TO (PRE) SERVE THE NATION

The Importance of a National Presence for a National Archives in the Digital Age

by

Ryan Courchene

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of History (Archival Studies)

Joint Master's Program

University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Table of Contents

Abstract

This thesis examines the history and strategic importance of maintaining a regional presence for Canada's national archives (Library and Archives Canada/LAC). If the national archives of a large federation, such as Canada, is to preserve the archival records of the Government of Canada, it must be equal to the task of providing access to records that reflect the complex and diverse character of the country and the decentralized structure of its governing institutions.

Provision of archival services for Canadian federal government records is the responsibility of LAC. These records are not only created in Ottawa but in federal offices across the country. LAC requires a similar nationwide presence to ensure that every citizen of Canada has a relatively equal opportunity to access these archival records. Thus, LAC has had, since the 1980s, regional offices in various Canadian cities. These offices are responsible for federal records created in their particular region. These offices have played limited roles overall in providing LAC's services to federal agencies and the public. At its peak, there were nine regional offices. Budget restraints have caused the closure of six. There are offices now only in Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Halifax. At the same time, however, LAC is planning to increase the visibility of its remaining offices and their ability to provide LAC services.

This thesis is being written at a time of great change and promise for LAC's regional offices. The thesis will look at the reasons for, and the development of, the national presence of LAC in these offices and what their future may be like, particularly in the digital age. The thesis argues that a national presence for a national archives is not only important in Canada but in all nations, and especially in large ones like Canada. Even in a digital age, it is necessary to have a physical presence across the entire nation.

Acknowledgements

From the beginning of my path in the archival profession to the writing of this thesis, I have received a great deal of support. I would first like to thank my thesis advisor, colleague, and friend, Dr. Tom Nesmith, whose knowledge and expertise are considerable. Your guidance and feedback have been amazing and I cannot thank you enough for your perseverance, patience, and most of all, your friendship. I would also like to thank the Graduate Chair, Dr. Janis Thiessen, and my thesis examination committee whose feedback and guidance have been valuable. Dr. Greg Bak, I want to thank you so much, not just for your membership on my examination committee, but for your help throughout my journey and your guidance as my professor. Dr. Jarvis Brownlie, thank you so much for being a member of my thesis examination committee. You that helped me realize that I could complete this program after taking your course. I cannot thank Paulette Dozois enough for being on my thesis examination committee. You have no idea how much it meant to me. There are few that have your knowledge and expertise and I will always cherish your input, but most of all, your friendship.

I would also like to acknowledge my colleagues at Library and Archives Canada who have been integral to my path -- starting with David Horky, who first showed me that archival work is important. I thank David Cuthbert, who has also been integral to my career path and always made himself available to help. I would also like to thank my director, Kristina Lillico, and my managers, Marnie Burnham and Laurena Fredette, who were very helpful and understanding when I decided to work and go to school full time. I thank former colleague Kelly Homenick whose knowledge and work have been integral to this thesis. I thank everyone not mentioned above who has played an integral part in my thesis work.

I add that the views stated in this thesis are my own and not necessarily those of Library and Archives Canada.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my mentor, colleague, and friend, David Horky, who has guided me the most in my archival career. I cannot thank you enough for your passion for archives and your work ethic. You are an inspiration.

List of Tables

Introduction

National archives play an integral part in documenting and preserving the history of a nation. One role of a national archive is to assist in creating a historical narrative for a nation through acquisition, preservation, and dissemination of national collections. For many nations, one single central archive may be all that is needed to properly acquire, preserve and provide access to their collection. However, this can be a problem for physically large nations, whose considerable size may result in a narrow capital city perspective on a national collection. As a result, the entire nation beyond the capital does not have proper representation in the holdings of the national archive. The significance of what is acquired for the national collection is diminished the further away from the national archive one goes because records created at a distance may not be known or appreciated as much. Analyzing the importance of records outside of the national centre is difficult if there is no one who can explain the importance that the records have for citizens where the records were created.

This thesis argues that in order to compensate for this, a physically large nation such as Canada requires a national archives with a physical presence in multiple, dispersed locations, such that no citizen in the country is located at an enormous distance from the national archives. This would ensure that it is acquiring the records needed to document the history of the entire nation and serve its citizens well. The national presence also would allow for the records acquired to be preserved without a long distance transfer to Ottawa that could damage the record. Most importantly, this national presence would ensure that the acquired archival records would remain in the regions where they were created so persons there could have easier access to records created for or about the people in these regions. There may be records created outside of the national capital that have national importance and are known to everyone, such as records relating to a national disaster or national accomplishment. It is also understood that records created in one region may be significantly more important to citizens of that region than to others in the nation. For example, there may be lesser known artists or writers that are especially treasured by those in one region, and not well known to anyone in another region, but their records have national significance. Does this make these records any less important because not everyone shares the same view? How is a national archive able to analyze the importance of these records without having a national presence to identify them?

It is the mandate of all national archives to acquire records that best represent a nation. The most logical way to do this outside of the central office of the national archive is to have a national presence with local expertise in permanent staff in the regions to ensure that these regional records have a champion of their inclusion in the national collection. It is because of this that a national presence is of utmost importance to a national archive of a large nation. Having a physical presence with a staff located in regional settings allows identification of important records created outside of a national capital.

In recent years, archives have been going through difficult growing pains as they move into the digital realm and drastically change how an archive is viewed. Instead of waiting for the researcher to come to them, they are proactively trying to interact with and attract clients by utilizing the internet and social media. The longstanding and stereotypical view of the hidden introverted archivist guarding dusty documents that were only accessed by the dedicated and determined no longer applies. In fact, it was never the case. In addition to adapting to digital means of engaging with the users of archives, archives must also work with increasing volumes of born-digital records.

How can a national archive best adhere to its mandate and serve the various regions of a country in the digital age? To do so, archivists have had to become digital professionals in order to create, disseminate, and preserve digitized non-digital records and acquire, preserve, and disseminate born-digital records. This task also creates several problems. The most obvious one is that there are still vast holdings of historical records in analog form. It would take several lifetimes with unlimited resources to digitize everything now in archives, while taking into account that analog records are still being made in great quantities, including in the regions. Moreover, given this imbalance, access to a digitized record may well prompt a researcher's interest in a related analog record. The digitized, born-digital, and analog record will be intertwined indefinitely, among regional records too. In addition, to paraphrase Marshall McLuhan's famous aphorism "the medium is the record" and is itself a key part of its message.

 This means that a record that is created in a region can indeed be sent to the national archives' headquarters to be digitized and made available online to anyone across the nation. Nevertheless, the significance and validity of that record is thereby diminished if the original is thought superfluous and destroyed or kept but withdrawn from access. To have a record in your hand, especially a record of importance to the person holding it means everything. Would a

digitized image of an ancestral Indigenous artifact such as a headdress or wampum be the same as the original for an Indigenous person? If this person had the signed treaty of their ancestors in front of them, able to see every aspect of the paper, the signatures, the stamps, the words, would they feel that a digitized copy was the same as the original? Would they trust that the digitized copy was an exact copy of the original without missing a section or missing a handwritten message on the back? Only the original would give the person peace of mind that what they were seeing or holding was authentic and valid. As for born-digital records currently being created, acquiring and preserving them is not an easy process. While preservation may require a centralized headquarters' vault, the rationale for appraisal, description, and public service by a regional office applies as much to born-digital records created in the region as it does to analog records created there.

This thesis will make the overall case for regional archival services offered by the offices of the Canadian national archives (LAC). The first chapter will outline how the expansion of the Canadian government across the country after Confederation resulted in creation of many regional offices that have created vast amounts of records. These records fall under the legal mandate of LAC. Chapter two will provide an overview history of LAC's approach to its work with Canadian government records in order to explain how the regional records challenges outlined in chapter one eventually prompted the late-twentieth-century creation of regional records centres (or mere warehouses for records) and a few full service regional archival offices. Chapter three will compare the LAC's approach to regional offices with that of the national archives in two similar, physically large federations – Australia and the United States – in order to suggest what LAC might borrow from their examples.

This thesis maintains that the national presence of a national archives is important. This requires a commitment to making the archives of the nation more accessible to all, especially those who cannot travel to the capital city headquarters. It is true that digitization can assist this goal. It can help give a sense of importance to every citizen across the nation and that their records are culturally significant to the entire nation. It helps provide the opportunity for citizens in one region to share their history and culture with those of another region of a nation who may not know about this national enduring knowledge. But digitization cannot replace the presence of a national archives across a country in a network of regional offices, just as digitization cannot replace the national headquarters of the archives itself.

Chapter 1: Decentralization in the Canadian Government

Canada is one of the largest nations in the world in geographic terms, with an area of almost 10 million square kilometres from coast to coast, and from the US border to the northernmost point. Despite its considerable physical extent, the population is only 38 million in 2020.[1] The national capital of Canada is Ottawa where the federal government is headquartered. With ten provincial and three territorial governments, the interaction between regional governments and the federal government has been ever changing since Confederation in 1867. There has been a continuing decentralization of power and responsibilities from the federal government to the other governments of Canada.

There has also been decentralization internally within the federal government of Canada as several of its departmental headquarters in the national capital have decentralized some operations to regional offices throughout Canada. Decentralization has been a part of the Government of Canada since its inception in 1867 with the signing of the *British North America Act*. The new federal government was assigned jurisdiction over matters such as criminal law, money and banking, trade, transportation, the postal system, citizenship, the militia, and Indian Affairs. Canadian external affairs remained a British government responsibility. Responsibility for education, civil law, health and welfare, natural resources and local government was given to the provinces, while jurisdiction over agriculture and immigration was made a joint federal/provincial responsibility.[2] The sheer size of the country was a major factor in the decentralization of government. Another factor was the distinctive cultural and linguistic concerns of francophone Quebec.

---

[1] Statistics Canada. "Canada's Population Clock (real time model)". https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/71-607-x/71-607-x2018005-eng.htm (last accessed 19 December 2020).

[2] Government of Canada, "The Constitutional Distribution of Legislative Powers". https://www.canada.ca/en/intergovernmental-affairs/services/federation/distribution-legislative-powers.html (last accessed 29 December 2020).

Since Canada is one of the largest nations in the world, the public service of Canada needs to be distributed accordingly. It is necessary to provide access to programs and services to the people residing across the country. Administrative historian J. E. Hodgetts cites four reasons why the federal government needs to establish offices outside of the national capital.

1. First, certain direct operating functions, connected with specific programmes, may necessitate the transplanting of the administrative organization to the relevant locale…

2. There are numerous regulatory or protective responsibilities that can be assumed only by planting administrators at the crucial control points…

3. Some direct services and benefits – both for the general public and more particularly for specified groups such as ex-servicemen and Indians – can best be dispensed by being brought close to clients…

4. Certain research activities can only be undertaken at particular locations that offer the environment or raw materials necessary for the study[3]

Each point gives a rationale for the dispersal of the public service by "decentralizing" the federal government. Federal government offices and officials needed to be placed in a relevant geographical location to provide the programs and activities needed in the particular region -- such as customs, post offices, experimental farms, Indian Affairs, and national parks.

In the mid-1970s, there was an attempt by the federal government to create more of a regional presence through the implementation of the Government Relocation Program. This program called for the relocation of some 10,000 public service employees to the regions to stimulate economic growth and bring the nation together. It was never implemented, as it was believed that the cost was too high and it was met with immense opposition from the public servants and the unions. [4] Even though this program never came to fruition, the federal government did succeed in moving some federal government department headquarters to the regions. Veterans Affairs, which was headquartered in the national capital, moved to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island in the 1970s. The Canadian Tourism Commission moved to Vancouver, British Columbia in 2005 along with its 85 employees at a cost of $17 million.[5]

---

[3] Hodgetts, J.E. *The Canadian Public Service: A Physiology of Government 1867-1970*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973, p. 223.

[4] Phillipe Le Goff, *Moving Public Servants to the Regions*, PRB 05-100E. Ottawa: Library of Parliament, Parliamentary Information and Research Service (2006), p. 1.

[5] Ibid.

Also in 2005, the Department of National Resources decided to move its CANMET Materials Technology Laboratory (CANMET-MTL) to a state-of-the-art facility in Hamilton, Ontario along with 120 employees. Another department that moved in 2005 was the Canadian Police Research Centre, which went from Ottawa to Regina, Saskatchewan.[6]

The reasons why these specific moves were made are difficult to pin down but it mostly likely has to do with the need of the program in the area. Even though some departments completely moved to the regions, others simply increased their presence in the regions by moving some of their administrative powers to the regions. Several government departments, such as Transport Canada, soon followed this example and started doing this on a large scale. The two main departments that started this early on in the twentieth century, which I will provide as detailed examples, are the Department of the Interior and the Department of Indian Affairs[7]. The main reason for these two departments to regionalize early on was that they both required a strong regional presence in order to provide the most comprehensive recording and reporting structure due to the national significance of these two departments.

In 1873, the federal government created the Department of the Interior. It controlled much of federal government activities in the West, which included the Northwest Territories and Yukon. The department's responsibilities included management of natural resources of various kinds: mining, surveying, mapping, and land administration for homesteading, geological surveys, national parks, policing, and forestry. The headquarters of the Department of Interior needed tight control over its recordkeeping and required duplicates be sent from the regional offices to headquarters.[8] The originals were kept in the regions. Many departmental records were transferred to the prairie provincial governments along with jurisdiction for natural resources after 1930.[9]

The Department of Indian Affairs (established initially as the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of the Interior in 1873 but made a department in 1880) had, like Interior, a

---

[6] Ibid., p. 2.

[7] For the purpose of this thesis, I will be referring to what is now the departments of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) and Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) as their predecessor single Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and/or its predecessor the Department of Indian Affairs.

[8] Terry Cook, "Paper Trails: A Study in Northern Records and Northern Administration, 1898-1958," in *Canadian Archival Studies and the Rediscovery of Provenance*, ed. Tom Nesmith. (Chicago: Scarecrow Press, 1993), pp. 274, 282.

