

REPORT ON NATIONAL PROGRAM ARCHIVES
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Editor's Note -- Mr. Woods' original report was prepared during the spring of 1967. He very kindly has edited and up-dated it especially for publication in the ARSC Journal. Certain other material intended for purely internal CBC consumption has been omitted.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most valuable recordings in CBC's Program Archives in Toronto is Winston Churchill's address to the Canadian Parliament in December of 1941. At one point Churchill introduces a review of the war by recalling to his audience a couple of lines from a Harry Lauder song famous in the first World War:

If we all look back on the history of the past,
We can just tell where we are.

Often the best way to examine a problem is historically. And that is what I propose to do - look back on the history of CBC's program archives policies to help us see "just where we are", where we should be going, and perhaps, even how to get there. To begin at the beginning, radio.

Radio like television, and unlike other media of communications, books, newspapers, films, etc., is ephemeral - in its pure "live" form it has no physical body to preserve. And were it not for the introduction and general use of sound recording as a technique in the production and dissemination of radio programs, my first statement would be the end as well as the beginning of this report. However, once you have recorded a radio program - for reasons whatsoever - you have given the ephemeral a physical body - it becomes a document, a preservable thing. As to whether or not you preserve it is another question and will later form the main burden of this report.

The fact is so obvious one tends to overlook it: the medium is not a record in itself, like a book. Such records as radio does produce are ancillary to the medium - a by-product of one of the myriad activities involved in making and distributing programs. Without forethought then, radio will tend to document merely its own operational activities with little regard to the intrinsic values of the program materials. No rationalized program archiving policy - no rationalized archival collection. Thus, until the advent of Program Archives as an operating CBC department in the early 60's, what is preserved from radio's past is the product of negative principles of selection: not recordings collected and preserved according to some system of values, but rather what has not been lost or destroyed - the flotsam and jetsam of the broadcasting machine.

From the beginning and for almost a quarter of a century after, no one at the CBC gave a serious thought to the preservation of programs in any continuous and orderly fashion. It was laissez-faire. The greatest document-producing machine in Canadian history was creating and consuming an incomparable record of our history. What was kept of this record and what destroyed was decided almost entirely by operational expediency. Let us see what has happened.

I shall begin this account of the manner in which program recordings have accumulated, or rather, more often (and disastrously) not accumulated, in Canada over the years with some pre-CBC history. In the course of my story I will doubtless recount a great many familiar facts but because with the passage of time even simple information tends to become obscure, I should like to take this opportunity to put some of it into the record.

So far as I know, the first recording of a Canadian radio broadcast was made by the great pioneer of the recording industry, Herbert Berliner** in Montreal. He attached a device to his radio and made a record of a speech by Mackenzie King and sent it to him. King was delighted and astounded. He wrote to thank Berliner and to ask how he had accomplished such a miracle. He ventured to guess that someone had taken his speech down in shorthand and that Berliner or an actor had read it. This recording has disappeared but we have been more fortunate with a later historic broadcast.

In 1927, the Diamond Jubilee of Canadian Confederation, the Association of Canadian Clubs of Canada made the suggestion that the most appropriate and dramatic manner of celebrating Dominion Day would be a coast-to-coast broadcast of the ceremonies in Ottawa. A committee was duly appointed. Bell agreed to co-ordinate the line and station facilities, the Canadian National Railways*** to produce the broadcasts, and the Department of Marine to reserve time for them on all Canadian stations. The hook-up involved twenty-three stations and 23,000 miles of lines in Canada and the United States. Station CNRO in Ottawa arranged three pick-ups on Parliament Hill: the speakers' rostrum, the Peace Tower, and the massed choir of one thousand voices. There were three broadcasts that day and as one line fed the signal to the network another fed it to a recording machine at CNRO. Fortunately the recordings were presented to Mackenzie King who preserved them. They are still extant and we recently acquired copies of them for Program Archives.

* Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission - established by Act of Parliament, 1932, as a Government agency to broadcast Canadian radio programming nationally.

** Oldest son of Emil Berliner, who, with another son, Edgar, came to Montreal shortly after the turn of the century to oversee his father's business interests in Canada. In 1919, he formed his own company, Compo, and in 1921 left his father's business altogether and became completely independent and, incidentally, a Canadian citizen.

*** The Canadian National Railways, partly as an advertising venture, pioneered national broadcasting in Canada and by 1929 were broadcasting on a regular basis three hours per week on a coast-to-coast network. CNR passenger cars were equipped at the time with radio receivers, to entertain trans-continental passengers.

CRBC

The first Canadian broadcasting agency to produce a flow of broadcasts of historic value was the CRBC, established in 1932. Unfortunately, extensive professional recording facilities were not then considered a necessary adjunct to program production and distribution. The Commission was woefully underfinanced and produced only a few hours of programming daily. Most of their facilities were leased. As the CRBC had no clear channel high power transmitters, I imagine the lack of adequate recording facilities seemed trivial. However, a few recordings were made on acetate discs using a special attachment on an ordinary turntable. Some of these recordings still exist and include such things as: Dionne Quintuplets' birthday broadcasts, several ceremonials (e.g., Sir Arthur Currie's funeral), royal, vice-regal and ministerial radio addresses, a few talks by distinguished men, portions of Frank Willis' Moose River Mine broadcasts, and an unusual rendition of The Maple Leaf Forever played by synchronized bands, located in the principal Canadian cities from Vancouver to Halifax. Eastward from Vancouver each location had the network for eight bars. Every station came in on cue, in tempo and in tune. In its day it was a radio tour de force. Even today it is an affecting document, a very neat symbol of the purposes of national broadcasting in Canada.

