

1. INTRODUCTION

(References in the text may be found in section 4 of this Report)

The development of a concern for libraries and resources for Canadian Studies in Britain

The seminar which is the focus of attention in this, the first of our Canadian Studies Occasional Papers, provided a significant guidepost along the route taken by Canadian Studies in Britain, and, in particular, in the development of thinking about libraries and resources in support of teaching and research.

The background is sketched by Nicole Gallimore (former Librarian, Canadian High Commission, London) in her *Foreword* to the *Guide to Resources for Canadian Studies in Britain*¹. The summary below may help to set the seminar in context.

- 1973 The Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, initiated programmes of support for the acquisition of Canadian books, learned journals, and federal government documentation.
- 1974 *The Foundation for Canadian Studies in the UK* was established on the basis of donations from the Government of Canada, British companies with Canadian interests and Canadian companies with British interests.
- 1975 The University of Edinburgh *Centre of Canadian Studies* was designated.
- 1975 The *British Association for Canadian Studies* (BACS) was inaugurated at a conference at the University of Leeds.
- 1977 A one-day conference, sponsored by the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, was held at Canada House, London, on *Selection and acquisition of Canadian documents and books in the United Kingdom*.
- 1977 An Academic Relations Officer was appointed and an office established at the Canadian High Commission, London.
- 1978 Valerie Bloomfield was contracted by the High Commission to carry out a survey of resources for Canadian Studies in Britain and to compile a *Guide*.
- 1979 BACS Conference at Lincoln College, Oxford, included a session on *Resources for Canadian Studies in Britain*².
- 1979 The University of Leeds was designated as a *Regional Canadian Study Centre*.
- 1979 *Guide to Resources for Canadian Studies in Britain*¹ was published.
- 1980 Seminar held at Canada House on *Libraries and Resources for Canadian Studies in Britain*.

For some time before the seminar was held, the idea of forming a *Library and Resources Group* to collect and disseminate information on Canadian holdings in Britain, to initiate bibliographical projects and publications, and to co-ordinate resources and develop special collections had been discussed informally amongst librarians and others with interests in the development of Canadian Studies. The seminar provided an opportunity for wider discussion of the notion and confirmed the need for such work to be undertaken.

This report of the seminar has been delayed so that an account could be given of further progress in this field. It is hoped therefore that this publication will fulfil two purposes: a record of the seminar itself and the context in which it was held; and an informative introduction to be subject of *Libraries and Resources for Canadian Studies in Britain*.

A further summary of events will indicate some of the developments that have occurred since the seminar.

- 1981 BACS Annual Conference included a session on *resources* and the AGM gave formal approval to the establishment of a *BACS Library and Resources Group*.
- 1981 University of Birmingham designated as a *Regional Canadian Study Centre*.
- 1981 Donald Simpson invited by the BACS Council to be the first chairman of the Library and Resources Group and, in that capacity, to represent the BACS at the Association for Canadian Studies conference on *Bibliography for Canadian Studies: Present Trends and Future Needs*³ at the Learned Societies meetings in Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia.
- 1981 BACS Council approves the rules of the Library and Resources Group following development work undertaken by the steering committee set up at the seminar in October 1980.
- 1981 Valerie Bloomfield commissioned by the BACS, with the aid of a grant from the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, to undertake an update and extension of the *Guide to Resources*.
- 1981 Seminar held at Edinburgh University Library on *Canadian Studies in Scottish Libraries*⁴.
- 1982 Problems of obtaining Canadian Provincial Governments' documentation in Britain discussed at a Canadian Studies in Britain ad hoc Federal-Provincial Liaison Committee at Canada House.
- 1982 BACS Annual Conference again includes session on *resources*.
- 1982 Discussions between BACS Library and Resources Group and the London representative of the Public Archives Canada concerning co-operation in his *Survey of British Manuscript Resources*.
- 1982 Discussions due to take place during October to explore possibilities of developing teaching about Canada within higher education both in London and in Wales.
- 1983 Publication of the updated, revised and extended *Second Edition of the Guide to Resources for Canadian Studies in Britain* is planned.

Academic Relations Division of the High Commission publishes a termly Newsheet, a number of which deal with aspects of *Libraries and Resources*⁵. *Resource Guides*⁶ have been published for selected topics.