[9] Ibid., p. 288.

widespread regional presence. At the start of the First World War, there were one hundred offices of the Department of Indian Affairs spread across Canada. Like the Department of Interior, control over these offices was in the headquarters in the national capital. The rationale for this centralization was to establish consistency across the nation in its regional offices. The department still did not have consistent recordkeeping practices as of 1914, which meant that not all offices were keeping proper records. It was said that some agencies had careless and un-businesslike practices in recordkeeping, which was a shortcoming for the Department of Indian Affairs.[10] These poor recordkeeping practices continued into the mid-20th century but eventually, the preservation and organization of these records became more of a priority for the department.

It was a long uphill battle for the department to implement the necessary changes to its recordkeeping practices. This was evident in the recordkeeping of the regional offices of the department. In "The White Man's Paper Burden," Bill Russell states that "as late as 1927, agents were being told to keep all records, although one suspects that a few agency offices were kept warm over long winter nights thanks to a supply of old papers for which storage space had simply been exhausted."[11] This shows how difficult it was to implement proper recordkeeping practices in the department. Even though the department requested that the most important records created in the regions be transferred to Ottawa, there was still an enormous amount of records being kept in these regional offices. Regional records officers were told to keep everything and destroy nothing, even though they had insufficient room to store these records. As a result, many were likely destroyed without proper authorization.[12]

These two departments are the two most important examples of federal government decentralization immediately after 1867. But it was not until after the Second World War that more significant decentralization started to take place. The simple increase in the number of employees in the regions is not a determining factor in measuring the decentralization of the nation because the increase in regional federal government employees could be related to the growth of the population or other factors. The first real sign of the movement to decentralization in Canada can be shown in the records that these regional departments created. They can

---

[10] Bill Russell, "The White Man's Paper Burden: Aspects of Records Keeping in the Department of Indian Affairs, 1860-1914," *Archivaria* 19 (Winter 1984-85): 71.
[11] Ibid., p. 71.
[12] Ibid.

identify the changes to the standards and procedures that are followed in the regional offices as well as show how regional offices carry out more systemic and consistent decisions in these regional offices. Hodgetts argues that the decentralization and distribution of the departments is directly related to what the department does in terms of functions and activities. For example, a department with little activity outside the nation's capital such as the Department of Finance cannot and should not be decentralized. A certain degree of centralization is still important to have.[13] Other departments like the Department of Interior and Department of Indian Affairs had a majority of their functions and activities take place outside the national capital and necessitate a level of decentralization.

While early decentralization was most significant in the Department of Interior and Department of Indian Affairs, the decades following the Second World War saw increased decentralization in other departments as well. The Post Office has since 1867 offices spread throughout the country but its administration was centralized in the national capital. In the 1950s, however, the Deputy Postmaster General of Canada questioned whether it was necessary to have such control over a national department in the national capital. The department decided to commission a study of its operations to see if they should keep a centralized administration of the department. The results were conclusive in stating that decentralizing the department would benefit it as a whole. The Post Office then decentralized a significant amount of decision-making power to the five main regions of the department. There were immediate reductions in overhead with less routine correspondence and less paperwork produced, and the less mundane decisions were dealt with in a timely manner and only those decisions of great importance were brought to headquarters. It was a logical decision, but not yet a common practice as many in the federal government bureaucracy believed centralization was more cost effective. This was true of departments such as Finance but it was to change after the Second World War, with Indian Affairs taking a lead role. The delegation of responsibility from headquarters to the regions was now determined to be viable and cost-effective.

After the Second World War, the Department of Indian Affairs went through some changes resulting in significant amendments to the *Indian Act* in 1951. The amendments called for the devolution of responsibilities pertaining to programs and services to the regional

---

[13] Hodgetts, p. 233.

agencies. This resulted in a new numbering system for both headquarters' and regional offices' recordkeeping by creating responsibility codes and more secondary and tertiary numbers.[14] This created a more consistent recordkeeping system that every office could implement so that control over their records would be a lot easier. This change was influential in showing the importance of the records created in these regional offices. The regional operations for the Department of Indian Affairs became an important part of the department as a whole, and the department had more control over their required functions.

With the growth of the Canadian government following the Second World War, the government began to look at decentralization as a cost effective and valuable tool in providing its programs and activities. The Glassco Commission was created in 1963, which was responsible for reviewing the government as a whole, and making recommendations on decentralizing the government. The commission found that there was a disconnect between departments' headquarters and regional offices. The commission recommended that regional offices be allowed to implement management methods that suited their specific and regional needs.[15] The main recommendation of the commission was that decision-making powers centralized at headquarters that pertained to the regions be moved to the regions. This would result in reduction of time and waste, which in turn would give the regions more responsibility and as an outcome of this, they would be more productive and would have a feeling of more involvement with the department.

In this spirit, in the late 1960s, major changes took place in the Northwest Territories. The Government of the Northwest Territories was established and staffed mainly with public servants originally from Ottawa.   The Northwest Territories was no longer governed solely from the nation's capital. This new territorial government, which was headquartered in Yellowknife, now had greater control over local affairs but not the full powers of a province. It became more involved with its own citizens. The Department of Indian Affairs supported this new government and also wanted to transfer its records to their custody so that they could be retained and preserved locally. Other government departments wanted to do this as well and as a result,

---

[14] Sean Darcy, "The Evolution of the Department of Indian Affairs' Central Registry Record-Keeping Systems: 1872-1984," *Archivaria* 58 (Fall 2004): 168-169.

[15] Canada. *The Royal Commission on Government Organisation*. J. Grant Glassco, chairman, F. Eugène Therrien, and Watson Sellar (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1962-1963), pp. 27-28.

the Northwest Territories Program was established to preserve and provide access to these records from other departments such as the RCMP.[16]

After the Glassco commission, several departments of the federal government started down the path of decentralization and each of them did so for their own reasons. They were not forced to decentralize by the commission as the Glassco report only made recommendations but they did decentralize in part because of the report. The Department of Indian Affairs, Public Works, Fisheries and Oceans, and Agriculture are just a few examples of departments that moved to decentralize in the 1960s, which resulted in more regional policy decision making and regional leadership.[17] In the 1960s and 1970s, Canada saw a wave of social policy innovation. For example, Medicare and the Canada and Quebec Pension Plans were created. There was an increase in federal industrial and regional development activities. There was the increase in acknowledgement of bilingualism. There were also court cases that challenged constitutional powers such as CIGOL[18], wage and price controls, and the National Energy Program.[19] These were all factors in government decentralization but they were just some factors among many.

In fact, there were dissenting opinions on the reasons why the government needed to decentralize. Graham and Swimmer argued that decentralization was not the federal government's conscious decision. The distribution of public servants in Canada was directly related to broad political, economic, and regional factors.[20] Some examples of them include the Public Service 2000 initiative, responses to the Quebec sovereignty movement, and the response to the 11 September 2001 attack on the United States. All were directly related to an increase in public servants outside the national capital region. Decentralization was therefore not only done by the federal government in a proactive manner, but also in a reactive manner, a result of the government addressing factors such as the ones listed above.

---

[16] David W. Leonard, "Establishing the Archives of the Northwest Territories: A Regional Case Study in Legality," *Archivaria* 18 (Summer 1984): 72-76.

[17] Terry Cook, "Archival Records in the Regions: Options for Immediate Action – Report for Senior Management Committee." Central Records File 9135-1, Vol. 1. Library and Archives Canada. 28 February 1988. pp. 3-4.

[18] CIGOL (Canadian Industrial Gas and Oil Ltd.) vs. Government of Saskatchewan et al and the Attorney General of Canada et al.

[19] Richard Simeon, "Considerations on Centralization and Decentralization." *Canadian Public Administration* 29, 3 (Fall 1986): 450-451.

[20] Katherine A.H. Graham, and Gene Swimmer, "The 'Ottawa Syndrome': The Localization of Federal Public Servants in Canada," *Canadian Public Administration* 52 (2009): 435.

One way to see how a country's government is decentralized is to look at the diffusion of its employees. In 2005, the Canadian government had 369,300 employees. Those who worked in the national capital region numbered 113,800 (or 31%).[21] This means that over two thirds of federal government employees worked outside of the national capital, which is an eye-opening look at the reality of the decentralization of the government. This number is even more significant when compared to the larger percentage of employees working in the national capital of Australia at (35%).[22] It is far from the decentralization of federal employees of the United States in 2005, where a mere 16.6% work in the national capital.

A question to ask is why would the federal government want to decentralize and move to the regions? One reason would be the cost. Real estate in a national capital is at a premium whereas moving the department in part or as a whole to a smaller city or to a remote location would reduce budget required for that department. The initial cost of moving would be offset in the long run. The problem is getting approval for that initial movement cost. As I mentioned earlier, the cost of moving the Canadian Tourism Commission headquarters to Vancouver was $17 million dollars. This example is not the best for justifying a move outside of the national capital for reasons of cheaper real estate due to the high cost of real estate in Vancouver, but it could be justified if the department can provide better service. This would be the case for the Canadian Tourism Commission as Vancouver is a central hub for Canadian tourism.

Vancouver has a higher cost of living than Ottawa but the general cost of real estate and office buildings is usually cheaper in the regions than in the national capital. I would like to thank Phillip Le Goff for compiling the following information. Table 1 shows how the proportion of federal jobs as well as the general cost of residential housing in 2004 can reflect the relative cost of commercial real estate in each city. As you can see, the majority of federal employees not only work outside of the national capital region, but also outside of the largest cities. It also shows that out of the 27 Canadian Metropolitan Areas, 23 have less expensive real estate than that of the National Capital Region.

---

[21] Le Goff, p.3
[22] Ibid.

Table 1: Federal Employment and the Existing Residential Price Index*

Metropolitan Area	Percentage of Federal jobs	Ranking Out of 27	Price Index Ottawa = 100	Ranking Out of 27
Outside CMA's	24.7			
Ottawa	24.2	1	100	24
Montréal	7.0	2	82	19
Gatineau	6.9	3	63	12
Toronto	6.0	4	132	25
Halifax	4.5	6	74	17
Vancouver	4.5	5	157	27
Québec	3.4	8	58	11
Winnipeg	3.4	7	51	5
Edmonton	2.5	9	75	18
Victoria	2.4	10	137	26
Calgary	1.8	11	94	22
St. John's	1.2	12	56	8
Kingston	1.1	13	74	16
Regina	1.0	14	47	3
Hamilton	0.8	15	91	21
Saskatoon	0.7	16	56	9
London	0.6	17	70	14
Windsor	0.5	18	67	13
Greater Sudbury	0.5	19	52	7
Saint John	0.3	24	49	4
Saguenay	0.3	23	39	2
Sherbrooke	0.3	22	56	10
St. Catharines-Niagara	0.3	20	72	15
Kitchener	0.3	21	86	20
Thunder Bay	0.2	25	47	6
Trois-Rivières	0.1	26	38	1
Oshawa	0.1	27	100	23

*based on the average selling price (MLS) for 2004.[23]

Another reason for the federal government to decentralize is to stabilize and distribute growth across the nation. There are factors that can contribute to the demise of certain areas of the country that rely on regionally specific economic sectors. For example, fishing is a major contributing factor to the wealth of the communities on the coasts of Canada. Farming is a major

---

[23] Ibid., p.5. Source: Statistics Canada, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) and the Parliamentary Information Research Service.

contributing factor to the wealth of the prairies; oil is a major contributing factor to the wealth of Alberta. All of these factors are unstable and can cause the demise of certain communities if there is a situation that causes a catastrophic failure to the income of that community. An oil spill on the coast could devastate the fishing community. A severe flood or drought could devastate the farming community. The federal government may therefore want to "balance" the economies in these areas by moving offices to the regions, creating additional jobs that would provide support for their communities and offset any negative situations. This regional development would stabilize and grow the economy in the regions and reduce the socio-economic disparity that may exist between the national capital and the regions.

Another important factor in regional development is reduction in emigration from the regions. A move to the regions by the federal government will also address regional specific needs that only pertain to that region. The federal government has a duty to serve the public and concentrating the federal government in the national capital will run the risk of losing sight of the public interest outside of the national capital. Geographic decentralization of the public service would help bring the federal government closer to private sector enterprises that are not centralized in the national capital. This would help develop a better relationship between the regional enterprises and the federal government, which operate in the same environment.[24]

The Canadian government has been decentralizing for decades. A clear example of decentralization is the current federal government departments that provide Aboriginal affairs governance, the department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and the department of Indigenous Services Canada. I will refer to them as the previous single department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) in this thesis. Canadian control of Indigenous matters was not always the case. Until 1860, Indigenous Peoples were the responsibility of the Imperial Government and the Colonial Governor was responsible for Crown-Indigenous relations in each colony. In that year, this responsibility was transferred from the Imperial Government to the individual colonies themselves. A Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs was appointed in 1862 to oversee responsibility for the Indigenous Peoples. The first department to have this role was the Secretary of State of Canada. This responsibility was shifted to the Department of Interior in 1873 and then finally to its own department in 1880. The first agency with department status that governed Aboriginal affairs

---

[24] Ibid., p.10.

was the Department of Indian Affairs (DIA), which was created when the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of the Interior was elevated from a branch to a department.[25] Not only did this department oversee the governance of aboriginal affairs, but it was also responsible for nearly everything related to Aboriginals such as their health and education.

