

With respect to the papers previous to 1813, unless important reasons exist for their exclusion, strangers as well as inhabitants of the Kingdom are admitted to consult, make extracts from, or copy the documents.

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The 1st of July, 1867, would appear to be a suitable date for the separation, from that time, of the public papers of Canada, from those previous to that date that being the beginning of a new system of government.

Until a consolidation is made of the papers before 1867 stored in each of the departments, no general regulations can be framed, and great delay necessarily arises from the confusion caused by the papers being scattered in various departments.

Until, however, a suitable building is erected for the deposit of the papers, it is impossible to carry out any general or effective plan. Such a building need not be of an expensive character, one or, perhaps, two stories high would be all that is necessary, absolutely fire-proof, with the heating apparatus outside, 16 feet from floor to ceiling in each room, with a light iron gangway running round the shelves, midway of the height, so that the volumes on the shelves could be easily accessible. It would be necessary also, that the building should be so arranged as to be easily added to as increased accommodation was required. If there is room in the quadrangle formed by the two parts of the western block, that would seem to be a suitable place for the erection of the required building. It should, however, be so situated as to be of convenient access in the event of information being required by Parliament or by any of the departments. The place I have suggested would be suitable in this respect, and a building there being in an unobtrusive position, its plain appearance would not detract from the general architectural character of the others.

As it is evident that until a suitable building is erected no transfer can take place of the accumulated papers, some time must elapse before they are removed. As each department should transfer its papers, in such order that they may be immediately available for reference, advantage could be taken of the delay to have them put in order. It is not possible, with so many departments to signify exactly how the papers should be arranged. In some cases that may be done by subjects where there is a variety under the control of one department. In others the whole might form a continuous collection, bound in manageable volumes, but in all cases the arrangement should be strictly chronological. In each volume an index should be bound so as to enable papers to be more or less fully indexed for facility of reference.

The papers when transferred to the general archives office should be accompanied by a schedule, these properly arranged and, perhaps, printed for the use of the officials only, could be formed into a catalogue indicating in which room the different collections were deposited and their general nature. For convenience the title of Archives Office might be retained, that name being the same in English and French.