

**PUBLICATIONS OF THE
CANADIAN ARCHIVES - NO. 1;
INDEX TO REPORTS OF
CANADIAN ARCHIVES FROM
1872 TO 1908**

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Publications of the Canadian Archives - No. 1; Index to reports of Canadian Archives from 1872 to 1908 by Various

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VARIOUS

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INDEX TO REPORTS

OF

CANADIAN ARCHIVES

FROM 1872 TO 1908

Published by authority of the Minister of Agriculture
under the direction of the Archivist



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INTRODUCTION.

The systematic organization of a federal collection of Archives was begun in 1872. Before that time there had been some individual attempts to gather in France or in England documents relating to the early days of our history; but the lack of uniformity in research and of centralization afterwards, rendered these pioneer efforts of little value.

As few in Canada were aware that documents were being copied in the Archives of London and Paris, it could scarcely be expected that deep interest would be manifested in the work. Few had the good fortune to know that in 1852 Mr. Fairbault had brought from France a collection of historical manuscripts taken from authentic sources, and that in the Library of Parliament these documents were open for public reference. Few too were aware that we possessed a collection of old maps copied at the Dépôt des Fortifications of France as early as 1854, or that in the various departments of the service in Ottawa were documents of which the importance was unsuspected and even the existence unknown. Even the old records of Quebec and Nova Scotia had scarcely been drawn upon by the writer of history.

The reports published by Dr Brymner, the first federal Archivist, came as a revelation. These were begun in 1872, as supplements to the reports of the Minister of Agriculture. Since that time the public has come to know the wealth of historical materials in our possession and to realize the importance of securing copies of all documents relating to Canada in the Archives of Europe. The researches undertaken by Dr Brymner both in our own country and in England, and the extended inquiries instituted in France by the Abbé Verreau and followed up by Messrs. Marmette and Richard, have laid the

foundation for one of the best collections of historical manuscripts to be found in America.

The decision of the government to centralize at the federal Archives all the documents prior to 1867 which had remained scattered throughout the different departments has brought to completion the work undertaken by these worthy pioneers. The great project begun in 1872 and pursued without interruption for thirty-six years, reached its consummation when the Hon. Mr. Fisher, Minister of Agriculture, brought about the erection of the stately Archives building in the Capital of the Dominion for the preservation from fire or loss, of the thousands of volumes of manuscripts assembled here with so much care, and consulted by historians and students in all parts of the world.

It is not within our province to speak of the services the Archives Branch has already rendered, or is called upon to render; but one has only to review the works of history published in this country during the last thirty years, to prove that methods of research are better and sounder and that authors who have a thought for their reputation no longer write without drawing upon the manuscript sources of history of which they can now so easily avail themselves.

The annual reports of the Archives Branch were published from the year 1872 to 1882 as supplements to the reports of the Minister of Agriculture. In 1883 a separate and distinct volume was published with a pagination of its own. A complete collection of these reports is to be found in the Sessional Papers published year by year at Ottawa.

There is a first series of eleven volumes comprising the years 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882. A second series issued as a separate publication and included in the Sessional Papers comprises the years 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905. There is a volume for each year with the exception of 1899, when a supplement was issued and for the year 1905,

when two volumes were published. A collection of documents relating to the Constitutional History of Canada selected by Adam Shortt and A. G. Doughty, was published in 1907. During the years 1906, 1907 and 1908 there was no separate report issued by the Archives Branch, but an account of the work of the Branch for each year is to be found in the annual report of the Minister of Agriculture.

In order to ascertain what has been accomplished by the Archives Branch from the year 1872 to 1908 it is necessary to consult the following reports:

(a) The first series 1872-1882, eleven volumes.

(b) The second series 1883-1905, twenty-six volumes, and the annual reports of the minister from 1872 to 1908 in which there are important observations on the Archives, making a total of 74 separate publications.

How many are there, even among close students of history, who have preserved a complete set of the reports?

