

SESSIONAL PAPER No. 18

“Halifax establishments which I visited were the offices of the Registrar of Deeds and the Prothonotary, and the office of the Register of Probates. I made a complete list of all the volumes in these offices. But perhaps the most notable collection of historical material is what is known as the Akins collection, which was gathered by the late Mr. Akins, the Nova Scotian Archivist, in the course of his long life. This collection is now the property of the Nova Scotian Historical Society and is kept in a room at Dalhousie College, but at present it is not in such a condition as to be easily accessible. A mere catalogue of this collection would fill a large volume, so that I contented myself with copying out that portion of it which more immediately relates to the three Maritime Provinces and even this condensed catalogue would make a large pamphlet. There are not many manuscripts, but almost every thing in the shape of a book or pamphlet which relates to the history of the three provinces is to be found here. There are also many newspaper files. The late Governor of Nova Scotia, Hon. Alfred Jones, had made a large collection of portraits of persons connected with Nova Scotia numbering 200 or more and these are kept at Government House. I made a list of them for the benefit of persons who may wish to obtain copies of the portraits of our famous men. Mr. J. J. Stewart, editor of the Halifax Herald, has also a large collection of portraits and of pamphlets. There are also a considerable number of portraits in the Province building and in the Provincial Museum.

“In November I took a trip to Sydney and examined the Records of the Registry Office there and likewise the Register of the Parish of St. George at Sydney which contains the births, deaths and marriages beginning in 1785. St. George remained the only parish in Cape Breton until 1828. This register is in the possession of the Rector, the venerable Archdeacon Smith, D.D. The first record book ends in the year 1805. This register is complete to the present day with the exception of the baptisms from May 1849 to January 1852. While in Sydney I was fortunate enough to have an opportunity to examine a valuable private collection that of the late Judge Dodd. These were the papers of his grandfather, the first Chief Justice of Cape Breton, who was a notable figure in the public life of that colony. A full account of the contents of these papers will be found in my final report. As the season was not favorable for travelling in Cape Breton, I returned to Halifax and on my way back stopped off at Antigonish where I examined the books of the Office of the Register of Deeds which begin in 1874. I also visited the College and made arrangements to obtain a list of the records.

“Among the valuable historical material in Halifax, are the files of the Acadian Recorder newspaper from the year 1813 to the present time. This paper is still in existence and the files are well preserved by the proprietor, Mr. Blackadar. There are also numerous files of newspapers in the Legislative Library a full list of which will be found in my report.

“Among the most important records to be found in Halifax are those connected with St. Paul's Church. This church was founded immediately after the settlement of Halifax in 1749 and it was the only place of worship of the Church of England in Halifax until the year 1827. It was for 92 years the garrison church for the army and navy stationed in Halifax and the church itself has been the burial place of a great many distinguished persons connected with the early history of Nova Scotia. The books of the church contain a record of nearly twenty-three thousand baptisms, ten thousand marriages, and sixteen thousand burials. There are thirty-six volumes of records connected with the church forming one of the most complete and interesting series of books to be found in connection with the history of any province. When I left Halifax to begin work in Fredericton, it was by no means because my researches there were completed, but I had examined and catalogued everything that was immediately available and in sight, and the work that remained to be done there required more research and a greater degree of patience, because it is impossible for a mere sojourner in a strange city to obtain access to private documents and records which might be made available for historical purposes. To do this is a work of time and I felt that for some time I would be better employed in examining into the material in Fredericton in connection with the history of New Brunswick which