Blattnerphone

A CRBC technical event of more importance for archives was the installation at Ottawa of a Blattnerphone which was the first - and a very ungainly - tape recorder. The reels were of heavy cast aluminum, 24" x 3". The tape was narrow gauge steel which, if it slipped off the reel, could only be rewound by having one man climb to the top floor of the Ottawa hotel, The Chateau Laurier* trailing the tape and then lowering it down the stairwell for someone to rewind laboriously at the bottom. I assume from recordings of this period that the chief purpose of the Blattnerphone was to record overseas transmissions for relay to the network. Fortunately it was also used to record Ottawa originations, some of which have been preserved.**

CRBC Recordings Preserved

To judge only from the broadcasts preserved from this early period one would be forced to conclude that, principally, history was something that happened outside Canada. At home the epochal events were funerals, ceremonials, visits of dignitaries, anniversaries and ROYAL OCCASIONS. In fact, one might assume from the relative number of recordings in archives on any one subject that the dominating event of the twentieth century in Canada was the visit here in 1939 of King George and Queen Elizabeth.

Little of the sound recording of this period documents in any way significant Canadiana. A few formal and empty words are all we have to remind us of the style and character of the major political figures of the day: King, Bennett, Meighen, Hepburn, Duplessis, Aberhart. The other Canadian voices of the time: the poets, artists, musicians, orators and oracles are, with a very few exceptions, lost forever.

* The location of the CRBC's Ottawa studios.

** They were transferred to "soft-cut" acetate discs. The Corporation no longer owns a Blattnerphone in working condition.

Similarly, events and conditions that characterized the early 30's - depression, drought, disaster, dissensions are almost entirely undocumented. The world was in convulsion: wars in Europe, Asia, and Africa - political and economic ferment everywhere but the recordings from this period reflect little but sweetness and light - God in his Heaven, King George the Fifth upon his Imperial Throne, and all right, or about to be, with the world.

The entertainment, special events and information programming saved indicate a similar CRBC unconcern with true history. Only the extraordinary Commission programs have been preserved. Not one sound or syllable remains of the ordinary fare of the day: Alexander Chualdin's "Melodic Strings", "Forgotten Footsteps", "Youngbloods of Beaver Bend", and "Cotter's Saturday Night". This policy in Canadian broadcasting of recording and preserving the extraordinary and ignoring the every day - the real warp and woof of the fabric of history - was to continue for many years.

CBC* - RADIO

And so we come in late 1936 to the CBC and the subject proper of this report: the history of the accumulation and organization of program recordings and related documents within the Corporation and our present position with respect to this activity. That is: how we have selected, organized and cared for, over the years, the documentation on film, videotape, kinescope and sound recordings of our programs which, we must remember, are themselves a unique documentation of Canada and the world of our times. This latter fact adds much importance to any critical examination of our performance in this area. It is not purely a matter of CBC housekeeping. We have a responsibility to the country. By virtue of our function we have become important - perhaps the most important - custodians of Canadian culture and history - the national heritage.

Increase in Number of Recordings

To return to the story - for CBC's first fifteen years we are, of course, still concerned only with radio. We find a quickly changing picture in program documentation. The CRBC recorded almost nothing. The CBC produced a growing stream of program recordings - first a trickle, then a flow and finally a flood. In its two-network heyday Toronto alone might cut 25,000 discs in a year. Unfortunately, this did not mean that CBC's new mandate for national broadcasting had engendered a heightened sense of history. We were recording more, to be sure, but this was due to expanded programming and the installation at production centres of professional recording facilities. The basic attitude towards programs as living history and the documentary value of recordings did not change much. Records were cut for specific and immediate purposes. Once these had been served little thought or care were given to the recordings. They were the general responsibility of the record library at each location, but the library had no discretion in matters of what to record or, what of that, to preserve. It merely looked after the traffic of the recordings - collected them from the recording room and sent them out according to instruction or put them on file until

* Canadian Broadcasting Corporation - a Crown Corporation responsible to Parliament but independent of the Government, created by Act of Parliament, and established, November 2, 1936.

called for, which as often as not was never. Library records were minimal. There was no system of charge out and recall. Indexing was limited to series title and date. Program content was unrecorded.

How CBC Decided Which Records to Keep

As collections grew it became a practice for the record library to submit annual disposition lists to producers and others who decided what to keep and what to destroy. This personal and unco-ordinated exercise of policy and judgment allowed full reign to vanity, carelessness, ignorance, and sheer fecklessness. We now have, for instance, a complete set of "John Fisher Reports" but not one Lorne Green newscast: cabinets of "Sports College" and "Canadian Club Dinners" but no "L for Lanky" or "Laura Limited". There is one particularly sad example of the consequences of this willy-nilly policy. In 1943, violinist Adolf Koldofsky discovered in Toronto manuscripts of seven C.P.E. Bach concertos which had been lost for two hundred years and which had never been performed in public. The manuscripts were authenticated by Wanda Landowska who came to Toronto to give the works their world premiere on the CBC. With one precious, chance exception, all recordings of this series were destroyed. The result of this carelessness is a triple loss: to musicology, to the recorded repertoire of Landowska (these were the only recordings ever made of her performance of the works), and to the CBC. We must suffer twice: the loss of the recordings and the odium of having lost them.

Growth of Record Collections

Despite a lack of express archive policy large collections of recordings accumulated over the years in Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa (and Britannia Heights)* and Vancouver. These collections were uneven in value, unrepresentative in scope. Some large programming areas (e.g. news!) went almost undocumented. And it is most important to stress that we are only discussing here the growth of record collections - many important or historic programs were never recorded at all. Moreover the collections, such as they were, had no guarantee of permanence. They could, as portions of them did, fall victim to house cleaning (or other) manias. They could and did deteriorate in quality, moulder away, or decompose altogether in the unsuitable storage areas to which they were invariably consigned. From beginning to end and coast-to-coast there was no real archival policy in the CBC.

