchinson, Wendy. 'The Historiography of Canadian Women's History,' *Conference Group in Women's History Newsletter*, 4 (2), January 1979: 16-21.

Details the problems associated with the development of women's history in Canada, the four predominant themes of this research, and, briefly, the directions indicated for the future. Appends a Selected Bibliography.

Mitchinson, Wendy. 'The YWCA and Reform in the Nineteenth Century.' *Social History/Histoire sociale*, 12, November 1979: 368-384.

Explores the conflicting and complex pressures on Young Women's Christian Association reformers in their attempts to respond to the problems of late 19th century working women in Canada. Examines this historical problem in the context of the late 19th century Canadian reform movement.

Montgomery, Lucy Maud. 'A Girl's Place at Dalhousie College, 1896.' *Atlantis*, 5 (1), Fall 1979: 146-153.

In April 1896, while a student at Halifax's Dalhousie College, Lucy Maud Montgomery wrote this article for the *Halifax Herald*. *Atlantis* reprints Montgomery's thoughts and assessment of the state of higher education for women.

Morris, Cerise. 'Determination and Thoroughness': The Movement for a Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada.' *Atlantis*, 5 (2), Spring 1980: 1-21.

Examines and offers an explanation of the forces contributing to the recognition of the social problem of Canadian women's status and the appointment of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada.

'Reminiscences of a Pioneer Teacher.' In E. Blanche Norcross, ed. *Nanaimo Retrospective: The First Century*, pp. 47-8. Nanaimo, B.C.: Nanaimo Historical Society, 1979.

Describes the life of Miss May Woodman who served as a teacher in Nanaimo in the late 19th century. Based on an oral interview with the former female teacher.

'Report on the Home for Young Women Seeking Employment, Halifax 1870.' *Atlantis*, 5 (2), Spring 1980: 196-200.

Reprints the *First Annual Report of the Temporary Home for Young Women*, Halifax 1870. Established in 1869, the Home was to provide shelter and moral supervision for young women seeking work in the city.

Rooney, Frances. 'The Montreal Women's Symphony.' *Atlantis*, 5 (1), Fall 1979: 70-82.

Discusses the 1940s initiatives of violinist Ethel Stark in founding the Montreal Women's Symphony. Highlights aspects of the symphony's 20-year career and of the life of Stark.

Smith, Peter L. 'Emily Carr: A Review Article.' *BC Studies*, 45, Spring 1980: 128-134.

Reviews the three major biographical treatments of the life and art of Emily Carr as written by Maria Tippet, Doris Shadbolt, and Edythe Hembroff-Schleicher.

Sparling, Mary. "'The Lighter Auxiliaries': Women Artists in Nova Scotia in the Early Nineteenth Century.' *Atlantis*, 5 (1), Fall 1979: 83-106.

Examines the works of three early 19th century female artists in Nova Scotia. Details the social handicaps faced by these three women, Alicia Anne Jeffery, Millicent Mary Chaplin, and Maria Morris. Several examples of their art illustrate the article.

Stone, Olive M. 'Canadian Women as Legal Persons: How Alberta Combined Judicial, Executive and Legislative Powers to Win Full Legal Personality For All Canadian Women.' *Alberta Law Review*, 17 (3), 1979: 331-371.

Provides a detailed and clear outline of late 19th and early 20th



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century British legal precedents and Albertan judicial, executive and legislative decisions concerning the legal status of women in the public and private spheres. A much-needed history of the law and women.

Waxman, Sydell Blossom. 'Dr. Emily Stowe: Canada's First Female Practitioner.' *Canada West*, 10 (1) Spring 1980: 17-23.

A readable illustrated biography looking at the education and school and medical work of Dr. Emily Stowe, suffragist and Canada's first female doctor.

Weiss, Gillian. 'An Essential Year for the Child: The Kindergarten in British Columbia.' In Wilson, J.D. and Jones, D.C., eds. *Schooling and Society in 20th Century British Columbia*, pp. 139-161. Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1980.

Explores the growth of kindergartens in British Columbia arguing that the 1973 compulsory legislation was no more than 'recognition of an already existing situation' (p. 141). Relates the

introduction and maintenance of kindergartens to the increased employment of married women from the Second World War and discusses the leadership roles of Laura Jamieson and Lillian Newitt and the opposition of Tilly Rolston.

Wittig, Anne. 'Sexism in Schools: A Student Inquiry.' *History and Social Science Teacher*, 15 (2), Winter 1980: 89-99.

Presents a learning activity for students in upper grades designed for the examination of their secondary school 'to determine the extent of sex-stereotyping and sexism prevalent in that institution'. (p. 89) Consists of an outline for 10 lessons with a general introduction and bibliography.

'WSPU Deputation to Prime Minister Borden.' *Atlantis*, 5 (2), Spring 1980: 188-195.

Reprints *The Champion's* 1912 account of a meeting between Robert Laird Borden, then the Canadian Prime Minister, and a delegation of suffragettes of the Women's Social and Political Union in Britain in that year. ©