

FIRST REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON WAR RECORDS
AND TROPHIES

The COMMISSION ON WAR RECORDS AND TROPHIES RESPECTFULLY
SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING REPORT

DOCUMENTARY RECORDS

With respect to the storage of documentary records the essential points to be kept in view are accessibility, safety, and preservation in a legible condition.

To attain these aims the immediate construction of a suitable fire-proof building is imperative. It has been truthfully remarked that "the care which a nation devotes to the preservation of the monuments of its past may serve as a true measure of the degree of civilization to which it has attained." "The Chief monument of the history of a nation is its documentary records, the preservation of which is recognized in all civilized countries as a natural and proper function in Government."

The value of these documentary records is inestimable, as those of recent date are in continual use in the daily administration of business and reference to those of older date is frequently necessary. Accordingly in many cases they constitute the chief, and sometimes the only, protection of the state against unfounded or ill-founded claims.

They cannot be adequately guarded by insurance, as if once destroyed, they can never be replaced.

Actual financial loss, to say nothing of the immense inconvenience that would result to the public, and often to private individuals, by the destruction of any considerable portion of these records would be beyond calculation. At present the room available for storage overseas, in Canada at Headquarters, and in every Military District