1939: Royal Tour and War

Several events during the period under discussion have a particular bearing on the subject. In 1939 there was the Royal Tour which resulted in CBC's first effort to make a permanent record of any of its programming. Thirty hours of broadcasting were electrically transcribed in several sets. I suspect, however, that the chief purpose of this was to provide a memento for Their Majesties.

Also in 1939, (September 10), Canada entered World War II. The value of propaganda as a weapon made it imperative to record and preserve the

* Short wave receiving station near Ottawa.

great broadcasts by Churchill, Roosevelt, DeGaulle and Brockington*. Our collections grew apace. Unfortunately the war also brought restrictions and shortages. Aluminum as a base for recording blanks was replaced by frangible materials like glass and paper. Scrap drives were another hazard. Patriotic zeal often triumphed over good sense and thousands of historic recordings were junked to reclaim their aluminum.

The war also brought a new source of valuable recordings: the war reports of CBC's Overseas Unit. It seems quite characteristic that these broadcasts were preserved not by ourselves but by the BBC who shipped them to us after the war. This gift of our own history so embarrassed us that finally we sent all the recordings off to the Dominion Archives in Ottawa where, for lack of a play-back, they lay unused for more than a decade. This invaluable collection has only recently been repatriated.

Post-War Events: International Service and Sound Tape

After the war, two events had a profound effect upon program preservation. The first was salutary. The CBC International Service was inaugurated and, among its other activities, began to produce and circulate widely, permanent pressings (i.e., commercial-type phonograph recordings) of some of the best CBC programming. A "pressed" recording has a much greater chance of survival than a "soft cut". It is of a more durable material, there are many copies, and a matrix and stamper to make new copies as needed. All other CBC disc recordings from this period were "soft cuts" which meant that they could be easily damaged. "Soft cuts" were also generally unique recordings. If they were lost, that was an end to the matter.

The second post-war event significant for archives was a technical revolution: tape recording. Its effect for a time was disastrous. While tape made it possible to record history as never before, it also made it possible to destroy that record in an instant. Tape could be wiped and used again, and again. An irresistible economy. Discs, despite their many shortcomings, once cut had no value except as documents or scrap. They could be kept without making accountants uneasy. As tape replaced discs, record-and-wipe, record-and-wipe, became the standard practice. Indeed, no permanent library facilities for tape storage were ever established. Tape meant that large collections of radio recordings by the old processes of accretion would never occur again.

CBC - TELEVISION

With radio archives in this parlous state, in 1952 the giant of the mass communications era, television, appeared at the CBC. Suddenly there was a dramatic new dimension to the historical record - a picture. Although television, like radio, is essentially ephemeral, image-bearing media were quickly pressed into the service of the Cyclops to fill its enormous maw and record the emanations of its eye: stills, graphics, film, videotape, and latterly COLOUR and Gemini recordings. The multiplicity, complexity, numbers and sheer bulk of these records soon dwarfed anything in radio, and the accumulation of negatives, A and B rolls,

* Leonard W. Brockington, Canada's greatest orator, first Chairman of the Board of the CBC and, during the war, emissary and speech-maker extraordinary, for Viscount Bracken, Churchill's Minister of Information.

work prints, rehearsal prints, release prints, magnetic and associated tracks, "outs" and "trims", inserts, kine-negatives and kine-prints soon outgrew our ability to sort or care for them. The dead storage areas of CBC film libraries became crammed with footage which, to use a Boswellian phrase, was "...thrown together in a vague and desultory manner not even adhering to alphabetical concatenation." Thus, for instance, an interview with the late Mr. Pandit Nehru was to be found filed under "M" for mister. When space became a problem the solution was simple and brutal: throw out and start again, with hardly a thought for the invaluable (particularly to ourselves) historical record that was being discarded. To give but one example: 94,000 feet of interview footage shot for the "Close-Up"* study of Mackenzie King was discarded because it was unsuitable for stock-shots. This readiness to discard things of the utmost value may, I think, be explained in the fact that film libraries are part of the operating as opposed to program division of the CBC and therefore knew little of the content, historic or artistic value of the material for which they were responsible. This is no criticism of the libraries. To them film was inventory which, when it became excessive, had to be pruned to keep within allotted budgets for space, staff, racks, cans and equipment. And the program departments themselves were in such constant flux that soon even they had so little knowledge of what was in old programs that they could make little effective resistance to the general clamour for salvage. In this manner, for more than a decade we managed to lay waste a great deal of the unique historic record of Canada that CBC television produced. It was little short of vandalism. In a relatively brief space of time television, whose film and recordings were potentially the most valuable collection of documents in Canada, was in worse archival confusion than radio.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PROGRAM ARCHIVES

I would like to leave television for the moment (though I will return to it again and again) to discuss the origins, development and present condition of my own department into whose lap these staggering archival problems were dumped some years ago.

Program Research and Development Group

Program Archives as a department had its genesis in the discussions of the Ottawa Program Research and Development Group established early in 1957 by the Controller of Broadcasting. Probably the biggest problem tackled by the Group was the state of CBC's old radio and television recordings. After more than twenty years in the business the Corporation did not have any formal archive of programs either at the network production centers or in any of the regions except, as I have already described, in the crude sense, that a great deal of film, television and radio recordings were extant but next to inaccessible because library records were so scanty and inaccurate. These materials were scattered in a dozen locations. Selection of materials for preservation was a divided responsibility among several departments and many people. There was no co-ordination of approach nor continuity of policy. Any day a new broom could sweep away all that had been kept. Generally the materials were unsuitably stored and entirely uncatalogued. Little use was made of them.

