In the 'Corporate Subject Index' 133 organizations are listed, showing Guelph as the first word in the name of their organization.

When a letter is listed such as one written by John Galt to settlers in 1828 (item 107) one wonders why the date 1828-1828 is used in the period covered rather than just 1828. There are a number of such items which cover just one year. On the other hand, when the annotation states that the work covers several years (items 38 and 39) it might be questioned why the period covered lists only one year. As invariably in all publications there is the occasional typographical error such as assessment 'roles' instead of assessment rolls (item 39). With such a major work as this, these complaints are insignificant.

The bibliography is a tribute to the dedication and infinite patience of Elizabeth Bloomfield, Gilbert A. Stelter and their assistants who searched out the material, classified, and annotated it for this very comprehensive work. It should serve as a model for other regions not only in Ontario but also for the other local regions of Canada.

OLGA B. BISHOP

(Olga B. Bishop is Professor Emeritus of the Faculty of Library and Information Science at the University of Toronto. She was awarded the Marie Tremaine Medal for her contribution to bibliography in 1981. She has completed several bibliographies on nineteenth-century publications of the Ontario government as well as Bibliography of Ontario History, 1867-1976.)

Barbara B. Aitken. *Local Histories of Ontario Municipalities, 1977-1987: A Bibliography*. Toronto: Ontario Library Association, 1989. x, 74 pp.; \$12.00 (paper). ISBN 0-88-969-030-8.

Local histories of Ontario counties, cities, towns, townships and villages have been published for more than a century. There can be hardly a place among Ontario's 27 counties, 10 districts, 12 regional municipalities, 49 cities, 146 towns, 119 villages, 478 townships and 7 'improvement districts' that lacks at least one local history of some kind. Jubilees, centennials, sesquicentennials, and bicentennials of a particular locality or of the whole province or nation, have become occasions for publishing local history. And if many local histories make dull reading, they are usually treasure troves of essential facts in which we all want to prospect. How can librarians cope with local history materials in the information revolution?

Barbara Aitken, Acting Curator of Special Collections in the Douglas Library of Queen's University, has long been active in the bibliography of Ontario local histories. In the early 1970s she began compiling lists that were duplicated and distributed by the Kingston Public Library Board. In 1978 the Ontario Library Association published her *Local Histories of Ontario Municipalities, 1951-1977: A Bibliography* that listed about 1,700 titles. The present book closely follows the model of its predecessor in principles of selection, format of entries, layout and even cover design.

This volume lists about 1,050 titles in Ontario local history, including books and pamphlets published or reprinted since 1977 as well as Women's Institute

Tweedsmuir histories microfilmed by either the Archives of Ontario or Intech Associates of London. Each bibliographical entry lists in order: name of place, personal or corporate author, full title, name of editor where applicable, place of publication, publisher, date, pagination, details of illustrations, maps, index and bibliography, dimensions in centimetres, and library codes of 'representative cross-Canada locations.' Imprint details absent from title-pages have been added in square brackets whenever they could be ascertained.

New bibliographies should always be welcomed. As Dr. Johnson remarked of the lexicographer's lot, bibliography is mainly 'dull work ... [and] ... the fate of those who toil at the lower employments of life is to be exposed to censure without hope of praise.' Many bibliographies, like local histories, are labours of love that are not adequately valued by their users. Barbara Aitken and the Ontario Library Association are to be commended for their efforts in producing this research tool to help students, teachers, genealogists and historians and for the implicit recognition about local history.

However, this reviewer considers that the present volume could have been a lot better if its purposes had been more clearly defined and if newer technologies had been used. Aitken's 1989 volume does not reflect advances in technology during the 1980s which now allow more sophisticated methods of compilation and presentation than were possible with the 1978 volume. Perhaps, too, it suffers by comparison with other bibliographies of Ontario history that have appeared since Aitken's earlier book, notably Olga Bishop's two-volume compilation listing publications of all kinds to 1976 and the annual supplement produced for the Ontario Historical Society between 1980 and 1987.