The records created after the DIA's inception were seen as the documentation of a disappearing culture. In his article "The White Man's Paper Burden" Bill Russell cites two statements from the DIA registar-cum-archivist A.E. St. Louis:

> We possess in the Public Archives and in our own Department Archives an unbroken chain of chronological events relating to our Aborigines… I wish to emphasize the fact that none of our papers can be classified as Indian legends or myths, but all of them bear the characteristics of historical monuments… They contain an almost continuous record of our Indian wards progress… all this related chronologically by our Superintendents, Inspectors, Agents, Farmers and lastly by those worthy representatives of the Church… I feel that it is incumbent on the Department to preserve from decay the remembrance of what these men have done for its wards and these records should be kept intact for historical purposes as an example to future generations.[26]

and,

> Our correspondence, unlike other departments of the government service, deals almost exclusively with a human problem: the Indian and his land. The safekeeping of documents affecting his person and property he has entrusted to us and it is felt that his implicit faith in that trust should not be shattered through our neglect to provide and maintain proper safeguards for the preservation of these documents….[27]

The records created by DIA between the years 1860 and 1914 were not only seen to have operational value but historical value as well. This statement given by A.E. St. Louis in 1937 to the IAB director conveys the notion that it was their moral obligation and legal responsibility to document the Aboriginal people in a way that no other government department could. Records that relate to Aboriginal affairs were created for over a century and a half prior to the creation of the Department of Indian Affairs in 1880. Records creation dates back to minutes taken by the Albany Commission in 1722. A.E. St. Louis mentions that there is no other government department in Canada that can boast a longer continuous record of correspondence than the Indian Affairs department. The age of the records is remarkable but unfortunately, as

---

[25] Russell, "The White Man's Paper Burden," 53.
[26] Ibid., 52.
[27] Ibid.

with nearly all records created prior to the nineteenth century, the documentation was not comprehensive and poorly organized. Throughout the years, the records were scattered. Indian affairs functions were spread out to at least three different agencies, which included the Colonial Office, the Treasury, and the Army Commissariat. This chaos of responsibility was detrimental to the integrity of the records created on the Aboriginal people.[28]

The *British North America Act* in 1867 gave jurisdiction over Indigenous Peoples and Indigenous lands completely to the federal government of Canada. The act resulted in the passing of responsibility for Indigenous Peoples from formerly separate colonies such as Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs (DSGIA), which became the central office of Indian Affairs across Canada that was located in Ottawa. When the newly created headquarters started receiving all correspondence and records on Aboriginal peoples, it was a considerable volume, which created an immediate backlog of departmental business. This required a new system to file and register the records, which became known as the Red series, which remained in use and maintained up until circa 1920.[29]

The *Indian Act* of 1876 tightened the relationship between the "Indians" and the government as well as the rest of Canada. It provided a legal, social, and economic base for any interaction between the government and Aboriginal people, which fundamentally worked toward the assimilation of the Aboriginal people.

As for the recordkeeping, the volume of records was increasing exponentially and the department could not handle this influx. One beleaguered DIA official said in 1890:

> For many months past the members of the Branch have been working overtime in the almost hopeless attempt to keep the work of the office from getting into a muddle, but the fact becomes more apparent day after day that the present staff cannot hope to accomplish the task of keeping the work in anything like proper shape…
>
> It is becoming more difficult month after month to find any document that is required… We have therefore to rely greatly upon our memory in keeping track of documents… We have very little difficulty in finding documents eight, ten or twenty years old, but it is a serious matter to have to find a letter received within the past two years.[30]

---

[28] Ibid., 54.
[29] Ibid., 59.
[30] Ibid., 60.

The central filing system of AANDC evolved over the years. There were four phases of change in the filing system, each of which had a significant impact on the bureaucracy governing the Indigenous people of Canada. In chronological order, the phases were:

- *Red and Black Series*, which started in 1872 and lasted till 1923.

- *Duplex Numeric System*, which started in 1923 and lasted till about 1950.

- *Modified Duplex Numeric System,* which started around 1950 and lasted till around 1985.[31]

The Red and Black Series: Subject-Based Classification Systems

The "Red Series", created in 1872, seemed adequate upon its creation to handle the volume of headquarters files in 1872, but it was obvious, nearly at the outset, that it would not be able to handle the files created in the regions. The filing system became overwhelmed very quickly. DIA then created the "Black Series" for records in western Canada in 1882, which included the agencies in British Columbia, Manitoba, and the North-West Territories and a short time later, Saskatchewan and Alberta.[32] The Black Series also included records pertaining to the Maritime region. Like the Red Series, this series used a numeric filing system, which assigned a consecutive number to each new file being created in the system. Like the Red Series, the files were organized by subject.

Duplex Numeric System

By the 1920s, the sequential numbered subject files system that was used in the Red and Black series was becoming a filing nightmare for the department, as the subjects dealt with had more and more subsets. In 1923, and reflecting filing practices already underway, the department decided to move officially to a new filing system that involved organizing the files by subject and related subsets of the main subject. Broad subject categories remained and were assigned an

---

[31] Darcy, 165-170.
[32] Brian Hubner, " 'An Administered People': A Contextual Approach to the Study of Bureaucracy, Records-Keeping and Records in the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs, 1755-1950," (MA thesis, Department of History, Archival Studies, JMP, University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg, 2000), p. 67.

overall or "block" number, but subsets of the subject were assigned their own number within the block and given their own separate physical file. This multi-part numbering system gave rise to the "duplex numeric" title for the system. The creation of the new system also meant the migration to the new one of files created in the old system. Files were closed and reopened with a new number; they were moved and reclassified. Fortunately, none of the old numbers were obliterated and files that were searched for using the old system still could be found. File blocks were also set aside for regional agency offices, which reflected their growing importance. As with the other file structures, the regional office block number was followed by preassigned numbers for the subjects or activities managed by that office.

Modified Duplex Numeric System

While the development within the Red and Black series filing system of distinct file blocks for regional office records reflected the growing significance of their activities and records, regional offices themselves were not required to use the system. In 1950, the Modified Duplex Numeric System was established to require regional offices to use the same filing system as the Ottawa headquarters and it instituted a geographical block number for all files.[33] For example, like the duplex numeric system, the number 125/25-1 refers to a record from the Clandeboye agency (125) that pertains to Indian Education (25) and is a general file (1). Agencies and districts of DIA were assigned new block or responsibility codes in 1966. For several years after this, when agencies and districts were merged creating a new larger agency or district, the old agency numbers were kept since there would be overlap in files between the agencies. This change to the Modified Duplex Numeric System, writes Sean Darcy, "reflected the devolution of responsibility for programs and delivery of services to the agencies".[34]

The Department of Indian Affairs was the first incarnation of a federal government department in charge of administering the Indigenous people of Canada. This department remained as the Department of Indian Affairs up until 1936, when the department reverted to branch status within the Department of Mines and Resources. The Indian Affairs Branch as it was then called, was moved after this between the department of Citizenship and Immigration,

---

[33] Darcy, 168.
[34] Ibid., 168-69.

the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. When the Indian Affairs Branch began amalgamating and migrating agencies creating new agencies in 1966, it was decided that the Indian Affairs Branch would become a separate department again. This was the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND).[35] The department never reverted back to a Branch of another department again but it did go through a name change to the department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) but was still officially called the department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Finally, in 2011, DIAND was officially changed to the department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

AANDC is a geographically decentralized department with agencies and offices across Canada. This decentralization is reflected in its recordkeeping systems. The Red Series and the Black Series exemplify this. The Red Series dealt with DIA files created by headquarters while the Black Series and the Modified Duplex Numeric System specifically dealt with files created in the regions. For the department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (now CIRNAC and ISC), there are ten major regional offices dispersed across the nation serving its Indigenous citizens. For the Atlantic Region, there is an office in Amherst, Nova Scotia that serves New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador. In the Atlantic Region, there are thirty-four First Nations with a total population of 63,104 that live both on and off the reserve as of November 2015. There are also five Inuit communities in Labrador as well. The Atlantic Region also has a liaison office in Halifax as well as a satellite office in Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador.[36] In the Quebec Region, there are sixty listed First Nations.[37] The Ontario Region, which also includes the headquarters of AANDC, has the largest number of people of Aboriginal ancestry in all of Canada. Ontario has a population of over 242,000 registered Indigenous peoples with 181,000 of these living on 207 reserves consisting of 126 different bands.[38] The Ontario Region has one regional office in Toronto and four district offices in Brantford, Sioux Lookout, Sudbury, and Thunder Bay that serve the

---

[35] Bill Russell, "Records of the Federal Department of Indian Affairs at the National Archives of Canada: A source for genealogical research." (The Ontario Genealogical Society, 1998), p. 5.
[36] Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *Atlantic Region,* Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016942/1100100016946 accessed October 19, 2020.
[37] Indigenous Services Canada, *Quebec Region,* Indigenous Services Canada website: https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1100100019255/1582306532791 At the time of this writing, the Quebec Regional office of the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada website only listed COVID information and nothing on the regional offices location or what they managed. Accessed October 19, 2020.
[38] Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *Ontario Region,* Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100020284/1100100020288 accessed October 19, 2020.

Indigenous peoples of Ontario.[39] Manitoba has a regional office located in Winnipeg that serves the 148,000 Indigenous people in the province, of whom 88,000 live on reserves. Manitoba is home for 63 First Nation bands and is the location of Canada's Treaty One people.[40] Saskatchewan has a regional office in Regina and a district office in Prince Albert. Saskatchewan is home to almost 145,000 Indigenous peoples from 70 First Nations.[41] Alberta has a regional office located in Edmonton and a field office in TSUU T'INA. The Alberta Region is responsible for 102,000 Indigenous peoples from 45 First Nations bands located on 140 reserves.[42] British Columbia has its regional office in Vancouver and is responsible for 198 First Nations Bands consisting of about one third of all First Nations in Canada.[43] As for the North, there are regional offices in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories and Iqaluit, Nunavut.[44]

Since its inception in 1867, the Canadian government has grown greatly in size and spread its offices across the country in order to perform a wide variety of functions. One of the earliest and most significant of these functions is responsibility for Canada's relationship with Indigenous people. With this expansion of the federal government, exemplified in the administration of this relationship, vast amounts of records have been created in the regions and also accumulated at headquarters in Ottawa. The unique records created and held in the government's regional offices have presented a particular challenge to LAC and its predecessors. The next chapter discusses their response to it. Chapter three points to the need to meet this challenge with expanded LAC regional services to Indigenous people and all Canadians.

---

[39] Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *Ontario Region Offices,* Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100020391/1100100020392 (last accessed October 19, 2020.)

[40] Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *First Nations in Manitoba,* Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100020400/1100100020404 (accessed October 19, 2020).

[41] Indigenous Services Canada, *First Nations in Saskatchewan,* Indigenous Services Canada website: https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1601920834259/1601920861675 (last accessed 19 October 2020).

[42] Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *Alberta Region,* Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100020655/1100100020659 (last accessed 22 October 2020).

[43] Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *About British Columbia First Nations,* Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100021009/1314809450456 (last accessed 21 October 2020).

[44] Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, *Regional Offices,* Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016936/1100100016940 Regional office websites for these offices have limited information at this time. Location is all that is listed (last accessed 21 October 2020).

Chapter 2: Library and Archives Canada

In the previous chapter, we discussed how the federal government created vast amounts of regional records. How has that affected the archival records among them that have national significance and document the history of Canada? First we have to look at the evolution of Library and Archives of Canada: from its inception in 1872 as a branch office of the Department of Agriculture; to the establishment of the Public Archives of Canada (PAC) in 1912 as a separate department; its renaming as the National Archives of Canada in 1987 (NAC); and its merger with the National Library of Canada to become Library and Archives Canada in 2004 (LAC).[1] Prior to the establishment of the Public Archives, records of national significance were the purview of the Archives Branch of the Department of Agriculture. The records of the federal government, however, were the responsibility of the Department of the Secretary of State. With the passing of the *Public Archives Act* in 1912, the newly formed Public Archives of Canada inherited the holdings and mandate of the Archives Branch and responsibility for federal government archival records. The head of the PAC, the Dominion Archivist, was designated a Deputy Minister.[2] At the department's inception, the position reported to the Secretary of State but that changed over the years. It has reported to the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, the Minister of Communications, and now the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

The *Public Archives Act* was a significant archival step for the federal government as it formalized the authority of the Public Archives of Canada. The *Act* designated the PAC as the sole repository for federal government archival records. It did not give the PAC sole authority to determine what was a Canadian government archival record or to require its transfer to the archives. The *Act* also allowed the PAC to acquire any other records of non-governmental origin that it deemed to be of historical value.[3] This gave the department the authority to collect a wide variety of records and retain custody of them permanently.

Both the first federal Archivist at the Department of Agriculture Douglas Brymner (served 1872-1902) and his successor Arthur Doughty (served 1904-1935) believed that

---

[1] Library and Archives Canada, National Archives of Canada fonds, Biography / Administrative History. http://collectionscanada.gc.ca/pam_archives/index.php?fuseaction=genitem.displayItem&lang=eng&rec_nbr=266&rec_nbr_list=266,24016,105663,97640,120,1706542,19069,18214,18975,17966 (last accessed 9 April 2015).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Jay Atherton, "The Origins of the Public Archives Records Centre, 1897-1956," *Archivaria* 8 (Summer 1979): 44.

centralization was necessary for proper preservation. They did not distinguish between records of national, regional and provincial importance and believed that local preservation was a hindrance and proper preservation and access for research should be done in the national office in Ottawa.[4] When Brymer was first appointed, he toured cities outside Ottawa to see records held outside of the national capital. He discovered that the records in Fredericton were "lying in greatest confusion in the Province Building" and records in Halifax were "well kept and in good order" but were stored on wooden shelves and were not in an adequate preservation location due to poor fire protection. He found over 400,000 British military documents in Halifax, which led him to negotiate for their acquisition with the British War Office. This led to a complete transfer of military records relating to Canadian and Maritime affairs to the Archives office in Ottawa a year later.[5]

During the years prior to the First World War, the Public Archives began to seek better control of records created in the regions, which resulted in regional offices being created in Quebec, Trois-Rivières, Montreal, Saint John, and Halifax. PAC agents were sent to Ontario and the prairies, but offices were not created.[6] The offices were mainly intermediaries, whose only job was acquiring archival records of any origin in the region and sending them to Ottawa for permanent retention. There was local opposition to this. Why could the records not be kept in the regions where they were created? Centralization was seen as detrimental to local researchers because it limited their access to records. In order to see the record that was created in the region, researchers had to travel to Ottawa.[7]

It was initially decided in the 1920s that the regional offices of the Public Archives in Halifax and Saint John would be the beginning of the regionalization of the archives. At this time, these two offices acquired archival functions that mirrored those in the national headquarters. They housed some records and provided reading rooms to review the records as well.[8] This was a beginning of a regional presence, but it was short lived. With the Great Depression, the Government of Canada had to make some drastic budget cuts and the regional

---

[4] Ian Wilson, "'A Noble Dream': The Origins of the Public Archives of Canada," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982-83): 30.
[5] Donald Macleod, "Our Man in the Maritimes 'Down East' with the Public Archives of Canada 1872-1932," *Archivaria* 17 (Winter 1982-83): 87-88.
[6] Wilson, "'A Noble Dream'," 29-30.
[7] Donald Macleod, "'Quaint Specimens of the Early Days': Priorities in Collecting the Ontario Archival Record, 1872-1935," *Archivaria* 22 (Summer 1986).
[8] Wilson, "'A Noble Dream'", 30.

presence of the Public Archives was no more. It was status quo throughout the Great Depression and the Second World War. The Public Archives was still mostly focused on the private records of individuals and families, which meant that preserving and collecting the federal government record was still not a major concern for the Archives. At the time of Doughty's retirement in 1935, the Public Archives had not systemically transferred federal government records with historical value into its custody.[9] For example, the Department of Public Works secured a building in 1938 to house government records outside of PAC control. This was only a stopgap solution because it did not address the fact that government records were being created at an exponential rate. It was only when the building was requisitioned for wartime purposes and departments had to recall their records that things really came to a head.[10] Disposition of these records became a priority and the Public Archives was perfectly suited to fulfill this role because of the powers given to the department in the *Public Archives Act*.