It is true that the collections may be found on the shelves of the Library of Parliament; in the legislatures of the provinces and in several public institutions; but, bound up as they are with the Sessional Papers they are difficult of access and an index is necessary to enable one to consult them. We have therefore thought it desirable to summarize in the present work, the valuable information contained in the numerous volumes.

Inquirers, students and writers will find in the pages which follow, the exact title of each of the volumes relating to the Canadian Archives from 1872 to 1908 with the precise indication of the volume of Sessional Papers in which they are contained and the page of the minister's report referring to the work carried on by the Branch. A brief analysis is given clearly indicating in a few words the contents of each volume.

The nature of the reports varies. They contain an account of the researches undertaken in Canada, in each of the provinces, and of the investigation made in the great depositories

of Archives in England and in France. Remarks are made on the organization of Archives in other countries and of the methods of classification and preservation.

It has been found impossible within thirty-seven years with the appropriation at the disposal of the Branch to copy or to concentrate all the documents. It should be borne in mind that this mass of documents is scattered in thousands of files that do not always refer solely to the colony of Canada. Sometimes the documents are found in the Department of Foreign Affairs and deal with matters relating to commerce, navigation, the army, finance and Indians. Other papers are found in the colonial depositories and state libraries and museums.

The first step was to discover the location of the documents and then to select those relating to Canada for transcription. The process of selection and copying is slow as the whole work must be executed under the direction of experienced men.

In making transcripts of original documents for the Archives, it is imperative that the copies should be carefully examined and certified, if reliance is to be placed upon them. This work cannot therefore be entrusted to inexperienced hands. The government has decided that in the future, research, transcription and collation shall be left only to experts in order that the public may rely with confidence upon the copies deposited in the Archives. If, therefore, the Canadian Archives does not at present contain transcriptions of all the documents indicated in the reports there are, however, references in the volumes published during the last thirty-seven years to the places where they are located, and thus the papers are available to investigators.

The reports not only indicate the source, but also give a fair synopsis of the documents already copied, or to be copied, in the Archives of England or France. In order to appreciate the value of this early work it is necessary to consult the summaries prepared by Messrs. Verreau, Marmette and Richard on the French Archives, at the Department of Foreign Affairs,

the Colonial Department, the National Archives, the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Mazarine Library, the Libraries of the Institute, the Arsenal, and of Ste Geneviève, and the calendars commenced by Dr Brymner and continued by the Branch in the principal centres in London, the Public Record Office, War Office and the Tower of London.

In addition to the information before mentioned the reports of the Archivist contain the complete text of numerous documents bearing upon special subjects with comments and appropriate notes. Thus for example the following questions have been dealt with:—The establishment of Cape Breton, exploration and commerce in the West, the settlement of the Loyalists in Canada, intercourse with the United States and Canada after the Treaty of 1783, negotiations with the State of Vermont, the French nobility who remained within the Colony after 1760, inland navigation, Chambly, Sault Ste Marie and Welland canals; War with France in 1790 and the designs of France on Canada during the revolutionary period, the settlement of the French Royalists in Upper Canada, Administration of Justice, Marriage Laws in Upper Canada, the Constitutional Act of 1791, Clergy Reserves, Indian Lands, anticipation of the War of 1812, Roman Catholic Church in Upper Canada, the Indians of Grand River, proposed Union of Upper and Lower Canada in 1822, Naturalization, Land Companies in Canada, Education, Immigration, Banking and Currency. In the report of 1904 were published instructions to the Governors; documents relating to the war of 1775-76, a list of the officers and men killed in 1837-38, documents relating to Bigot, Vergor and Villeray, a description of Nova Scotia in 1761, a letter from Father Ignace on Acadian Missions, Canadian Archives in 1787. The reports also contain a list of books, pamphlets, manuscripts and papers deposited in the Archives.

The report for 1905 includes the Instructions to Governors from 1791-1839, the Imperial Orders in Council relating to