By all indications, the checklist follows the National Library of Canada’s limited definition of ‘newspaper,’ although no such indication is given in the introduction. The volume is supplemented by two indexes. The first cites newspapers published outside Charlottetown. It would have been preferable to have compiled a complete geographical index. If a user wishes to know which newspaper or how many were published in Charlottetown, then that user will have to go through the volume page by page. Also, some newspapers have only Prince Edward Island cited as ‘location.’ Where do they fit? The other index is chronological and indicates which titles were published each year.

In addition to the above, it would have been useful to learn whether any indexes (complete or partial) have been compiled for any of these newspapers. There is a line in the introduction which mentions a ‘newspaper card index,’ but this may be a holdings list; no clarification is given. Some re-writing and better proof-reading would have clarified a number of ambiguous points. There are a number of spelling mistakes – Meighan (p. 17) for Meighen, Mechanics Institute (p. 139) for Mechanics’ Institute, among others. The notation section devoted to ‘missing’ issues should have been much more specific. A line such as ‘many issues [missing] between 1890 and 1892’ creates greater consternation than assistance. It would have been preferable to have spent more time on the bibliographical aspect of this checklist rather than on the ‘biographical’ or prospectus notation. And finally, the concept of typography is totally missing from this publication. There is no use of bold face or different type sizes. The most glaring eyesore is the use of ‘see’ references. For these pages the ‘see’ references sit in an upper corner of a blank page; at one point there are six consecutive pages of these.

Most of the basic information on Prince Edward Island newspapers is available in this checklist. With more rigorous scholarship, this could have been an excellent publication.

ERIC L. SWANICK

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G. Blaine Baker, Kathleen E. Fisher, Vince Masciotra and Brian Young.


This bibliography, the result of three years of shelf-searching, is an essential reference work for the historian of Quebec law and society. It is inspired by the notion that ‘Lower Canadian law reposed in some measure in that society’s literature of the law, and in the minds of provincial lawyers, judges and bureaucrats whose dialectic with that literature is displayed in their use and annotation of legal literature’ (p. 2). Sources lists some 7,000 volumes, all of which were in circulation in Quebec between approximately 1760 and 1890, and somehow found their way into the
McGill Law Library. The latter was established in the early 1840s, and represents one of the oldest intact law libraries in central Canada.

The authors have obviously taken great care in determining the pedigree of these sources, in examining them for annotations and other insertions, and in constructing the framework of topical categories and sub-categories within which they are presented. This framework is itself revealing of some of the contours of the culture. For example, the remarkable number of books under the sub-category ‘Pleadings’ suggests that the culture remained strongly oral (as opposed to textual) in orientation. Similarly, the extraordinary number of editions of, and commentaries on, the *Coutume de Paris* recorded under the sub-category ‘French Surveys: Customary Law’ is an indication of the enormous controlling power this source exerted over the local legal imagination. That control was not total, however, as the following wholly irreverent annotation reveals: ‘I would not give a cent / for the time that I’ve spent In reading the *Coutume de Paris* / O foolish concessions / Of time and ‘Success’ loaned / ...’ (pp. 170-1). A third proportionate analogy of some interest is the significantly greater number of sources listed under the category ‘Property’ relative to those under the category ‘Consensual Legal Relations’ (i.e. contract). What this implies is that property, not contract, remained the dominant mode of social ordering throughout the period 1760-1890.

Taken together, the framework of categories and the marginalia will help to open up whole new perspectives on the infrastructure of nineteenth-century Quebec legal culture. The reader will also find the three essays which surround the sources – the first an overview of the province’s socio-economic history, the second a survey of Quebec legal historiography, and the third a history of the McGill Law Library – of great assistance in contextualizing these otherwise distant sources.

**DAVID HOWES**

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This extraordinary work is arguably the most significant contribution to Canadian bibliography since Marie Tremaine’s *A Bibliography of Canadian Imprints, 1751-1800* (1952). Indeed, Tremaine’s classic is invoked in the title, the publisher’s blurb, Marianne Scott’s Foreword, and Patricia Fleming’s own Introduction. If this association accomplishes little more than helping the uninitiated to discover Tremaine, then it is for the better. But Fleming’s book stands on its own with authority and reserve as a fully developed descriptive bibliography based on the principles evolved by Greg and Bowers and refined by Gaskell and Tanselle.