Maureen McAuley and Susan Wagg. *Percy Erskine Nobbs and His Associates: A Guide to the Archive / Percy Erskine Nobbs et ses associés: guide du fonds*. Montreal: Canadian Architecture Collection, Blackader-Lauterman Library of Architecture and Art, McGill University, 1986. 271 pp.; \$12.95 (paper). ISBN 0-7717-0157-8.

Ruth Kositsky et al. *Edward & W.S. Maxwell: Guide to the Archives / Edward & W.S. Maxwell: guide du fonds*. Montreal: Canadian Architecture Collection, Blackader-Lauterman Library of Architecture and Art, McGill University, 1986. xix, 494 pp.; n.p.l. (paper). ISBN 0-7717-0162-4.

Cindy Campbell et al. *Ramsay Traquair and His Successors: A Guide to the Archive / Ramsay Traquair et ses successeurs: guide du fonds*. Montreal: Canadian Architecture Collection, Blackader-Lauterman Library of Architecture and Art, McGill University, 1987. 2 vols; n.p.l. (paper). ISBN 0-7717-0170-5.

These three titles are the product of a remarkable co-operative exercise. The Administration of McGill University, the Libraries, the School of Architecture, the University Archives, even the Physical Resources unit, Montreal's Canadian Centre for Architecture, and various individuals from other institutions joined forces to survey, organize, and describe three collections of great significance to the history of Canadian architecture, and then to see the Guides through to publication. The many individuals who melded themselves into so successful a team deserve congratulations.

One major player remains to be acknowledged. These Guides provide eloquent testimony to the invaluable contribution of the Canadian Studies Research Tools Program of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. One cannot but feel that the commitment demonstrated in this project was motivated by the availability of two major grants from SSHRCC under this program, without which the research resources of McGill's Canadian Architecture Collection could not have been made physically and intellectually accessible, except in a very limited sense.

The format of the Nobbs and Maxwell volumes is similar. A list of illustrations is followed by acknowledgements, preface, key to abbreviations, historical introduction, methodology and guide to the use of the inventory, the inventory itself, a bibliography of primary and secondary sources and, finally, the indexes.

Neither has a true collection level entry. This is particularly noticeable in the Nobbs inventory where, apart from the number of projects, there is no statement of the overall physical extent, even though each entry has a meticulous count of the items involved. The Maxwell inventory is improved by giving a collection figure of over 16,000 drawings. Similarly, neither provides a statement of extent, other than folder numbers in individual series entries, for professional and personal papers. Although common sense would dictate that these series are not large, the offsite researcher has no way of knowing whether a folder contains one or a hundred items.

The purpose of both inventories is to provide a comprehensive listing of drawings. This reflects an emphasis on the content of the holdings rather than a neglect of the textual record. Where they exist, textual documents are included in the project record, but the textual weakness of the collections can be deduced from the relative infrequency of such inclusions, and the small series for personal and professional papers. The arrangement in both reflects the evolution of the respective practices.

Individually, the entries provide a wealth of information. All information is derived from the documents themselves, with some sensible editing to ensure consistency, e.g., where the use of both 'house' and 'residence' occurs, it has been standardized to the former. Entries list architect's name, project title, place, client, operation number, date, building type, drawing description, drawing inventory, photographic material, related papers, and comments. Four indexes are generated from this information: project title, client, topographical, and typological. Again, no doubt as a result of experience with the Nobbs inventory, the Maxwell also includes an index of associated architects, a most useful addition, since the lack of it made some references to other architects difficult to track in Nobbs.

The two volumes relating to Ramsay Traquair and his successors highlight a different aspect of architectural scholarship. The collection began in 1917 when the staff of the McGill School of Architecture began to collect measured drawings and photographs of historic buildings. It grew in the twenties as concern arose over the careless loss of heritage buildings in Quebec. Under the tutelage of Traquair himself the measured drawing of old buildings became a regular part of the School's curriculum. After a hiatus of twenty years beginning with Traquair's retirement, interest was revived in the sixties by renewed demolition threats. The collection consists of drawings, photographs, and personal papers of Traquair, Bland, and others. Besides the drawings of buildings, the collection contains a significant amount of information on Quebec silver, a particular interest of Traquair's.

The format is similar to the companion volumes in the series. It includes extensive historical introductions to the principals, a valuable chronology and bibliography of primary and secondary sources, and, as in the Nobbs and Maxwell, an explanation of the methodology used by the compilers. In addition, two authority lists have been added for photographers and places. There is a project title index, a typological index, a draughtmen's index, and a key to the draughtmen's index.

While the primary audience will be those professionally interested in the practice and history of architecture and design, these volumes deserve to reach a far wider audience. Between them they cover an extraordinary time range in the development of the man-made environment in Canada. The illuminating essays on the principals, and short biographical pieces on the associates of Nobbs and the Maxwells, and the successors of Traquair bring the men and their professional and pedagogical philosophies vividly to life. Nobbs, we learn, was a well co-ordinated athlete who won a silver medal in a foils display at the 1908 Olympics. Maxwell's drawings delineate an architectural practice of national scope, and his attention ranges from the mundane to the majestic, from hen houses and hymnboards to hospitals and hotels, from peach houses to power houses. Similarly, in addition to

buildings, Nobbs designed furniture, coins, letterhead, tombstones, and in the forties a Canadian flag remarkably close to the one chosen two decades later. We discover a consistency of philosophy. Nobbs's conviction that 'regionalism in architecture was inevitable and therefore a sensible source of inspiration ...,' is paralleled by Traquair's belief that 'architecture is a matter of building to meet real needs with real materials in a real place and therefore regional both from the point of view of its making and its meaning.' One wonders what they would make of the faddish homogeneity all too evident in today's big cities. All men of strong views and personalities, Traquair in particular seems to have been a maverick. 'I think,' wrote a colleague, 'he is our most scholarly yet least academic member ...,' an accolade many would still be pleased to receive. He himself strove to make the architectural curriculum as eclectic as possible. 'The longer I work at it the vaguer my ideas become upon standardization....' He went so far as to remark that he would be 'very sorry indeed if the university training ever came to be regarded as the only entrance to the profession.'

Physically these are attractive volumes. Care has obviously been taken with the choice of illustration. The pages are well laid out, the elements of each record are distinct, and the font is clear and readable. The inevitable typographical errors are few in number, and do not detract from a favourable overall impression. If this reviewer has a concern it is a question of durability. These are large heavy volumes which one hopes will receive extensive use. The paper covers in particular, while handsomely designed, may not wear well, and one regrets that it was not possible, apparently, to provide more durable bindings for the results of so much dedicated hard work.

Two other aspects of this ambitious project require mention. The volumes are bilingual, and, on request, the databases can be searched on-line. In this respect, those of us engaged with computerized projects will sympathize over the rigidity imposed by the machine. Those who are not yet so involved will learn that apostrophes and hyphens can, on occasion, attain a power of their own that require special explanation (Traquair, p. 511).

These volumes are to be highly recommended both for those interested in architecture and design in Canada, and for an audience that has a more general interest in Canadian culture.

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University of Calgary. Libraries. Special Collections Division. *The Hugh MacLennan Papers*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1986. xxx, 161 pp. Canadian Archival Inventory Series: Literary Papers, No. 1. n.p.l. (paper). ISBN 0-919813-39-9.

University of Calgary. Libraries. Special Collections Division. *The William Ormond Mitchell Papers*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1986. xxxix, 218 pp. Canadian Archival Inventory Series: Literary Papers,