The federal government began to take more interest in its records because of the enormous growth in the number of records that were being created and the lack of space to store them. It was not until his first *Archives Report* in 1949, when Dominion Archivist W. Kaye Lamb proposed a halfway house to hold government records, that a greater role for the PAC with government records started to take shape.[11] Lamb proposed his idea to the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Science (Massey Commission). He proposed a service that would receive government "dormant records" from departments that no longer needed them day-to-day in their offices but did not want to destroy them in case they were needed at some later time. The required new building would have a staff complement, which would manage and provide access to these records until they were destroyed or, Lamb hoped, the archival records among them could be transferred to the Public Archives. The Commission agreed with his recommendation. This involved a complete change in how the Public Archives interacted with federal government departments that helped the Public Archives acquire the archival records it wanted. The Public Archives now had greater opportunity than ever before to

---

[9] Wilfred Smith, "'Total Archives': The Canadian Experience, " in *Canadian Archival Studies and the Rediscovery of Provenance*, ed. Tom Nesmith (Chicago: Scarecrow Press, 1993), p. 139.

[10] Atherton, 49.

[11] William Ormsby, "The Public Archives of Canada, 1948-1968," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982-83): 36-37.

acquire, manage, and provide access to government records. The Public Archives could also destroy the non-archival record for departments in a timely manner.

The first such "Records Centre" was opened at Tunney's Pasture in Ottawa in 1956. The probationary trial of the activity was a success, which resulted in the building of other Records Centres that were renamed Regional Service Centres. A Regional Service Centre was built in Toronto in 1965, Montreal in 1966, Vancouver in 1972, Winnipeg in 1973, Halifax in 1973, and finally Edmonton in 1977.[12] These Records Centres soon filled up with government departments' records. Even though the Public Archives now had a regional presence, there was neither archival staff nor archival work done in these Regional Service Centres. The centres were simply warehouses where departments could put records for retrieval by clerical staff if needed by the departments. The records remained in the formal custody of the departments until designated and officially transferred to the PAC as archival records.

In 1966, the Cabinet passed the *Public Records Order*, which gave the Dominion Archivist a greater role in government records management as a whole.[13] Federal government archival records now not only had to go to the PAC but the PAC would determine which ones were archival before records could be destroyed. Establishing records retention schedules with the departments became an important duty of the PAC. The schedules created a timetable whereby records were retained for the length of time departments needed them and then disposed of by archiving them at PAC or destruction. Although the American National Archives and Records Service had pioneered this approach, this records management role was not what traditional archives had done. It was a responsibility that the PAC was willing to assume to ensure the acquisition of government records of archival value.

The Regional Service Centres now would provide advice to governments, train the departmental staff in proper recordkeeping, and produce guides and standards for the departments to promote the storage of dormant records in the Regional Service Centres. It had improved control over the acquisition of the dormant record, transfer of the archival record, and destruction of the non-archival record.[14] The *Public Records Order* basically ensured that the Public Archives had more control at the disposition of the record by being more involved

---

[12] Atherton, 58.
[13] Atherton, 59.
[14] Ormsby, 43.

through guidance and training at the front end when the records were being created. Even though the departments were being trained in better recordkeeping, the Public Archives still lacked a *full archival service* presence in the regions for description, public reference, and long-term preservation of the records. There was still no policy on those roles in the 1960s and 1970s regarding regional records. Concern about that lack was starting to become a major issue as the Public Archives wanted more archival records from the regions. This would give more substance to regionalizing the archival operations of the Public Archives.

In a report done by the Public Archives Committee on Acquisition and Access Policy in 1976, it was acknowledged that the federal government's ongoing decentralization policy was raising key archival issues. The committee also found that regional government records were different from the records that were created in the national capital, and that they held important evidential and informational data not in headquarters' records concerning the federal government's activities in the region where they were created.[15] This also countered the older view of the regional record as a transitory record of short-term value only, not archival value. This recognition of the new importance of the regional government record strengthened the case for a regional presence of the PAC/NAC/LAC with the kind of full archival service offered at its Ottawa headquarters. Archivists had been sent to PAC regional offices to analyze the government records for their archival value. The committee found that sending archivists to the regions and transferring the archival records to Ottawa was no longer responsible. The report stated that constraints of space "…could pressure some archivists into destroying material of basically local or regional significance in favour of headquarters files, which would understandably receive more research attention in Ottawa." The committee also stated that transferring records from the area where they were created would alienate these records from their local communities.[16]

The report spurred discussion of the Public Archives of Canada's need to provide archival service in the regions. Moreover, the regional offices of federal departments wanted to have their records near, even if they were dormant. A proposal that federal records could be transferred to the provincial archives for storage, as the Regional Service Centres did not have

---

[15] Public Archives of Canada, Public Records Division, Committee on Acquisition and Access Policy, "Report: Acquisition and Control of Field and Regional Office Material," File 9435-1, August 1976, pp. 5-7.
[16] Ibid., 12-16.

the expertise to preserve and provide access to archival material, was not supported. Regional offices also found that their headquarters viewed regional records as irrelevant at worst and secondary in importance at best. The committee concluded: "Material of largely regional significance should not be transferred either to the Public Archives in Ottawa or to a local archival institution, but rather should be retained and administered at the appropriate Regional Records Centre."[17] In order to provide an archival service in the regions, the Public Archives needed to have archival staff in the regions. Yet, the PAC was not prepared to implement the recommendations of the report.

In 1979, the Corbett-Frost Report examined the Public Archives and looked at the changes implemented since the *Public Records Order* in 1966. By this time, regional records had already established their importance to the federal government. This report focused on what the Public Archives was acquiring from the departments through disposition and it gave the Public Archives a poor grade on its acquisition work. Between the years of 1965 and 1976, the Public Archives had only acquired 530 of a total 17,022 feet from regional offices as a result of the Records Management Program.[18] Even though the Regional Service Centres had the ability and responsibility to acquire archival records in the regions, the amount of records actually transferred was minimal. The report stated that the reason for the low number of transferred records was not due to the fact that there were few records in the regions with archival value, as one might think, but the failure of the Public Archives to acquire comprehensive records in a consistent manner. The report made the following recommendation to the Public Archives: "That the PAC ensures that the records management system be properly implemented for regional and local records, through departmental records managers, by establishing PAC representation from Records Management Services, Micrographic Advisory Services, and Archives Branch in the Regions."[19] The report showed that records were being acquired randomly from government departments at each Regional Records Centre. Having archival staff in these Regional Service Centres would have addressed this issue. The report even went on to say that regional records are of value and the Public Archives must be more vigilant in identifying and acquiring them for permanent retention.

---

[17] Ibid., 14.

[18] Public Archives of Canada, Bryan Corbett and Eldon Frost, "Public Records Division: Acquisition Methods," (December 1976), 25.

[19] Ibid., 33.

The view that archival records should remain in their area of creation was beginning to become more prevalent in archival communities at about the same time as the Frost-Corbett Report was prepared. In 1980, the Consultative Group on Canadian Archives stated:

> Any particular set of records should remain, as far as possible, in the locale or milieu in which it was generated. This may be called the extension of the principle of provenance (which aims at keeping the context of records intact) to a principle of territoriality (which envisages the locale or milieu of records as part of their context)… . Archival materials … should be kept together … and remain as close to their source as possible.[20]

This not only emphasized the need for the records to remain in the regions where they were created but it also went further to state that the removal of these records from their place of creation was violating the principle of provenance. The principle of provenance states that the origin of records must be known and protected to give them meaning as evidence of the actions of their creators and if that context, or location of the records was changed, then the records' meaning would be eroded significantly. The archival community was now using archival theory to provide a valid argument for the keeping of records in the place where they were created.

Even with these external factors pushing for regionalization of the Public Archives, it was not until the 1980s that the PAC took important steps to address the decentralization of the Government of Canada. An archivist at the Public Archives, Terry Cook, stated to the Senior Management Committee of the Government Records Division in a report on regional records issued in 1986 that

> The consequences of not dealing with regional records is that the PAC will become, as far as government records are concerned, an Ontario-Quebec repository and thus forfeit its claim to be a national archival institution.[21]

Cook saw the value of the regional federal government record for understanding what was going on across the nation as a whole. Cook's report showed that the committee had to recognize the absence of a regional archival presence and provide solutions to the problem. The PAC had to decide whether to continue to send archival records to Ottawa or start to provide archival services in the regions. It came to the same conclusion that the Committee on

---

[20] Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, *Canadian Archives: Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada* (Ottawa: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 1980), p. 16.
[21] Terry Cook. "Archival Records in the Regions: Options for Immediate Action – Report for Senior Management Committee." Central Records File 9135-1, Vol. 1. Library and Archives Canada. 28 February 1988. p. 5.

Acquisitions and Access Policy had in 1976 that the Public Archives needed to decentralize its archival services to the regions to adequately match the decentralization that was happening throughout the federal government.

Unfortunately, the Regional Service Centres did not have the staff or facility capabilities to keep the records created in the regions that had archival value, which meant that when records were up for disposition and had archival value, they had to be sent to the PAC in Ottawa. When the PAC was renamed the National Archives of Canada in 1987, a new view of the regions was forming and a policy statement came out of the National Archives stating

> Regional government archival records produced in the regions and relating to the regions will, in general, remain in the regions under the control of the National Archives.[22]

This statement would change everything for the National Archives. It was the single most important statement in the creation of the regional archival presence of the Public Archives. No longer would archival records simply be sent to headquarters. The records would be close to those researchers who need them, who are almost always in the regions where the records are created. A key factor in the development of this new policy is the report written in 1989 by NAC archivist Paulette Dozois on federal government records created in the Yukon. Dozois spent several months in Yukon doing the study. Her study took a different approach in that it examined the federal records of an entire region, rather than of certain departments. But since relationships with Indigenous people were at the core of federal work in Yukon, she looked especially at the Indian and Inuit Affairs Program and the overall Northern Affairs Program records, in which Indigenous matters loom large. That said, the records of all federal agencies in Yukon touch closely on Indigenous matters given the prominence of Indigenous people and issues in the territory. Dozois concluded:

> The two programmes cited above exercise considerable independence in dealing with the Yukon Territorial Government and the Council of Yukon Indians. Their records are not all sent to Ottawa; indeed, only copies of final reports make the trip across the country. The work of these programmes and the relationship between DIAND [Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development], the Territorial Government and the Council of Yukon Indians on the issues confronting the Canadian North are covered in detail only by the records generated in Whitehorse …

---

[22] Ibid. p. 2.

The archival examination of the records of these two important departments indicates that the records at their Ottawa headquarters are, on their own, unable to document regional activity in a complete and accurate fashion. The Yukon records reveal a high degree of independence in the implementation of policy initiatives, and an ability to adapt a national policy to unique regional circumstances, or even to change that national policy.[23]

It took several years to implement the new regional records policy, as it required new resources, not only to refurbish existing buildings, but also find new ones to house the increased number of records that required special preservation controls. In addition, the archival records needed staff to preserve, maintain, and provide access to them. The first Regional Archival Pilot Project (RAPP) began in Vancouver in 1987 with the hiring of two full-time contract on-site archivists for an initial probationary period of one year, creating the country's first regional federal archives. The pilot project was a success and with that a second regional federal archives was created in Winnipeg in 1988, with records of the Canadian National Railway used as a focal point. These approximately 600 linear feet of records were found in an old barn at the Forks in Winnipeg and were in disarray and in dire need of preservation. Shortly after this, budget constraints resulted in reduced government spending. However, in 1992, the Vancouver office became the first permanent Regional Archival Operations office of the National Archives of Canada and hired two full-time archivists. Winnipeg officially became a Regional Archival Office in 1995 and hired two full-time archivists, which was reduced to one archivist a short time later until 2005 when an archival assistant was hired to assist the archivist. The third and final Regional Archival Office did not open until 2009 in the Regional Service Centre in Halifax, 17 years after Vancouver.