* Interview series similar to Edward R. Murrow's "Person to Person".

Report on CBC Archives

The Group decided that a formal report on the state of the Corporation's program archives should be made to focus attention on this unsatisfactory situation and produce action to correct it. An experienced CBC news correspondent undertook to survey the situation and make recommendations. He visited all production centers across Canada to explore conditions.

What he found was this: in television, particularly in Montreal and Toronto, the so-called film archives were Augean stables glutted with a hodge-podge of prints, negatives, fine grains, magnetics, outs, trims, and television recordings (kinescopes) - the extremely valuable juxtaposed with the utterly worthless, and all costing the Corporation tens of thousands of dollars annually for space (entirely unsuitable for long term film storage) racks, reels, cans, equipment and personnel. And for this large investment there was little or no program return. Each piece that was added to the collections only compounded confusion, making it harder to find anything. There were records for which no film could be found and film for which no records existed. It seemed obvious that if this condition were perpetuated the Corporation would be much better off to cut its losses and sell off the whole collection as scrap. In such a state the film and TV recordings were more a liability than an asset.

In radio he found a reverse situation: a diminishing collection. Although there was a large amount of sound recordings (perhaps 40,000 hours) from the 30's, 40's and early 50's, the introduction of tape which was continuously being erased and re-used meant that the number of current radio recordings being preserved was approaching nil. The storage condition for radio recordings he found was equally as bad as - or worse than - television, and the indexing similarly inadequate.

Report Recommendations

In December of 1957 a report was submitted to the Group who circulated it widely. It outlined the situation I have described and proposed a solution: the creation of a separate department whose single responsibility would be to look after these matters both in radio and television - to put what was extant from the past into archival discipline and to set up a continuing service to keep new material in good order thereafter. One presumes, though it was not specified, that the intent was that English and French language program archives would be kept separately but develop in parallel at each network headquarters, and since no separate recommendations for the regions or other services were made, that Program Archives in Toronto would be the center for all English language services and Archives de Programmes in Montreal for all French.

Hindsight has shown that the size of the department envisioned, a cataloguer and a couple of clerks, was woefully inadequate to the magnitude of the job. For instance, the Sound Archives of the BBC, with no responsibility for television, has a staff of twenty-two. However, apart from underestimating the jobs, the report's recommendations, though novel and even daring, were basically sound. A unified radio-television program archives was eminently sensible: one staff instead of two, one storage area (optimum storage conditions were the same for tapes and discs

as for film) instead of two.* There were additional advantages. The program recordings and other documents of radio and television were supplementary and would increase in value by being kept and catalogued together - television could use the sound from radio and radio the sound from television. Finally, a unified archives would be more convenient to use. Producers, writers, researchers and other seekers of information or materials need only look in one place and, moreover, if television lacked the documentation they sought they might find it in radio and vice-versa.

Appointment of a Supervisor of Program Archives

The first result of the report was my appointment as Supervisor of Program Archives in January 1959 with instructions to realize the report's recommendations. I was attached to the National Script Department for guidance, discipline and supply. Of supply there was little. No space, apart from a shared office, no staff, no capital or operating budget had been provided for the new department. The first few months were spent in gathering informed opinions from key people in Programming and Operations as to how the job might be tackled. I also went to New York to see how CBS and NBC coped with their archival problems.

I found that both NBC's and CBS's archival practices with respect to program recordings and related recordings were similar to our own in kind but better in quality. Such work as we hoped to combine in one department was the responsibility of many and, so far as I could see, there was no thought of change or movement toward integration at either American network. However, both networks had selected, organized and stored their materials much more carefully than we. Program information was also more readily available through the well-kept records of the Program Analysis Department at NBC and the Program Information Department at CBS. Unfortunately little use was made of the recordings because information and materials were not organizationally co-ordinated. Generally activities were passive not active in concept: a large in-put and a relatively small out-put.

When I returned home and fully realized what I was faced with - a quarter of a century of radio and a decade of television in the backlog, and never idle programming mills grinding out thousands of hours of documentation on sound tape, film and kinescope monthly - I felt like the man with a broom who had been told to sweep back the tide. It became obvious that problems of these dimensions could only be tackled one at a time. A very large operation both in television and radio had to be removed from its administrative locus and realigned within a new department. There could be no hiatus. Clearly nothing large scale could be done until Program Archives had the knowledge, experience, space, staff and equipment to cope with BIG problems.

Beginning the Job

I chose to begin in radio, and for these reasons: more could be done with less; sound collections were ceasing to grow because of tape wiping; radio had a much larger time back-log; and the experience gained relatively inexpensively in radio could be applied to the costly operations

* One, that is, at each network center rather than one at each production center. (See Report on the Regions, p.)

of television. On June 1, 1959, I moved my office from the Script Department to the basement of the Executive Building where most of the radio recordings were stored. With some borrowed equipment, improvised furniture, the part-time help of a CBC producer on leave of absence (paid for by the Ottawa Program Research and Development budget) and a typist loaned by the Script Department, I began the real work of my job. We laboured there for six months auditioning and describing the program content of old recordings - getting the feel of the job. Even this small start at organizing archives produced fresh programming: two radio specials in January of 1960 on the subject of the 50's, documented with the actual sounds and voices of the period.

In February of 1960, Program Archives (now minus its part-time help) moved from the basement of the Executive Building to the Design Building, into an area one-third as large as requested. When the stenographer and I had moved all the records we had collected from the basement and other locations into position, we discovered our working area was, in effect, a corridor ten feet wide and forty feet long. In April 1967 we still work there. It is a most unsuitable environment for the storage of audiovisual materials and although the area assigned to Program Archives has since been tripled, the bulk of the materials in storage has more than doubled and the staff quadrupled.

