

It, arranging for the destruction of useless papers the utmost care is required to prevent the shadow of doubt being entertained that any political influence is used for the preservation or destruction of any documents. The system established in England may be referred to as a model for the consideration of papers believed to be no longer required for any purpose. Great care must, however, be taken that no document, which gives indication of others of importance, although of no consequence in itself should be destroyed. Experience here has shown the importance of this precaution, confirmed by the ninth rule established by the Keeper of Records quoted in full in a previous part of this memorandum.

The provinces being proprietors of the public lands (except in the North-west), having control of the courts, municipalities, education, marriage laws, &c., papers in the departments relating to those subjects, if there are any, should be transferred to the Provincial Governments. It is no doubt desirable to have copies of all such papers on record in the archives office, but the originals undoubtedly belong to the Provincial Governments and should be in their possession. In referring to land papers, it may not be out of place to call attention to the great danger from fire to which the surveys, titles of land, &c., in the North-west are exposed in the attics of the Eastern Block, which are filled with wooden partitions, dried like tinder, only requiring a single spark to cause a most disastrous conflagration involving an irreparable loss.

In forming an Archives or Record Office, a collection of important reference books should not be forgotten. Every work relating to Canada should be on the shelves. A valuable collection has already been made in the present Archives Branch, but more could have been done in this direction had funds been available. In this respect so far as relates to Canadian affairs, the collection should be as complete as possible, but no money need be wasted on rare and expensive originals if correct reprints can be obtained, which in the case of valuable historical works is usually the case at a moderate cost with generally the added advantage of careful annotation.

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