LOCAL HISTORY: OTTAWA, THE YUKON, & BC
(See also Local Histories under Briefly Noted)


As Canadians devote increasing attention to the writing of local history, and there is an ever-increasing awareness of the necessity of preserving our national heritage, it is heartening to see that the Architectural and Heritage Section, Design and Construction Division, of the National Capital Commission, has compiled a comprehensive bibliography of works dealing with the rich history of the region around Canada's federal capital.

This bilingual bibliography contains a vast range of items located, such as church histories, biographies, directories, government publications, manuscript and record collections at selected archives, serials, annual reports, and maps. Concise introductions to each section provide valuable information as to the type of material likely to be found in the publications listed, as well as some indication of their availability. The bibliography provides sources for the material listed, with a total of approximately sixty libraries and archival institutions included.

Several special lists of articles are of particular value. For example, the section devoted to 'Serials' contains a list of articles relating to Heritage buildings in The Ottawa Journal for the period from 1960 to 1975, and a list of articles by Eric Minton in The Ottawa Journal from 1967 to 1975. The work also contains a very useful list of articles published in the Transactions of the Women's Canadian Historical Society of Ottawa from 1901 to 1928. Another particularly useful section relates to manuscript sources. This 65-page section lists an impressive variety of manuscripts, varying from a few pages to large record groups from government departments. The collections covered range from private papers to governmental records (at all levels). Also included are church records, cultural organizations, and papers of many national political figures and Ottawa literary personalities. While the value of this 325-page book for librarians, archivists, historians and other researchers cannot be over-emphasized, the work cannot be consulted quickly for articles on a specific person, place or building. Some suggestions for making the work more readily useful for quick reference would be consolidation of some sections, and the breakdown of information into more specific groupings, such as 'Municipal Government', 'Education' and 'Early Settlement'. The general re-organization of the work (for example, the preliminary section comes before the Table of Contents, thus pushing it about 15 pages into the book!), as well as the possible inclusion of some data in appendices,

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would add a good deal to this otherwise exhaustive and impressive piece of scholarship.

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These two plump bibliographies update the original volume of James R. Lotz (now out of print, but itself to be revised and amplified for its period), published by the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ottawa, in 1964 (Preliminary Edition), as no. 1 in the Yukon Research Project Series. Although the publishers have changed, the Updates continue to receive official sponsorship, now from the Government of the Yukon Territory. Of the compilers, Ms. Cooke is the Boreal Institute’s Librarian and she has supervised the project, while Ms. Hemstock has been the principal researcher for both volumes, gathering materials from major libraries and other sources in several provinces, and the Yukon and Alaska. One measure of her success is the number of titles captured: about 1260 entries for 1963-70, and 655 for 1971-75, plus cross references. Under the classified arrangement, it is not surprising that the Economic Development and Geology classes comprise the largest number of entries, but I did not expect to find History to be the third largest category, outstripping even Transportation and Communications.

The scheme is arrayed in the Table of Contents, and each broad class, in the natural and social sciences, is marked by a capital letter of the alphabet. Subdivisions are denoted by lower-case letters. Individual titles are arranged alphabetically by author or other entry and then by title under each class or subclass, and identified by the class capital letter and a number, the numeration being continuous within each class. This makes for simplicity in citing, but the Update year-span must be given with the letter-number notation. (The Lotz bibliography has to be cited by page number.) Each entry gives brief author, title, imprint, pagination, and illustration statement (or, for periodicals, the journal title, volume and page numbers, and date), and usually an annotation and subject headings, as well as a single location symbol. The work includes government and industrial reports, and theses, as well as books and journal articles. Unpublished materials are included only (the Preface tells us) when the present owner has agreed to give access to researchers, but I noticed a great number of such items (perhaps 10% of the total), many of them in private hands where owner-