The English Network, having by the beginning of the fiscal year 1960-61 provided the infant Program Archives with some inadequate and unsuitable space, the services of a stenographer, and some third-hand technical equipment and office furnishings, came to an end of its benevolence towards the foster child which it felt Ottawa had abandoned on its doorstep.

Program Archives' budget was part of the National Script Department budget which had been pruned rather than expanded from the previous year. However, Head Office, with some sense of the obligations of paternity, provided funds for two casual positions from June 1960 till March 31, 1961: a librarian-cataloguer and a senior clerk.

Immediately we set to work to hammer out a philosophy of operation and a system of implementing it: that is, what to keep, how to keep it, describe it, evaluate it, catalogue it, index it and file it.* Appendix I "Selection of CBC Program Recordings (TV and radio) for Accession into Program Archives: Categories and Criteria" codifies the "philosophy" of Program Archives.

The main features of the catalogue system developed are as follows: All main catalogue entries for Program Archives recordings are made chronologically. Each recording is assigned a date code number, e.g. a recording from May 2, 1959 would be coded 590502-: the first two digits indicate the year, the next two the month and the last two the day. When a recording is accessioned it is given a "dash" number following the chronological one. Simple arithmetic progression is used to distinguish recordings of the same date. This number is the catalogue number of the recording and also its shelf number. Consequently the recording files are self-indexing chronologically, which has many advantages.

* See Appendix I.

After a recording has been accessioned it is auditioned* and a report prepared setting out all pertinent content, production and technical information. Content description is the core of the catalogue operation. Since we are generally dealing with unique documents, and there is little or no body of literature relating to them; and because retrieving information by actual audition is a cumbersome and time consuming process, audition reports are carefully and often exhaustively done. In the audition report, the content of a recording is first epitomized. This is set off spatially (for rapid scanning) from the main body of the report which is a content analysis. In important and elaborate recordings such analysis may be done down to the minute and second.

From the audition report colour-coded main and analytical index entries are prepared.** Main entries (5 x 8) are, of course, filed chronologically. Tracings (3 x 5) subject, performer, author, title are filed in a single alphabetical index, with the various classes of entries being given both a conventional and chronological (year only) precedence. Multiple index entries are often made on cards of the same year to save space. Additional cards for tracings of the same year are distinguished numerically.

Also during this period Program Archives undertook two novel projects: a series of oral history interviews with Boer War veterans (eighteen hours were collected), and the production of a special one hour documentary, "Churchill in America", based on extensive archive recordings and oral history interviews. This program was aired twice on the Network and subsequently issued as an International Service recording where it became a "best seller" - only one International Service feature program has had a larger distribution. The total cost to the Corporation of this production was less than \$300.

In the fiscal year 1961-62 the English Network was no more inclined (or able) than previously to provide any of the extensive financial nourishment necessary if Program Archives was even to begin to meet its responsibilities in radio. Television, of course, was then and has remained ever since, hopelessly out of the question. Head Office again came to the rescue and provided funds to hire a full-time librarian and two senior clerks. Program Archives was now a department of five - an operating nucleus. Initially, we gave all our attention to cataloguing the earliest material to be ready to meet heavy program demands that were sure to be made upon Archives during CBC's twenty-fifth anniversary year. Mainly as a result of our labours the CBC was able to produce a flood of

* Coloured cards are used to distinguish the various classes of recordings, e.g. yellow: music; white: talk; green: documentary and so forth. This separation is also followed in the index, where blue has been added for subject entries. In practice we have found this simple device a great aid in searching the catalogue - so many entries may often be ignored.

** All available textual material relating to a recording - publicity, scripts, transcripts, etc. are collected and kept together in a vertical file awaiting the audition of the recording. After audition this material is attached to the report and passed to the cataloguer. After the cataloguing is complete, the report and these other related documents are filed chronologically.

well documented anniversary programming: "Matters of Record" (13 hrs.), "Worth Repeating" (26 half-hrs.), several "specials" and two television programs, "Look Back and Listen" and "The First Twenty-Five".

Program Archives Becomes a "Canada Unit"

October 1961, besides being the culmination of our Anniversary efforts was important for Program Archives for two other reasons. We halted our work on cataloguing the backlog and turned all our energies to collecting and processing material of archival importance from the current schedule. We have been occupied, and more than occupied, with this task ever since: collecting the recordings, cataloguing them, and servicing requests.

The other important event was that Program Archives became a Canada Unit. Head Office, who had been paying the piper, began to call the tune. As of October 1st, 1961, the direction and administration of Program Archives was detached from the Network and became a function of the Vice-President, Programming. The chief reasons for this change were:

1. It was felt that Program Archives was a Canada-wide responsibility and that Montreal, as a center for the French language services, should develop, in policy and practice, parallel with Toronto, the center for English language services.
2. The idea of a Program Archives service was born at Head Office. Its progenitors quite naturally had more faith in and enthusiasm for the project and more concern for its fate.

Growth of Program Archives

Despite this transfer coinciding with the worst series of fiscal crises in Corporation history, the Office of the Vice-President, Programming, was able to establish a nucleus Program Archives operation in Montreal (Archives de Programmes), and expand in Toronto. Toronto increased its staff to seven which was subsequently augmented by two others from the English Network. This has permitted Program Archives, in Toronto at least, to provide a continuous and growing archival service in sound. Currently our catalogue has more than 80,000 entries. We accession between five and six hundred separate items every month. There is a continuous flow of recordings to and from the regional production centers and the other English language services. We supply over fifty hours of recordings for use in production every month. And the trend is always upwards.

Appendix III "A Survey of Research and Recordings Provided by Program Archives..." gives a breakdown of the requests serviced by the Department over a given period - January 1964 to August 1966. It has considerably increased since then.