Aitken's principles of selection can also be criticized. There is no definition of local history that would help the user to understand why some thematic studies by academics that happen to be set in particular counties or townships are included but not others. Akenson's book on *The Irish in Ontario* is included under Leeds Township and Gagan's *Hopeful Travellers* under Peel County, but not Wightman's study of Manitoulin Island (1982). Are any of these local histories anyway? And if thematic books by academics are acceptable, why not relevant theses on microfiche which are just as useful and accessible as the Tweedsmuir histories on microfilm? There are no abstracts or other notations which might explain the special claim of some academic work to be included. Some histories of transportation systems and companies, architecture and schools are included but not others.

The designation of places and localities is inconsistent, as a few examples may show. The village that was incorporated as West Toronto Junction in 1887, renamed Toronto Junction in 1891 and annexed to the City of Toronto in 1909, is listed simply as Junction. Though cross-references are supposed to be specified, a study of Broughdale in London Township that was annexed to the City of London in 1961 is listed under London without any cross-reference under Broughdale. Histories of Cambridge are not cross-referenced under Galt, Preston or Hespeler, the three municipalities in Waterloo County that were amalgamated to form the City of Cambridge in 1973. Nor is there any mention of Cambridge in the very incomplete list of Historical Changes in Place Names in Ontario (Appendix 5). Names are most often of municipal units such as counties, townships, cities, towns or villages. But there

are also larger regions such as the Bruce Peninsula and ecologically defined places such as the Don River Valley. There is inconsistency in cases where East and West, North and South divisions are distinguished in place names.

New technology might have been used to enhance details of presentation which are almost identical to those in the 1978 volume. The appearance of the printed page would have been improved by avoiding repetition of the place name when multiple entries are listed for the same place. Indexes of places and authors could have been created to help the user. More careful thought should have been given to appropriate appendices. Good maps can be helpful, but the one provided with a list of Counties and Townships of Ontario is virtually useless in locating the places about which local histories have been written. Counties and townships are listed in an order which is neither alphabetical nor clearly geographical, and there are no names of cities, towns and villages. More useful would have been a map in several sections, with access through a total alphabetical index of places. The list of historical societies in the 1978 volume, including details of the journals they publish, should have been updated and retained rather than the list of church archives which seems irrelevant here.

One might also question the choice of representative library locations, of which at least one and as many as a dozen are given for each title. According to these notations, Leo Johnson's *History of Guelph* (1977) is held by libraries in New Brunswick and British Columbia and by the Library of Parliament and the Department Library of Environment Canada in Ottawa, but no Ontario library is specified closer to Guelph itself than Chatham in the west and North York in the east. The selection of 'representative locations' was apparently provided by the Interlibrary Loan staff of the National Library of Canada. The results may help to explain why Interlibrary Loan requests can take so long to fulfil!

With the profusion of new publications and computerized methodologies, the task of the bibliographer of current book imprints has become much more difficult. Canada really needs a bibliographical centre that will use current technology to compile the equivalent of the *America: History and Life* database and be able to provide specific bibliographical datasets for particular groups of users. Bibliographers working on a more modest scale should probably focus their efforts more closely on particular places, periods, topics or types of works. Barbara Aitken's bibliography would have been more useful if it had limited itself to a complete listing of genuine local histories, together with relevant indexes and appendices including local historical societies with their journals and annual volumes.

ELIZABETH BLOOMFIELD

(Elizabeth Bloomfield is Co-ordinator of the Guelph Regional Project that is creating an information base in print and machine-readable formats for the history of Wellington County: Guelph and Wellington County: A Bibliography of Settlement and Development Since 1900 (1988) and Inventory of Primary and Archival Sources: Guelph and Wellington County to 1940 (1989). She is also principal investigator of the 1871 Industrial Census of Canada project that is computerizing all the manuscript census schedules of industrial establishments.)