In 2010, the new Librarian and Archivist of Canada, Daniel Caron, launched a "modernization" policy as the focal point of the Library and Archives Canada activities. It envisioned moving the LAC more decidedly from the analog to the digital age. At the same time as some new resources were allocated to digital archiving, severe budget cuts to the LAC were imposed by the Harper Government. How would the LAC and its regional offices fare in a setting that now stressed digital interactions with Canadian citizens and fewer resources for the kinds of analog records that were the most significant part of the holdings of the Regional Centres? Would there be a need for regional offices if born-digital records and digitized analog

---

[23] Paulette Dozois, "Beyond Ottawa's Reach: The Federal Acquisition of Regional Government Records," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-92): 62-63.

records could be accessed by anyone, anywhere from Ottawa? And would budget cuts mean that the analog holding of the regional offices be move to Ottawa to save costs? Caron noted that digital changes could have unsettling and uncertain outcomes:

> Technological developments are not static and will continue to advance as society itself interacts with and harnesses its own technological expertise in new and unforeseen ways. In this seemingly futuristic environment, memory institutions will need to continually reassess their presumptions and business precepts surrounding their understanding of what constitutes digital information and their roles and responsibilities in relation to it.[24]

Substantial changes to the regional presence of the Library and Archives Canada began with the closure of the Record Centre in Edmonton on in 2012, which housed both archival and non-archival records created in federal offices in the region. Since the Edmonton Records Centre did not have any archival employees, it was determined that records stored there but still officially in the custody of the creating department, were returned to that department. Archival records that were already in the custody of Library and Archives Canada were moved to the record centres in Winnipeg and Vancouver. Records relating to Indigenous Affairs were sent to Vancouver and all others were sent to Winnipeg. This also represented a historic change in LAC policy established by W. Kaye Lamb in the 1950s, as "dormant records" still in the control of department but stored in LAC centres would no longer be stored there. They became the responsibility of the departments. Only archival records under LAC control would be kept at the centres.

This was only the beginning of the changes coming to the national presence of Library and Archives Canada. With the closure of Edmonton, the idea that Library and Archives Canada would centralize all its holdings became a definite possibility. Citizens in the region and decentralized government departments with a heavy regional presence, which relied on the regional centres, were given some reassurance in 2014 from Caron's successor as Librarian and Archivist of Canada, Guy Berthiaume, about the national presence of LAC: "I would like for our regional centres… to be hubs, to be places where people congregate… to be centres where the

---

[24] Daniel J. Caron, "Modernization and the Documentation of Society in the Digital Environment," 2010, https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/news/speeches/Pages/Modernization-and-the-Documentation-of-Society-in-the-Digital-Environment.aspx (last accessed 3 January 2021).

totality and globality of our mandate is enforced."[25] After the restraint and restructuring of the regional centres, there emerged greater hope from LAC's new emphasis on public outreach that digital communication promised to facilitate.

Library and Archives Canada's emphasis on a new vision embracing the digital future, was reflected in its business plan in 2013.[26] One of the ways to do this was to digitize analog collections, which in turn, would improve their accessibility. An example of this is the migration of LAC's analog audiovisual collection, which was in an obsolete format, to a sustainable digital format. This priority also resulted in revamping the LAC website and online search tool. It called for improving online interaction with Canadians through Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, and YouTube.[27] LAC also wanted to adapt a more collaborative approach to carry out its mandate and support documentary heritage communities. This involved improving interactions with other archives, libraries, galleries, and museums to help improve the service they provide to Canadians through closer collaborations that digital communications especially allowed, while continuing their work within their particular mandates. This was a positive step for LAC and these other institutions in that it sought to bring the vast national collections they held more directly to Canadians. This meant that if someone wanted to research a specific subject that spanned several institutions, that they would be made aware of collections held elsewhere. It also meant that these institutions would be able to collaborate to see how each institution provided service and see what worked and what they could learn from each other to provide the best service possible for their clients.[28] There is clearly room in this expanded public outreach for the LAC regional centres to play a greater role in any such regional collaborations.

As a result of these priorities, the LAC website became one of the 10 most visited government websites in Canada with over 90 million views. LAC's Facebook page was off and running with over 1800 updates in 2015-2016 resulting in over 106,000 comments and shared posts. LAC's Twitter, Flickr, and Podcasts were just as popular.[29] LAC also started networking with other institutions creating shared exhibits and sharing parts of their collection. For example,

---

[25] Guy Berthiaume, Library and Archives Canada All-Staff meeting. 17 September 2014.

[26] Library and Archives Canada, *Business Plan 2013-2016* https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/three-year-plan/Documents/business-plan-2013-2016-eng.pdf (last accessed 13 October 2020) p. 1.

[27] Ibid., 9

[28] Ibid., 10

[29] Library and Archives Canada, *LAC - Annual Report 2015-2016* https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/annual-reports/annual-report-2015-16/Pages/AnnualReport-2015-16.aspx (last accessed 13 October 2020), p. 9.

the Great Seal of Canada was on loan to the Canadian Museum of History for the major exhibition *1867: Rebellion and Confederation.*[30] LAC initiated public events such as the Wallot-Sylvester Series where LAC would host special presenters to discuss issues related to their fields or institutions. For example, in March 2015, David Fricker, the Director General of the National Archives of Australia, spoke at LAC on "e-Government: Policy Responses from the National Archives of Australia."[31]

One of the major projects that Library and Archives Canada took part in was the Open Government Partnership, which involved 68 countries in 2015. This project involved attempting to speed up reviews of groups of records in accordance with federal access and privacy laws in order to increase public access. As a result of this "block review" approach, LAC was able to release more than 18 million pages between 2010 and 2015.[32]

Shortly before the next three-year plan was launched in 2016, LAC senior management requested a new approach be explored in order to emphasize local collaboration with the LAC outside of the national capital. That would end up enhancing the LAC's national reach. This approach also included a new Service Model for storage and a review of the current properties the LAC occupied outside of the national capital. The increased commitment that LAC now made to collaboration, innovation, client service, and public visibility reflected the core values that drove this new view and led to the report titled *LAC's National Presence: Business Case for a Collaborative Approach.*[33]

Prior to 2012, there were eight record centres across Canada with three archival offices in these centres. They were in the record centres in Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Halifax. Each of these offices had archival staff that provided access to regional archival records. As mentioned, in 2009 Library and Archives Canada created a new policy on the storage of the Government of Canada's records and decided to focus on the storage and preservation of *archival* records rather than "dormant" ones, most of which were not going to end up as archival. By June 2015, Library and Archives Canada no longer provided storage service for the Government of Canada's non-archival records. With this decision came the closure of five of the eight regional

---

[30] Ibid., p. 15

[31] Ibid., p. 17

[32] Ibid., p. 24

[33] Library and Archives Canada, *LAC's Future National Presence: Business Case* Internal Report, Library and Archives Canada, unpublished, 2015.

centres across Canada leaving the three centres with archival offices in Winnipeg, Halifax, and Vancouver. This decision was a difficult one. It required government departments to make dramatic recordkeeping changes as they no longer could rely on Library and Archives Canada to hold their dormant records. The decision was justified as it aligned with the mandate of the LAC, which focuses on archival records above all.

The mindset of the new national presence of the LAC was to prepare for and move toward recordkeeping in the digital age. In order to do this, it needed to focus on making the three remaining offices of the hubs of access for both LAC analog and digital collections and enable these offices to be able to provide a full set of services that they were not yet able to provide. In the past, very few people even knew that Library and Archives Canada even had offices outside of the national capital. With the new emphasis on a national presence, this was one of many issues that needed to be addressed. The three archival offices in the regional records centres were located in industrial parks that were difficult to get to by the public. The new vision involved moving the offices into areas that were easy for the public to access but doable within LAC's extremely limited budget. There was a proposal to create partnerships to share offices with institutions that already had a large public presence. The three archival offices were still in large warehouses that were costly to maintain, so it was determined that in order to move to a more publicly accessible and visible location, these warehouses needed to close and the records moved elsewhere. The record centres were being leased and the leases were up in 2017 in both Vancouver and Halifax and in 2023 in Winnipeg. It was decided to focus on the immediate need to vacate Vancouver and Halifax to meet the deadline of 2017 in order to not renew the leases in these centres. The Winnipeg office would remain status quo giving it the opportunity to take in records from Vancouver and Halifax and learn from the other offices on the successes and failures of the new approach. With only two years to complete the project, Vancouver and Halifax needed to move quickly to look for a partner for their new office. A lot needed to happen in those two years. A new location needed to be found, not only for the records, but also for the remaining staff. Staff that were no longer going to work in the regions were notified to allow them to find work elsewhere after the two-year transition.

Halifax was able to create a partnership with the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 located in the heart of the Halifax Seaport. This was substantially more public friendly than the previous location in Dartmouth. Pier 21 was a perfect partner for this initial testing

phase as Pier 21 has over 75,000 visitors per year. This partnership came into fruition in the summer of 2017. Vancouver also created a partnership with the Vancouver Public Library located in its beautiful building in downtown Vancouver. The LAC archival office moved from the Record Centre in Burnaby to the Vancouver Public Library. The only difference between the new offices in Vancouver and Halifax is that Halifax sent its entire archival holdings to Ottawa and Winnipeg. The Halifax office no longer keeps any regional records. Vancouver's records were initially to be sent to Ottawa and Winnipeg, but that met resistance from the Indigenous communities in the British Columbia area that relied heavily upon the Indigenous affairs government archival records. LAC decided to keep the Indigenous affairs records in the Western Region. All other records with archival value were sent to Ottawa and Winnipeg.[34]

The Vancouver partnership was a success and dovetailed with another major partnership – construction of a facility to be shared by Library and Archives Canada and the Ottawa Public Library (OPL).[35] LAC realized that the OPL had tens of thousands of visitors every year and this foot traffic would be a significant boost to LAC's visibility. The Ottawa Pubic Library was in dire need of a new building and the LAC was in need of increased visibility. This new facility would house all the public service staff that the LAC currently has in its current facility at 395 Wellington Street, but the collections would remain where they are. The new facility is to be built on Albert Street, only a couple hundred yards from the LAC's Wellington address. Construction will begin in 2021 with a proposed completion date of 2024.[36]

Another major project in which Library and Archives Canada is currently engaged is the creation of a new state-of-the-art preservation facility to be built behind the current state-of-the-art preservation facility in Gatineau, Quebec that was opened in 1997. The building of this facility was needed as LAC had a critical shortage of storage space for its holdings. Construction of this facility broke ground in August 2019 and is expected to be complete by 2022.[37]

---

[34] Library and Archives Canada. *Annual Report 2016-2017.* Library and Archives Canada Website: https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/annual-reports/Annual-Report-2016-2017/Pages/annual-report-2016-17.aspx (last accessed 13 October 2020).

[35] Library and Archives Canada, *Library and Archives Canada (LAC) - Ottawa Public Library (OPL) Joint Facility Project,* Library and Archives Canada website: https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/transparency/briefing/2019-transition-material/Pages/lac-opl-joint-facility-project.aspx (last accessed 13 October 2020).

[36] Ibid.

[37] Library and Archives Canada, *New Preservation Facility - About the Project,* Library and Archives Canada Website: https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/our-infrastructure-projects/new-preservation-facility/Pages/About-the-project.aspx (last accessed 13 October 2020).

This renewed emphasis on public outreach and service, collaborations with libraries, museums, galleries, and other archives in new partnerships bodes well for the regional centres of LAC. But the movement of some records from the regions raises some concerns, as might the construction of new storage facilities in Ottawa. Yet these facilities are already expected to be full when opened without moving any other records from Winnipeg or Vancouver into them. But the removal of some records from Vancouver and all of Halifax's records does prompt questions about LAC's commitment to keeping regional records in the regions and a true national presence. And what of digital services? Will they make regional offices less necessary? The regional offices of LAC are at a crossroads. What is their future? Let us turn in the next chapter to Australian and American approaches to regional offices and services for their national archives to see what might be learned from their experience.

Chapter 3: The National Presence of a National Archives

The national presence of a national archive is integral to ensuring that the nation's history is properly represented. Having a regional presence allows the national archive to have direct contact with records created outside of the national capital and an understanding of their importance to the nation's history. Having a national presence also ensures that citizens across that nation have access to their own history, especially records that directly affect where they reside. It acknowledges the concerns and needs of citizens located outside of the national capital who do not have the ability to go to the national archives' headquarters.   From my experience, just a person's engagement with an original document has value beyond its digital copy, online access to a national archive does not give these citizens the same engagement with the past that a visit to an actual regional office can. And the very feasibility of an actual visit can make a significant difference in a citizen's willingness to research at the national archives.

This chapter and the Conclusion of this thesis compare the regional presence of a national archives for three large nations. The chapter will look at Library and Archives Canada, the American National Archives and Records Administration, and the National Archives of Australia. There are other large nations with national archives that could be looked at such as China and Russia, but this chapter will be limited to these three. The similarities in their governance as democratic federations allow more relevant comparisons than vastly different countries. The ease of access to sufficient documentation of the history of the national archives for these three nations has also influenced my choice.[38]

Library and Archives Canada

For most of Library and Archives Canada's history, since its creation in 1872 as the Archives Branch of the Department of Agriculture, it has been a highly centralized agency of the Canadian government. It has had an Ottawa headquarters and very little presence through branch offices outside Ottawa until the 1970s. For the first few decades of its history, it did not have formal

---

[38] It should be noted that not all geographically small nations have one central national archive office (Sweden and New Zealand, for example, have regional offices) and not all large nations have a major regional presence (Brazil, for example).

responsibility for federal government archival records and only very limited authority over them until the *Public Records Order* of 1966. That authority was strengthened by the *National Archives of Canada Act* of 1987. That growing responsibility, the explosion in the volume of government records, and the spread of federal government offices throughout the country led to the creation of several LAC records centres in cities across Canada between the 1950s and 1970s. But these centres simply stored government records that for the most part were not archival and thus the centres did not perform the full range of archival functions that the Ottawa headquarters carried out. As Paulette Dozois notes of the LAC view of the vast bulk of the centres' holdings: "Because of the local nature of these records, they were thought not to be of national significance and therefore, not worth preserving in the NA."[39] Records created in the regions that had archival value were not kept in the regions, as there was no archival staff in the regional centres to acquire and maintain them. They were sent to the national headquarters to be archived.