In addition to the regular work of Program Archives in the last two years we have provided the English AM Network with two archival "show case" series: "As Time Goes By" and currently "Playback" which is researched and written right in the Department.

A very recent example of the manner in which Program Archives is able to function for radio is the crisis caused by the sudden death of Governor General Vanier. Within two hours of receipt of the news on Sunday morning, March 6, 1967, we had located and delivered to the Radio News office all pertinent recordings. And, due largely to our organization of materials, radio already had a full scale obituary program sitting on the shelf ready for air. Television, which, of course, does not yet have a Program Archives service, had no prepared obituary of its own and had to use a National Film Board production.

However, although I take some pride and pleasure in what we have been able to accomplish in the sound division of Program Archives, we have quite a way to go before we can provide a truly adequate service to radio. We still gather material faster than we can process it. Our technical arrangements are cumbersome, obsolete and inadequate. The Department is in the anomalous position of being too poor to save money. We must achieve a greater flow of material to and from the regions and other services. The collection and processing of textual documents of importance lags sadly behind. Our storage and working areas are unsuitable and woefully inadequate. And, of course, television, by far the larger and more demanding, but also potentially the more valuable archival work, lies virtually untouched.

THE STATE OF ARCHIVES IN THE REGIONS

I would like to pause here in my description of the development of the Program Archives Department and turn to other associated matters. Most of the remarks I have made about the state of archives at the CBC have been drawn from my experience in Toronto. It is my home base and quite naturally I am more familiar with its problems. Also, in Toronto (as in Montreal), one can see the problems of archives "writ large" as it were.

Last summer a colleague and I visited the regions to gather impressions of conditions and opinions as to how archival problems relating to programs at the local production centers might best be solved. Generally we found that the problems varied in degree but not in kind from those in Toronto and Montreal. I think it is fair to report that from Vancouver to St. John's the consensus was:

1. That a formally organized and functioning archive of CBC program materials was essential to the operation of the CBC.
2. That one good archive at each network headquarters was preferable to several inadequate ones scattered across the country.
3. That archival provisions in the Regions suffered from lack of funds but that even if the Regions had more funds at their disposal they would not use them to improve archival services - other immediate needs were more pressing.

Although archival problems in the regions were similar they did vary from center to center in interesting particulars which I will describe. First, however, I must say emphatically - that there may be no misunderstanding - in any professional sense of the word, archives of program materials do not exist at all in the regions.

A. VANCOUVER

1. Radio: Preservation of recordings is a divided responsibility: The Record Library (old "soft-cuts"); a post-broadcast tape-holding area which has no records of program content and acts only upon instruction from producers; a "Living Memory" oral history project - more than 700 reels with précis and transcripts; and some individual and departmental holdings.
2. Television: The maintenance of television "archives" is solely the responsibility of the Film Director. He felt his problems were not yet out of control. Several years ago he had 17,000,000 feet in storage. Today he has more than 25,000,000. The storage area is little more than

a "lean-to" in an alley. It is dusty, gritty and sooty. Security consists in a Yale padlock on the door. There is not even a telephone on the premises. Cataloguing and indexing are very limited. You can find what you want only if you know precisely what you want - footage from a particular production of a particular date. That is, you must know what is there before you can find it. They might have what they know but do not know what they have. The whole collection is subject to the hazards of fire, flood and tempest as well as the more gradual processes of attrition.

B. EDMONTON

1. Radio: Apart from a few Outside Broadcast recordings little or nothing has been preserved.
2. Television: Again, apart from a little stock shot, a few kines (made in Winnipeg), a few films shot in reversal, there is nothing. A unique reversal kine of Lord Mountbatten's reminiscences of Winston Churchill was presented to Mountbatten, and therefore lost to archives. News footage is saved for two years and then discarded. The catalogue has no entry by subject or personality. One person is responsible for maintaining the library and keeping all film records.

C. WINNIPEG

1. Radio: There is no central repository of radio recordings in Winnipeg. Except for a few discs of Winnipeg dramas and a collection of six-month-old Public Affairs tapes in the Record Library, anything they may have is held individually or departmentally. Outside Broadcasts, for instance, thought they had a fair collection of old material but were unable to locate much of it when they searched. There are few or no written records relating to recordings. The acting Public Affairs Supervisor made the interesting suggestion that Program Archives should have representatives in the Regions (perhaps freelance) to look out for valuable material to send to Toronto for central archiving and to assist regional producers and others in the use of Archive services.
2. Television: Winnipeg is unique in film retention. They have for some time preserved all their original negative shooting. After a work-print has been made the negative is filed at the lab. The edited work-print is transferred to videotape for release. The work-print is kept in the Film Library while the lab keeps the negatives on cores, wrapped in brown paper and stored in boxes or tins. Negatives are filed by production number. The lab's storage area is a fireproof, cement-block, air-conditioned building. CBC does not pay for this storage! Film Library records are meagre from an archival point of view but superior in usefulness to some other regions. The Librarian-in-charge felt that she lacked sufficient space, staff, and information about Winnipeg's holdings to improve materially the television archive situation there and was in favour of transferring the most valuable materials to Program Archives in Toronto.

D. TORONTO

1. Radio: The archive situation here has been described in detail earlier in the report.
2. Television: In addition to what has already been outlined, Toronto currently has a plan to change the Film Library's records-keeping system which deserves special consideration in this report since it has considerable implications for the development of the Program Archives Department.

At the beginning of television no one foresaw what a mammoth operation film would become and what vast library problems would ensue, particularly in the major production centers. Film libraries, being in a sense, the end of the film production line, have never expanded or developed quickly enough to cope with their growing responsibilities, particularly in Toronto. Their effectiveness has also been hampered by "lay librarianship", which can be adequate to a small library but is usually disastrous in a large operation. Librarianship is a science and CBC would be well advised in future to hire professionals to set up and control systems in any major operation. This combination then, of managerial neglect in planning and lack of professional competence in execution has resulted in the chaotic film library conditions described earlier and is, in large measure, responsible for the loss, deterioration or inaccessibility of much of CBC Television's invaluable historical record of Canada.

With Film Libraries in "horse and buggy days", Film Production has accelerated into the "jet age". Presently 20,000 pieces of film move through the Toronto Library monthly. There is also the prospect of a 25% growth in traffic in the near future as, more and more, film becomes the medium with the message in television. And colour will exacerbate the problem. The Manager of the Television Film Service in Toronto feels the time has come to automate his records-keeping systems. I agree.

However, present plans for automation include an operation that would to some extent duplicate work planned by this Department. Because he has not the physical space to house two records systems the manager proposes, with the help of professional librarians, to transfer all old records to the new system. However a basic law of any records-keeping system - automated or not - is: put junk in - get junk out. As indicated earlier, Toronto Film Library records are very inaccurate, therefore it will be necessary to verify entries through actual inspection of all the film in the library - over 200 million feet: a prodigious extra burden for a library whose chief concern must be with the handling of current film.

It seems to me that the Film Library, in attempting to order the past while at the same time trying to process in a new fashion an ever-increasing flow of current film, runs the danger of not succeeding in doing either satisfactorily. In any case, any work done by them on the past will only have to be done over again, and in greater detail, by Program Archives should the Corporation decide that finally, and after more than thirty years in business, it is time it had a viable Program Archives operation. A film library, however well-run, is still not a film archives. If the Corporation does intend to carry through its plans for a Program Archives Department it would make better overall sense to give the job of re-organizing the past over to Program Archives, whose natural function it would be, thus leaving the Film Library more time and energy to cope with the growing problems of current service.

E. MONTREAL

I have not included Montreal in this survey because Archives de Programmes is thoroughly familiar with the situation. One need only mention that Montreal faces archival problems of a similar size and order as Toronto.

F. HALIFAX

1. Radio: Halifax has a few "soft-cut" discs in its Record Library and these, together with a handful of tapes stuffed into a hall cupboard and stray tapes in the offices of producers, make up the sound "archives" of Halifax. However producers and others were interested in Program Archives and would like to see an arrangement whereby more of their best material is preserved.

2. Television: Of all the regions visited, Halifax had the most imaginative plans for the future organization of its film and other visual material. Early in 1966 the Film Library (who keep such material as there is from the past) was transferred from the supervision of the Film Director to that of the Production Manager of CBHT who was most enthusiastic about the production value of a well-organized collection of film, related graphic material and other recordings. He felt (quite rightly, I think) such a collection should bear the same relationship to a television production center as a library does to a university. Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard and Yale are great centers of study because of their magnificent libraries and unique collections of books, papers and manuscripts. And if we are, in fact, as Mr. McLuhan insists, in the post-literate era, then the documentation on film, sound recordings and other media that radio and television produce will be the basic records of our times. No one in Canada produces such a profusion of these records as ourselves and no one will have more to gain from the careful preservation of them. They are living images of the times. And living images are the stock-in-trade of all broadcasting. Halifax's plan in detail is:

- a. To keep an edge-numbered screening print of all significant shooting in the film library.
- b. To keep the matching edge-numbered original negative in vault storage.
- c. To make a matching fine grain duplicating master (to make new negatives) and keep it also in vault storage.
- d. To shoot and similarly preserve record footage documenting the changing scene in the Region.
- e. To make a collection of historic photographs of all kinds on 35 mm. slides.
- f. To collect and preserve tape recordings of actuality sound effects - e.g., steam tractors, trains, etc.

(Of course, to work, such a library would need a good system of cataloguing and indexing. Halifax is fortunate to have a professionally trained librarian in charge of their Film Library systems.)

It is an ambitious plan and, if carried out, would solve a good many of Halifax's problems in the preservation and re-use of film and other television recordings. But even were the other major centers to follow Halifax's lead in this matter, which seems unlikely, it would be at best a half-measure - hacking at the branches of the problem - not getting to the root of it. The Corporation would have better and more useful film libraries across the network but it would still not have a Program Archives - an operation functioning in both languages, in television and radio, for the benefit of all broadcast services: local, regional, network, Northern Armed Forces and International,

Of course, it is not a mistake for the Corporation to improve its regional film library services. However, it would be a mistake, and I think a fundamental one, for the Corporation to embark upon an extensive program of expanding library services locally in lieu of, or even at the expense of, developing the Program Archives concept, i.e.: centralized services

in Toronto and Montreal - to select and preserve what is valuable from each production center and make it available to all.

An audio-visual archive must have a controlled physical environment and elaborate equipment. Its techniques and methodology derive from a sophisticated frame of reference. It is the job of professionals. It is also an expensive business. To date, it has seemed beyond the Corporation's means (or budgetary ingenuity) to set up one such archive. To establish many - one at each major center - would require a fiscal miracle and the Corporation would get less for more money. Even the limited experience of Program Archives in Toronto has shown that the value of such a collection increases in geometric proportion to its size and variety: twice as many documents (carefully selected) yield four times the value, etc. Concentrating effort will not only cost much less but give better results.

G. ST. JOHN'S

1. Radio: There is no centralized, systematic selection and preservation of valuable material. There are quite a few items of more than routine interest around but these are kept in the offices of producers, supervisors, etc. There is one particularly valuable collection of discs from pre-Confederation days: several hundred hours of Confederation debates. A transcript of these debates (if any exists) has never been made public and consequently the records have an even greater value as historical documents. The first Director for the Newfoundland Region kept the recordings under lock and key for fear of inflammatory political consequences should any portions be broadcast. However, lately, very effective use was made of them in a CBC Tuesday Night special "Father Joey '49".* Considering the unique value of these recordings the Corporation has a particular responsibility to ensure that they are preserved. It is suggested that taped copies of highlight be made of them for deposit in Program Archives, Toronto, full copies be made for the Newfoundland Provincial Archives and the original acetates be sent to the Dominion Archives in Ottawa.