The policy statement authored by the NAC's Terry Cook in 1987 explained, "Regional government archival records produced in the regions and relating to the regions will, in general, remain in the regions under the control of the National Archives."[40] This marked the move to a more definitive national presence for the NAC whereby archival records created in the regions would now be kept in the regions where they were created. The first Regional Archival Pilot Project (RAPP) began in Vancouver in 1987 and a second regional archive was created in Winnipeg in 1988. The Vancouver office became the first permanent Regional Archival Operations office of the National Archives of Canada in 1992. Winnipeg officially became a Regional Archival Office in 1995. The third and final Regional Archival Office was not created until 2009 as the Regional Service Centre in Halifax, seventeen years after Vancouver.

Recent changes in regional policy during the 2010s have altered this landscape considerably. When opened, the three regional offices performed all archival functions with records created in their regions. Vancouver now only performs those functions with the Indigenous affairs agency records created in British Columbia. Other regional records once stored at the Vancouver regional office are now in Ottawa. Vancouver still provides public reference for LAC holdings. Halifax has gone through a similar evolution. It does not now have

[39] Dozois, "Beyond Ottawa's Reach," 58.

[40] Terry Cook, "Archival Records in the Regions," p. 2.

any regional records archival holdings, and does not perform archival functions with regional records, other than public reference service for LAC's overall holdings. Winnipeg continues to perform most archival functions for records generated in its region and others that have been sent there from outside the region because it has a massive storage facility. It holds approximately 40,000 linear feet of archival holdings in its storage facility.[41] Among these records are the federal government personnel records from across the nation and military personnel records from those who served in the Canadian military after 1945. That said, after the changes in Vancouver and Halifax that aim to promote their visibility for LAC reference services, Winnipeg is the LAC regional centre with the most records by far, but oddly still the lowest public profile.

National Archives of Australia

The National Archives of Australia (NAA) was only established as an independent department in 1983 with the passing of the *Archives Act*, which established the Archives as an executive agency of the Australian government. Federal records archiving has a prior history, however, when the Australian government ordered that historical military records be transferred to the War Museum, which became the Australian War Memorial, which opened in 1941. This was a first major step in the preservation of federal records documenting the history of the Australian nation.[42]   With the passing of the *Archives Act* in 1983, the NAA became responsible for "preserving Australia's most valuable government records and to encourage their use by the public and to promote good records management by Australian Government Agencies."[43]

The NAA may have only been officially created in 1983, but it has antecedents that date from the 1940s. In 1944 the Commonwealth National Library appointed an Archives Officer, which was the first step toward the creation of a national archives. The officer, Ian Maclean, focused on ensuring that government departments properly disposed of their records. His

---

[41] Holdings in Halifax and Vancouver, with the exception of Indigenous records in Vancouver, where shipped to LAC headquarters starting in 2015.

[42] National Archives of Australia, "Our organisation". https://web.archive.org/web/20150314235238/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/ (last accessed 9 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 14 March 2015).

[43] National Archives of Australia. "About us". https://web.archive.org/web/20150228092658/http://naa.gov.au/about-us/ (last accessed 9 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 30 March 2015).

mandate extended only to federal government records. His work resulted in a growing body of historical documentation.

> The Library's Archives Division expanded, creating training schemes for departmental records officers. In the 1950's, new repositories at Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth were added to those in Sydney and Melbourne to cope with the increasing need for storage. By 1952, the Archives Division of the Library had 25 staff and, taking over the responsibilities of the War Memorial, became the single archival authority.[44]

The Australian national archival agency thus had regional offices across the country, but for storage of records rather than for archival services such as public reference services. Storage space was one thing, but access another. One of the other early challenges facing the nascent Australian national archives was the 50-year rule governing access to government records, which meant access to records younger than 50 years of age was restricted. This was a problem as it meant that few records created by the Australian government would be accessible to the public because Australia's late start at archiving federal government records meant that most archival records were under fifty years of age. In 1954, the renowned American Archivist Theodore R. Schellenberg of the United States National Archives visited Australia and toured the country giving lectures as a Fulbright Scholar. In his visit, Schellenberg argued that the nation should provide access to federal government records that were less than 50 years of age. He also stated that the Archives Division did not belong within the Library.[45] It should be a separate entity. It was immediately clear that the Australian archives was in need of review and some see Schellenberg's visit as the point of realization that this needed to change. However, many scholars and persons in the archival community believed that Schellenberg's visit had very little to do with the changes that were made subsequent to his visit. Michael Piggott wrote, "Nevertheless, our conclusion would be that the influence attributed to Schellenberg generally has been over-inflated."[46]

Nevertheless, in 1961 the Archives Division got its independence with the passing of the *National Library Act*. This act created the Commonwealth Archives Office in the Prime

---

[44] National Archives of Australia, "Our History". https://web.archive.org/web/20150316160633/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/history/index.aspx (last accessed 9 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 16 March 2015).
[45] Ibid.
[46] Michael Piggott, "The Visit of Dr. T.R. Schellenberg to Australia," (MA Thesis, University of New South Wales, 1989), p. 339.

Minister's Department. Even though it now had its own office, it still did not have the authority it needed to ensure proper recordkeeping in the Australian government's departments. And there was a substantial backlog of records. The Australian government thought that it could improve access to its records by adopting a 30-year access rule in 1970, but without proper arrangement and description of the records, it did not matter that under the new policy, citizens did not have to wait as long as before for access. In fact, they still did have to wait because access suffers without proper arrangement and description.[47]

One of the most interesting things about the Australian archives is that in the 1960s, it decided to use the series system to arrange and describe its records. This approach was different from both Canada, which for the most part today uses the fonds system, and the United States, which uses the record group system. There is an understandable reason why each country adopted a different system of arrangement, but in retrospect, arranging by series was the better approach to implementing the principle of provenance. It was suggested and implemented by Peter Scott who devised it to cope with the often rapid changes in records administration in the government, which meant multiple agency creators of records. The series system, unlike the fonds and record group system, is able to capture this complexity.[48]

The Commonwealth Archives Office proposed to the federal government that it needed a central records repository to preserve the nation's government archives. The request was approved and the very first purpose-built Commonwealth Archives Office records repository was built in Villawood near Sydney in 1972.[49] In 1973, another important step in the development of the Australian national archives was taken. At the request of the Australian government, the then Dominion Archivist of Canada, W. Kaye Lamb, visited Australia to review and make recommendations on the Australian federal archives.[50] Lamb's report emphasized that the archives needed to have legislation that gave it authority to properly acquire, preserve, make accessible, and dispose of records. He recommended that this be done in four stages.

1. Assess records management within the government departments.

---

[47] National Archives of Australia, "Our History".

[48] Ibid. Some Canadian archives have adopted the series system: Archives of Manitoba; Archives of Ontario; Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan; Yukon Territorial Archives; and the region of Waterloo (Ontario) Archives.

[49] Ibid.

[50] Robert C. Sharman, "Australian Archives in Lamb's Clothing," *Archivaria* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1976): 23.

2. Take physical custody of dormant government records but still provide access to the "owners" of the records.

3. Give guidance on the final disposition of records to ensure proper transfer of archival material and destruction on non-archival material.

4. Take full custody and ownership of records of archival value, which will become part of the permanent holdings of the archives in the Commonwealth of Australia and provide access to these records to researchers.[51]

Lamb also made recommendations about the types of buildings needed by the archives. He recommended that a headquarters be built in the capital city of Canberra as soon as possible. He went into detail in his report about what the building should look like, represent, and require to properly house archival documents: "It should be attractive in appearance, fine in quality and adequate size … a symbol and visible evidence of the institution's existence and importance."[52]

Although it was important to the archives to have a suitable national capital building, it is Lamb's next recommendation that relates to this thesis: "In addition to this headquarters building, the Archives will also require new records repositories both in Canberra and for its branches in several of its state capitals … all branch centres will also accumulate collections of records that will be retained permanently, and all will require comfortable if not extensive accommodation for researchers."[53] This recommendation was underscored when Lamb explained his views on the future roles of the centres and their potential holdings. Lamb made recommendations on the need for professional staff, the acquisition of private papers, and access to public records.

In 1974, after reviewing Lamb's report, the government promised that an Archives Act would be considered. In addition, as a result of the report, the Commonwealth Archives Office was renamed the Australian Archives and began to move toward the recommendations in the

---

[51] W. Kaye Lamb, *Development of the National Archives,* Report, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1974, pp. 6-10.
[52] Ibid., p. 13.
[53] Ibid., pp. 14-15

report.[54] A newly appointed Archives Director-General began to promote the archival records in their custody. He lobbied the government for more resources and tried to implement as many of Lamb's recommended changes as he could. Unfortunately, a recession took hold of the country and the changes that the Archives strived to attain had to be put on hold. This directly affected the building plans envisioned by the Australian Archives, both in the headquarters and the regions. The Villawood repository ended up costing the Archives $6 million dollars once it was completed. The reason for the high cost for that time is that the records repository in Villawood was built to preservation standards with temperature controls and a low-temperature vault for film and tape, as well as research and conference rooms.   This repository was built sparing few expenses but as a result, the national building in Canberra had to be delayed, as funding was inadequate for the vision of a new headquarters.[55]

In 1978, the *Freedom of Information Bill* and the *Archives Bill* were introduced to the Senate. These bills included clauses, which gave the Archives sole authorization to dispose and transfer Commonwealth records. This also meant that if someone altered or destroyed records without permission, they would face penalties. These recommendations became part of the *Archives Act* that was passed in 1983. This Act not only included the authorization to dispose of and transfer records, but also affirmed the public's right to access those records. "The Act also confirmed the Archives as the main adviser to agencies on keeping, evaluating, and disposing of their records. As the public service was decentralized and the Public Service Board abolished, the Archives was the only organization with the mandate and expertise to set standards for records management." In 1998 that the Australian Archives was renamed the National Archives of Australia.[56]

The current regional offices of the National Archives are located in Adelaide, Brisbane, Darwin, Hobart, Melbourne, Perth, and Sydney. Each of these regional offices hold records pertaining to their specific region, but some offices also specialize in holding a certain type of record. For example, in Adelaide, its small collection ranges from nineteenth-century colonial records to immigration and defence records of the twentieth century, while the regional office in Brisbane has immigration records from the 1850s in its holdings. Another interesting aspect of

---

[54] National Archives of Australia, "Our History".

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

the Australian regional archival offices is that the regional offices in Melbourne, Darwin, Adelaide, and Hobart share the facilities holding their records with their state or territorial archives: "In July 2013 co-location of the Darwin office of the National Archives of Australia with the Northern Territory Archives took place at the Milner site. The refurbished building, to be named the Northern Territory Archives Centre brings together the archives collections of both agencies, offering a shared Search and Reading Room and reference service to the public."[57]

Another interesting fact about the regional offices of the National Archives of Australia is that the National Archives is currently headquartered in Canberra, but many of the national government departments are not centralized there. Early in Australia's political history, the Commonwealth government was headquartered in Sydney and even though it is considered a regional office of the National Archives of Australia, the regional archival office in Sydney holds headquarters' records for departments that are still located there such as the Post Office, Labour, Civil Aviation, and Defence.[58]

One of the fundamental aspects of the Australian regional offices is their dedication to service. The National Archives of Australia has a Service Charter to ensure that they are giving the best service they can to the public. The charter states, "We strive for excellence in our service delivery and continue to raise awareness of the rich content in our collection and to aid access to that material. We contribute to the development of Australian culture by helping Australians better understand their heritage and democracy."[59] This charter also outlines the NAA's services to the public, which include access to the records, copies of the records, and reading rooms to review the records. Finally, the charter also gives a section on feedback from the researchers, which in turn, allows them to improve on how they provide services in their Archives.

---

[57] National Archives of Australia, "Location and Opening Hours".
https://web.archive.org/web/20150408043943/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/locations/index.aspx
(last accessed 13 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 8 April 2015).
21 Ibid.
[59] National Archives of Australia, "Service Charter"
https://web.archive.org/web/20150316173906/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/service-charter/index.aspx (last accessed 13 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 16 March 2015).

National Archives and Records Administration

Congress established the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), which opened in 1935, to preserve and make available the historical records of the federal government of the United States. This was the first time that these records were given a designated repository. Prior to this, records were scattered throughout the country: "Federal records were kept in various basements, attics, abandoned buildings, and other storage places with little security or concern for storage conditions."[60] When laying the cornerstone for it, President Herbert Hoover said of the building, "This temple of our history will appropriately be one of the most beautiful buildings in America, an expression of the American soul. It will be one of the most durable, an expression of the American character."[61] After the completion of the new archives building in 1935, the National Archives started shipping records to the building to be stored as soon as possible, starting with Veterans Administration records, which were at risk and required fumigation. The archives also received transfers of World War I records and U.S. Food administration records.

Shortly after this, the federal government decided to evaluate its archival records held across the nation. It started the Survey of Federal Archives in 1936, which was a Works Projects Administration project to look at records outside the national capital region while the National Archives focused on the records within Washington DC. The survey found historical records stored in very poor conditions. For example, the staff of the National Archives found War Department records in the White House garage.[62] This shows how badly the Federal Government had managed the care of its historical documents at this time, but the completion of the National Archives building and the survey were first steps in changing this situation.

---

[60] National Archives and Records Administration, "National Archives History" https://web.archive.org/web/20150315032501/http://www.archives.gov/about/history/ (last accessed 13 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 15 March 2015).

[61] National Archives and Records Administration, "A short history of the National Archives Building, Washington D.C." https://web.archive.org/web/20150318002322/https://www.archives.gov/about/history/building.html (last accessed 13 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 18 March 2015).

[62] Jessie Kratz, "The First Records," *Prologue* 49, no. 42 (Summer 2017) https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2017/summer/historian-first-records (last accessed 28 December 2020).

Another important change to the National Archives happened in 1949 when the *Federal Property and Administrations Act* was passed, which transferred the National Archives department to the General Services Administration. This meant that the government joined the responsibility for archival and current records into one department, which was now called the National Archives and Records Service. This was a very important change and shortly after this, the National Archives started to build records centres across the nation to store dormant federal government records. In 1950, the very first Federal Records Center was built in Brooklyn, New York. Within 5 years, 9 more centres were built across the United States and this number grew to a total of 19 record centres today.[63] This is just the federal records centres. Their staffs serve federal agencies by providing storage and retrieval services for them for dormant or little used records that for the most part are not designated as archival and to be transferred to the control of the archival staff. The National Archives also has regional archives and presidential libraries for a total of 44 different facilities for historical records across the nation.[64] Why does the National Archives administer presidential libraries? They are not libraries in the traditional sense. They are the repositories of the official and personal historical documents of past presidents. The presidential libraries preserve and provide access to these documents. They might be better described as presidential archives. They are located in a place associated with the birthplace and/or the home state of each president.[65]

Along with the federal records centres and presidential libraries. NARA's regional archival presence was really established with the creation of the regional archives:

> In 1969, the Archivist of the United States established a regional archives system to make regionally created, historically valuable federal records accessible to the public locally. Regional archives holdings document national, regional, state, and local activities and interests and offer national resources in a local setting. The regional archives serve anyone who needs historical information created or received by the federal government—historians, genealogists, lawyers, journalists, scholars, government officials, environmentalists, students and others. Through exhibits educational programs, lectures, and other special events, the regional archives also help people learn the importance of

---

[63] National Archives and Records Administration, "Historical Timeline: Congress Passes the Federal Records Act of 1950" https://www.archives.gov/about/history/timeline.html#event-/timeline/item/congress-passes-the-federal-records-act-of-1950 (last accessed 28 December 2020).

[64] James Worsham, "How the National Archives Evolved over 75 Years of Change and Challenges," National Archives and Records Administration, *Prologue* 41, no. 2 (Summer 2009).

[65] National Archives and Records Administration, "Research our Records" https://www.archives.gov/research/start/gather-information (last accessed 28 December 2020).

archival records for ensuring citizens' rights, teaching good citizenship, and protecting democracy through open and accountable government.[66]

The regional archives not only hold original records created in the region, but also microfilm copies of certain records held at the national archives headquarters in Washington DC, such as national census records that are mostly used by genealogists. This is done simply to provide access to documents located outside the region. Several of NARA's partners have digitized federal census records but as of 2020, not all are yet available to the public via NARA.[67]

Even though there are 44 different facilities administered by NARA including both records centres and regional archives, I will focus on the regional archives. As of 2005, there were 14 regional archives in the United States holding 650,000 cubic feet of records outside of the national capital, which encompasses nearly one quarter of the total holdings of NARA.[68] The majority of these regional archives share the same facility with the federal records centres. As the number of records acquired grew, so did the need to expand facilities or build new ones. Today there are currently 11 regional archives. There are two in California. One is in Riverside and the other is in San Francisco. There are regional archives in Denver, Atlanta, Chicago, Boston, Kansas City, New York City, Philadelphia, Fort Worth and Seattle.[69] There was a regional archives in Anchorage, but it was closed in 2014 and the records were moved to the regional archives in Seattle. In 2005, the regional archives in Atlanta, which is the largest regional archives of NARA, moved to a new state-of-the-art facility in Morrow, Georgia near Atlanta. This regional archives covers the southeast region of the country. After moving to the new facility, visitation to the regional archives quadrupled. It now has an exhibit area in the lobby and the community has worked with the archives, as well as their archival partners in the state and university archives to plan new programs and special events.[70]

---

[66] Lori Cox-Paul, "There's a NARA near you! Exploring the National Archives," *Prologue* 37, no. 3 (Fall 2005), https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2005/fall/regions.html (last accessed 1February 2018).

[67] National Archives and Records Administration, "Search Census Records Online and Other Resources" https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/census/online-resources (last accessed 14 December 2020).

[68] Ibid. In 1985 the National Archives and Records Service was moved from the General Services Administration by the National Archives and Records Administration Act of 1984 and was renamed the National Archives and Records Administration. As a separate agency, it is now a part of the executive branch of the US government.

[69] National Archives and Records Administration, "Historical Records Near You: Selected Guides and Research Aids for Archival Holdings at the Regional Archives". http://www.archives.gov/research/guides/regional-resource-aids.html (last accessed 14 April 2015).

[70] Cox-Paul, p. 6.

Comparison

The regional archives in Canada, the United States, and Australia all have one fundamental thing in common. They all want to provide access to historical federal government records. The fact is that each country provides the best service they can with the resources they have. They all have policy and procedure constraints, which hinder their levels of service. Each country may seem similar on the surface in providing access but each country has underlying differences that affect how it reaches the end result of service.

Looking at the history of each regional archive, one notices that each regional archival program has been affected by similar factors, such as World War I&II, The Great Depression, immigration, and issues facing their Indigenous citizens. These factors have created roughly similar types of historical records. All three nations also encountered a level of decentralization of their governments in a similar fashion at similar times as well. So if they are so similar in these areas, where do they differ and how do these differences affect the records in their custody, the buildings they reside in, and the services they provide?

In order to understand the differences, it is necessary to look at the nations as a whole. We have to look at when the national archives first came into existence for each country. National archives started in 1872 in Canada, 1934 in the United States, and 1944 in Australia. This does not mean that each nation only started collecting records at these times; it means that these national archives did not become units within their governments until this time. Records were still being kept, often haphazardly and in poor storage conditions, causing many losses, prior to these dates but these governments did not yet feel the need for a central national archival institution as such.

It is also important to analyze what each country holds in their regional archives. For the United States, the regional archives hold a vast array of material that differs from one regional archives to another. The western regional archives have a large number of Chinese immigration records, the central archives have Native American records, and the eastern archives have Navy, and Passenger arrival records. According to Lori Cox-Paul, NARA's Regional Archives do not hold private records but do hold government records relating to some of America's most famous

people such as the military service records of Elvis Presley and Richard Nixon in St. Louis and criminal records of Buffalo Bill Cody and Billy the Kid in Denver.[71]

In Canada, the regional archives only hold historical federal government records in Vancouver (INAC records only) and Winnipeg, which also holds the federal government personnel records from across the nation and military personnel records from those who served in the Canadian military after 1945. Private records of national significance donated to Library and Archives Canada, such as the private collection of author Gabrielle Roy, who was born in St. Boniface, Manitoba, are sent to the national headquarters in Ottawa. Her private collection was sent to Ottawa even though there is a regional archive facility in Winnipeg, Manitoba.[72] As of this writing, it is not part of the regional mandate of Library and Archives Canada to hold private records in the regions. This is unfortunate since resources for acquisition of private archives among government archives in Canada are under pressure given the growing need over the last fifty years to archive the records of their state sponsors. Those archives that still do emphasize private archives, university archives serving their regions, in particular, are not capable of handling this challenge alone. LAC could counter the trend away from private archives activities and support that part of its mandate and local historical research by providing room for private records created in the regions to stay there in its regional offices.

Donors of private archives may well want their private records to remain in their own possession and yet find few local archives able to acquire them. An example of this can be seen in an article by Edward Laine in *Archivaria,* in which he discusses the history of Finnish-Canadian archives. He notes the strong archival tradition in this widely scattered Canadian community and yet its inability to sustain its own archival repository for its records and the lack of sufficient local archives able to take over this work and responsibility. Thus larger central archives such as LAC and the Multicultural History Society Archives of Ontario in Toronto have stepped in to do so.[73]

The National Archives of Australia also has a limited amount of private records and the private records it has, usually relate to private individual's interactions with the federal

---

[71] Ibid.

[72] Library and Archives of Canada, "Gabrielle Roy" lac-bac.gc.ca [archived website] http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/lac-bac/gabrielle_roy-ef/www.lac-bac.gc.ca/2/7/index-e.html (last accessed 14 April 2015).

[73] Edward W. Laine, "'Kallista Perintöä–Precious Legacy!': Finnish-Canadian Archives, 1882-1985," *Archivaria* 22 (Summer 1986): 77.

government. They have a small listing of records about famous Australians held at the national archives, such as Jessie Street who was a human rights campaigner, and Dhakiyarr Wirrpanda who was the first Aboriginal person in Australia to have a case heard in high court.[74] The few private records the NAA has are only held at its headquarters.

All three nations hold archival government records in their regional archives from the same or very similar department names with similar functions. For instance, all three nations have defence records, Indian/Aboriginal affairs records and immigration records just to name a few. The difference comes with the arrangement of these records from each nation. LAC arranges its records under the fonds system while the United States arranges its records using the record group system, and Australia arranges its records by the series system. Each system is similar in the sense that it aims to apply the central archival principle of provenance, or the idea that archival records must be arranged and described in accordance with knowledge of their creators' identities and actions. This affects how researchers access and understand them as historical evidence.

A fonds is "The whole of the documents, regardless of form or medium, automatically and organically created and/or accumulated and used by a particular individual, family, or corporate body in the course of that creator's activities or functions."[75] So for LAC, the records are arranged at the highest possible level of description, which is normally a department such as Agriculture Canada. The series is "A subdivision of a fonds maintained as an entity because the documents relate to a particular function or subject, result from the same activity, have a particular form, or because of some other relationship arising out of the circumstances of their creation or use."[76] These records of functions, subjects and forms are often brought together in recordkeeping (or filing) systems, called series. In Australia, arrangement and description is based on such recordkeeping systems rather than fonds, although all of the series of a given creator amount to all of its records and thus its fonds. At NARA, "A record group consists, as a rule, of the documentation produced by an administrative unit at the bureau level of the

---

[74] National Archives of Australia, "Uncommon Lives" https://web.archive.org/web/20150403213915/http://uncommonlives.naa.gov.au/index.aspx (last accessed 14 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 3 April 2015).

[75] Bureau of Canadian Archivists, *Rules for Archival Description*, revised version (2008), http://www.cdncouncilarchives.ca/rad/radcomplete_july2008.pdf (hereafter cited as RAD), Appendix D, D-5 (last accessed 29 December 2020).

[76] Ibid.

Government... however, the record groups embrace all governmental agencies from which records have been accessioned."[77] These different systems of arrangement are important to a researcher, as they must know how something about them to find subject matter related to their research and to understand the context in which it was created.

Another important difference and some similarity in the regional archives of each nation has to do with policies affecting access to their holdings. Researchers in each country must navigate laws governing access to information in government records. This has become an important part of the archival landscape since the 1960s. Canada and Australia have privacy acts to protect their citizens' personal information in government records. The United States does not. The United States, however, was among the first countries to pass a law governing access to information -- the *Freedom of Information Act* of 1966. This act gives American citizens the right of access to federal government records if the records do not fall under the nine statutory exemptions. Canada also has the *Access to Information Act*, which grants Canadians (in principle) a right of access to such information but also governs what information may be made available. For example, the *Access to Information Act* limits access to government records that may contain still confidential national security information. Australia is somewhat different in that the Archives Act gives Australian citizens access to government records 20 years after their creation, with very few exceptions. Under the *Archives Act*, the archives is required to release as much information as possible.[78]

In examining access to regional archives in each nation, we must consider how researchers would access these archives. The first point of access for each nation is its national archives' main institutional website. The websites for each national archives are similar in that they give access to their holdings from the main page. It is understood that websites are ever changing. This thesis will cite an original research date of the websites in 2015 and the updated websites to 2020. In 2015, the following was how researchers found regional holdings at these sites, which contrasts with how researchers would navigate the websites today. For the United

---

[77] Theodore R. Schellenberg, "Archives and Records Management Resources" National Archives and Records Administration, Archives Library Information Center, Staff Information Paper Number 18 (1951) http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/archives-resources/principles-of-arrangement.html (last accessed 29 December 2020).

[78] National Archives of Australia, "Access to Records under the Archives Act" https://www.naa.gov.au/help-your-research/using-collection/access-records-under-archives-act (last accessed on 29 December 2020).

States, the holdings were accessed from the "Research our Records" link on NARA's website. For Australia, the holdings were accessed from the "The Collection" link on NAA's website. For Canada, the collection was accessed from the "Search the Collection" link on LAC's website. These all looked to be very helpful to the researchers searching for records held at the national headquarters. The problem was in providing information for researchers doing research in the regions. The National Archives and Records Administration was the best of the three. On its main page, as one of the primary selections, was "Our Locations". Clicking on this link brought you to a webpage listing all the facilities administered by NARA across the United States and each regional archive had its own website linked to this page with all kinds of information on the regional archives. For example, the regional archives in Seattle had a standalone webpage with staff contacts, hours, exhibits, ongoing projects, and links to all kinds of helpful research information, which was wonderful for researchers.[79]

In 2015, it was slightly more difficult to access the regional archives of the National Archives of Australia. There was no direct link to its regional archives. Researchers had to drill down by either the "About Us" link or the "Visit Us" link. For the "Visit Us" link, they clicked "Visit Us" then "Reading Rooms" then "Our Hours". For the "About Us" link, they had to click on "About Us", then "Our Organization", then "Location and Opening Hours". Both paths brought them to a list of the regional archives of the National Archives of Australia. Each regional archive had its own webpage giving the location of the archives, the hours, and a synopsis of their collection, which again, was wonderful to researchers but it is a little harder to get to the regional archives page.[80]

In 2015, Library and Archives Canada did not have a direct link to its regional archives on its main page. It was difficult to access any documentation in the regional archives. Researchers could have accessed their regional archives page in two very indirect ways. They could click on "Copies & Visiting", then "Consult and Borrow Material", then click on "Government Records Accessible outside of Ottawa." The other way to access the regional archives page was by clicking "Services and Programs", then "Public Services A-Z", and again

---

[79] National Archives and Records Administration, "National Archives at Seattle" https://web.archive.org/web/20150329050504/http://www.archives.gov/seattle (last accessed 14 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 29 March 2015).