2. Television: The collection of film and recordings on other media is not large. Most of it is kept in the film library in a rather casual fashion. That the library is a less than satisfactory place to preserve material is attested to by the fact that the Regional Program Director thought it prudent to store films of special value in a local bank vault. Generally, the Newfoundland Region is reluctant to forward any material to Toronto. Several hours of VTR recordings of the '61 Newfoundland forest fires were sent to Toronto, and Newfoundland has never been able to retrieve any of it.

CONCLUSIONS

This report has shown how, over the years, the CBC has paid only scant attention to the preservation of its programming in radio or television. However, since the late 1950's some efforts, principally due to Head Office initiative, have been made to establish special machinery to organize this activity on a Corporation-wide basis. Two Canada Units, Program Archives in Toronto and Archives de Programmes in Montreal, were

* The Right Hon. Joseph R. Smallwood, Premier of Newfoundland since he led the former British Colony into Confederation with Canada, in 1949. He styles himself as "the only living Father of Confederation".

established to serve as radio-television archival centers for the valuable program recordings of the English Language and French Language Services respectively. The results of their work, though good in themselves, have been very limited and restricted almost entirely to radio. The new Departments have never been able to assume their inherent archival responsibilities in television for lack of funds. Unfortunately Archives have tried to grow during a period of general Corporation retrenchment. Therefore, apart from current efforts in Toronto and Halifax to improve film library services, CBC's archival position with respect to television grows worse month by month.

This continued lack of attention to archival matters, particularly the preservation of film, has caused much dissatisfaction and frustration within the Corporation and has brought it under considerable critical fire from without. Both the Anderson Report to the Secretary of State on the Film Industry in Canada and recent Parliamentary Committee hearings have expressed alarm at this situation. It seems to me that the Corporation can no longer afford to be "resolved to be irresolute" and "adamant for drift" in matters of such Corporate and even national importance without seriously damaging its reputation as a responsible body. We must either take up this archival duty and discharge it in a creditable fashion or disown it and turn the problem over to others.

There are some basic questions that must be faced squarely and thoughtfully:

Is the archiving of CBC programs a worthwhile activity?
If so, is it a legitimate activity of the CBC, or should it belong to some other national agency constituted exclusively for archival work, such as the Dominion Archives or the Canadian Film Archives?

No one, I think, and least of all ourselves, can doubt the great documentary and historical value of CBC's radio and television recordings. They are, as I have said, "living images" of the times. In a very real sense they are recorded time and once lost or destroyed may never be re-deemed.* They are invaluable historical and artistic records and must be preserved. And because they are "living images" they are uniquely valuable to ourselves for the "living image" is the heart and soul of broadcasting. To destroy such material would impoverish all Canada and seriously restrict the range of our future programming.

Granted then that the preservation of CBC programming has great importance for the Corporation and even the nation, there is still the second part of the question: is it properly our job to preserve them?

First of all, though this answer sidesteps the real issue, the job is ours by default. There is no other Canadian agency that is either equipped or qualified let alone willing to undertake so huge a task. But the job is ours for other more important reasons. We are bound to be the chief users and beneficiaries of a carefully preserved archives of our own broadcasting recordings. Such audio-visual documentation will form endless

* In August 1967 a million feet of film - largely nitrate - in care of the Canadian Film Archives (a division of the Canadian Film Institute) burned in its storage area in an aircraft hangar in Beaconsfield, Quebec. The disaster could have been averted had the Canadian government supplied a grant of \$60,000 to transfer the film to safety stock which the CFA had requested in 1964. The curator called the destroyed collection the "cornerstone of a Canadian film archives".

grist for our programming mills. And much of the value of such a collection to a broadcasting agency, of course, depends upon its being close to hand, and organized and catalogued from the point of the needs of broadcasting. We made the recordings in the first place and are in the best position to know their precise value in terms of programming and other needs. If this material were given over to another's care it would be much less accessible and its preservation and use less easily controlled.

Doubtless it will cost us a lot of money to create and maintain an archive of audio-visual documents. But considering the potential program value of this material it is bound to be a good investment. The documents, if carefully preserved, can only increase in value with age. They can be used, re-used and used again in endless variety and contexts. They are also very likely to be a source of revenue through sale and rental. We pay from \$10 to \$25 per broadcast-foot for a single exposure of film we procure from others. If our archives were properly organized, often we could supply these needs from our own holdings. We could even become sellers rather than buyers.

If we agree then that the archiving of CBC programs is a job that must be done and that is not only the Corporation's clear duty but also in its own best interests to do the job itself, there remains a final question to resolve: How is it to be done?

The only alternatives seem these: either we continue more or less as in the past to allow the local production centers to deal with archival problems as best they see fit and hope that with directives, exhortations, and a great deal more money from Management the situation will correct itself - or we re-affirm and develop the Program Archives concept of centralizing these activities in Toronto and Montreal - a unified radio-television archive of programs: one for the English language services and one for the French, providing a Corporation-wide service under a single directorship. The question is: should the English and French Services have several quasi-archives of programs strung across their networks or one good one at each network headquarters? How should the Corporation spend its money to achieve the maximum effect and benefit: fritter it away by dribs and drabs through diversity of effort, or concentrate its spending in the hope of finally making a breakthrough in this expensive, complex but most important work? I think the facts argue for themselves in this matter.