[80] National Archives of Australia, "Location and Opening Hours" https://web.archive.org/web/20150408043943/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/locations/index.aspx (last accessed 13 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 8 April 2015).

clicking on "Government Records Accessible outside of Ottawa". Both of these paths brought you to the regional archives page of Library and Archives Canada. Unfortunately, the information on this single page for all the regional archives was extremely limited and badly outdated. The page was last updated on 13 August 2012.[81] The page in question listed the three regional archives of Library and Archives Canada on the same page with generic contact information and hours of service listed. The page was outdated as it states that users cannot conduct research in the Halifax office. In fact, research had been possible in the Halifax office since 2009, 3 years prior to the last update to the website.

Since 2015, the websites for these three national archives pertaining to their regional offices and holdings have changed. By September 2020, the following changes had occurred. For the United States, the only change in the past four years to NARA's website access to its regional offices was renaming the link from "Our Locations" to "Visit us". Clicking on this link brought you to a website listing all NARA's national network of facilities, which includes research facilities, federal records centres, and presidential libraries. NARA's collections are still accessed with the "Research our Records" link.

For Australia, the NAA website underwent major changes in its overall look and links. The link for the collections was renamed from "The Collection" to "Explore the Collection". In order to find NAA's regional offices, you only have to click on "Visit Us" on the main page, then "Our Locations", which will send you to a link listing all the NAA's current eight regional research centres.

For Library and Archives Canada, the website has also undergone major changes but you still access its collections from the "Search the Collection" link. There is a new collection search tool that is currently in Beta testing at the time of this writing, to help researchers access collections a great deal easier. Accessing the regional service centres from the LAC website has been made a lot easier now, as you only need to access the "Service for the Public" drop-down menu, and then click on the "Service Points outside of Ottawa" link. This will bring you to a new page listing the three current regional service centres. This website now lists their locations, hours and an overview of the collections and/or the services they provide.

---

[81] Library and Archives of Canada, "Government Records Accessible outside of Ottawa" https://web.archive.org/web/20150427004757/http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/the-public/005-3050-e.html (last accessed 24 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 27 April 2015).

Along with the websites, NARA's regional archives also have other online access points. For example, the regional archives in Seattle also has a Facebook page.[82] Each NAA regional archive in Australia has links on its own webpage to Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, and dozens of other applications.[83] Unfortunately, there is no standalone regional archival presence on any social network for Library and Archives Canada. If there is something that involves a regional archive of LAC, it is sent via the national headquarters social networks.

Onsite access to the regional archives in these three countries is partially dependent on the website but not entirely. It is possible to contact some regional archives to do research by looking them up in the phonebook and calling the office directly. The one thing all regional archives in each nation have in common is the requirement that researchers make an appointment to visit the office. The records of the regional offices have to be selected for retrieval prior to each visit unless the researcher is only interested in looking at listings of the collections. Another thing that NARA and the NAA have in common is that each regional archive is a microcosm of the national institution. They have to provide the same or similar services as those that are provided in the headquarters. Regional archives have limited staff and require employees who can multitask. Not only do they have to provide reference services, but they also have to acquire the record, arrange and describe the regional archival record, and review the record to provide access to the researchers. They also have to supervise the researchers during their visit and provide assistance on the spot when needed as well as completing their day-to-day activities. Upon the completion of the research, the regional archives also provide reprography services for the researchers for a minimal cost.

The National Archives of Australia has a Service Charter that its staff must follow in providing services to the public. The charter defines the role of the National Archives of Australia:

- helps Australian Government agencies create and manage their records

---

[82] Facebook, "National Archives at Seattle" https://web.archive.org/web/20150721015338/https://www.facebook.com/nationalarchivesseattle (last accessed 14 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 21 July 2015).
[83] National Archives of Australia, "Adelaide Office" https://web.archive.org/web/20150316202746/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/locations/adelaide.aspx (last accessed 14 April 2015, Internet Archive snapshot 16 March 2015).

- selects the most valuable records created by Australian Government agencies to become part of the national archival collection
- stores, describes and preserves the national archival collection

The Service Charter also lists the services the NAA provides on its website as well:

- find out about our collection, services, events and exhibitions
- search for records in the collection using our databases
- request records be cleared for public release
- view digital images of records
- order and pay for print copies or online digital copies of records
- send us an inquiry about records in our collection
- view or order copies of our publications
- listen to audio of selected events at the National Archives.

The Service Charter also mentions that the staff is available to help assist researchers find a record by responding to any reference inquiry within 30 days of submission. It also mentions that staff will review requests for access to records, notify the researcher of the decision, and give a rationale for the decision no more than 90 days after the initial request. Another important part of the charter is that it mentions the provision for providing copies of requested records in several different formats. Finally, the charter mentions giving access to original records in reading rooms in a private and confidential manner. The most interesting part of the charter is that it states that in the cities of Brisbane, Sydney, Hobart, Perth, and Darwin, open records requested by a researcher will be made available within 90 minutes of ordering the record. [84] This is not the case in all the regional archives of Australia but is still a substantial promise to make in writing.

At Library and Archives Canada's headquarters in Ottawa, there is no promise of retrieval time, just a mention that retrieval of documents usually takes between 24 to 48 hours. There is no regional archive retrieval standard in LAC but for the regional archives, in Winnipeg for example, the entire collection of archival records is within feet of the consultation room and is usually provided the day of a request if access to the records is unrestricted.

---

[84] NAA, "Service Charter".

There is no service standard for the regional archives of NARA but under the FAQ's of the regional archives of Seattle, it is said that records must be requested before 3 PM, which gives the impression that since the regional archives in Seattle closes at 4 PM the records would be available to the researcher within the hour. That is even faster than that listed by the NAA charter but it is not an official promise to the researcher about accessing the records.

With the move to acquiring and providing access to born-digital records, what role will the regional archive play in the national archives of these countries? I will focus on the effects digital archives are having and will be having on the regional archives. The one thing that should not change for the regional archives is their common mandate that records created in the regions will remain in the regions where they have been created.

For NARA, digitization of its records has been going on for years and it embraces online access to these records from all of its regional archives, which is evident on the websites. As described in their 2018 Strategic Plan, NARA as a whole had over 235 million pages of digitized records but only 15 percent of them are currently available to the public.[85] The regional archives now not only provide access to their own records in their collection, but also can provide access to similar records held at NARA headquarters, which are digitized. This is exactly the same view of the regional archives in the NAA because the regional archives will always have their regional collections and supplement these collections with those similar digitized records at their headquarters.[86]

Currently for LAC, visions of digital archiving are only focused on the headquarters at this writing: there have been no transfers of born-digital government records to Library and Archives Canada in the regions. If there are born-digital records in the regions, they are directly transferred to LAC's headquarters and are not kept in the regions. There are digitization projects of select archival records in the custody of LAC but no records in the regions are being digitized at this time. Digitization in the regions only involves providing duplicates to clients requesting personal copies of documents. Any archival quality digitization of select analog records in LAC custody is only being done at the headquarters at this time.

---

[85] National Archives and Records Administration, "Strategic Plan 2018-2022," (February 2018), https://www.archives.gov/about/plans-reports/strategic-plan/strategic-plan-2018-2022 (last accessed 29 December 2020).

[86] National Archives of Australia, "Research Centres" https://www.naa.gov.au/help-your-research/research-centres (last accessed 29 December 2020).

There is a proposed physical change in the way the regional archives will conduct their business in the future in the LAC. In the guidelines for information management by the LAC, the policy position on "Digital by 2017" states that born-digital records created after 1 April 2017 by government departments will be transferred to the LAC digitally. Analog records with archival value created before then will be accepted by the LAC. Analog records created after that date will still be accepted by the LAC but only if they are the official records being used by the departments. Analog records with intrinsic value such as treaties and maps, even if digitized, will be transferred to the LAC in their original format. These transfers will most likely still be directly to the national headquarters, circumventing the regional offices. But that is not to say that the regional offices will not have access to the digitized records to provide to clients, and if the records are not open and available online, could review they the records according to ATIP in the regions.[87]

I believe that the largest factor affecting the national presence of the national archives for these three nations is the government that is in power and its views on national heritage. For Canada, there are three major national parties, the New Democratic Party (NDP), Liberals, and Conservatives. They have different views on how to govern the country, which include their views on the importance of government programs and how and where to allocate or withdraw resources. For example, in 2012, the Conservative government led by Stephen Harper made a drastic budget cut, which greatly affected Library and Archives Canada. Four hundred and fifty staff from the LAC received notices that they would either have to re-apply for their jobs, if they were still available or take early retirement. With the cut came a loss of 215 jobs, a total of 20 percent of its workforce and as mentioned earlier the first closure of a regional Federal Records Centre, in Edmonton. The budget cuts cascaded into a reduction in the services LAC provided with a reduction in onsite reference service hours, cancellations of community projects, interlibrary loans, and the withdrawal of LAC funding for the Canadian Council of Archives. There was also a 10 month moratorium on purchasing any archival documentation, which meant that historical documents that represent Canadian history, such as works from world renound Canadian writers and painter, that should be with the Library and Archives Canada can be and

---

[87] Library and Archives Canada, "Policy on Making Holdings Available" https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/policy/Pages/policy-making-holdings-available.aspx (last accessed 29 December 2020).

were purchased by other institutions, some outside of Canada.[88] This drastic budget cut was felt entirely by the Library and Archives Canada workforce in Ottawa and the regional archival staff were completely unaffected. The closure of the Prairie and Northern Regional Service Centre in Edmonton was just the start of the job losses for regional LAC staff, which continued through the years with the additional Regional Record Centre closures.

In the United States, budget cuts led to the closure of NARA's federal records center in Anchorage, Alaska in 2014 and the move of its records to Seattle. Another example is provided by the Republican administration under President Trump. It decided to close NARA's facility in Seattle, which houses federal government records created in the Pacific Northwest, including, now, Alaska. The current Washington State Attorney General, Bob Ferguson, along with countless others are fighting this proposed closure. Ferguson said that he would "weigh legal action to keep the warehouse full of historic photos, documents and maps related to federal government activities in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Alaska right where it is." He kept his word by filing a lawsuit against three of the four federal departments involved in the decision to close the facility and that did not respond to his request for documentation on the closure: NARA, the White House office of Management and Budget, and the General Services Administration. Ferguson did not file a lawsuit against the fourth department, the Public Buildings Reform Board, as it did respond but stated that it would charge $65,000 to redact the requested documents.[89] The Seattle regional archive remains open at the moment but is still scheduled to close at a date to be determined.[90]

Australia too has an example of a threat to NAA regional archives. In 2010, the federal government led by former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd decided to close the NAA's regional offices in Adelaide, Darwin, and Hobart to save money. This created several protests against this action. The Australian Society of Archivists (ASA) opposed the closure of these offices. For the office in Adelaide, the president of the ASA, Jackie Bettington, stated, "It is highly ironic that this is taking place at a time when the NAA is focusing on family history and encouraging

---

[88] Myron Groover, "The Wrecking of Canada's Library and Archives." *The Tylee* 7 June, 2012. https://thetyee.ca/Opinion/2012/06/07/LibraryCuts/ (last accessed December 29th, 2020)

[89] Feliks Banel, "After numerous 'red flags' AG Ferguson sues Federal Agencies over Seattle National Archives facility," *MyNorthWest* (18 August 2020): https://mynorthwest.com/2096964/wa-ag-ferguson-seattle-national-archives-lawsuit-filed/   (last accessed 29 December 2020).

[90] National Archives and Records Administration, "Seattle Facility Approved for Closure", *Press Release,* 27 January 2020 https://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2020/nr20-37 (last accessed 28 September 2020).

South Australians to shake their family tree and visit the Adelaide office to look at original records. All I can say is that you'll need to get in now while the records of South Australia remain in South Australia."[91] The Australian Society of Archivists planned a protest rally on 23 February 2010.[92] The protests and backlash from the community worked as the government decided that the regional offices would not be closed but would be moved to joint facilities with the particular state and territorial archives in their areas. In response to the protest, the Senator Joe Ludwig from Queensland wrote to the chairman of the National Archives Advisory council on 22 February, the day before the planned rally stating:

> Tomorrow I will be announcing that the Australian Government has responded to community concerns about the proposed closure of NAA's Darwin, Adelaide and Hobart offices, and will guarantee that a physical NAA presence will be maintained in every state and territory. Instead of simply closing the NAA's smaller regional offices, the Government will pursue a plan to join forces and co-locate with local institutions. The stand-alone NAA offices in Darwin, Adelaide and Hobart will remain open until a permanent solution involving co-location with a local organization, or an alternative arrangement which meets the needs of local users, has been found. I have discussed the details of the Government's expectations with the Director-General, Mr. Ross Gibbs PSM. As you would be aware the Government agreed to a savings proposal from NAA to close the Darwin, Adelaide and Hobart offices and this decision was announced in the Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook in November 2009. This measure will be reversed, but any savings achieved by entering into co-location arrangements must be returned to the budget in the future.[93]

Bettington responded to the statement by saying, "We applaud the announcement today that the National Archives of Australia (NAA) will be retaining a presence in Darwin, Adelaide and Hobart. This has come as a result of significant pressure from the public, archivists, politicians (of all political persuasions), academics, journalists, and historians. This is a real reminder to all governments across Australia that Archives do indeed matter."[94] Senator Ludwig's official statement shows how much the regional presence matters: "I understand the importance of maintaining a National Archives presence at a state and territory level – after all,

---

[91] Australian Society of Archivists Media Release 22 February 2010, *Protest against SA history leaving State,* ASA Archives, Noel Butlin Centre, Canberra/Australia. Author requested and received copy of letter from ASA Archives library from ASA member as email on 6 December 2016.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Special Minister of State and Cabinet Secretary, Senator the Hon. Joe Ludwig, Letter to Mr. Paul Santamarina S.C., chairman, National Archives of Australia Advisory Council, dated 22 February 2010.
[94] Australian Society of Archivists "Protest against SA history leaving State".

that's where Australia's history emerged. The Rudd Government has listened to the concerns of the local community, academics, researchers and other interested groups over the proposed closure of National Archives offices."[95] Senator Ludwig also acknowledged that the decision was directly related to the protests and concerns of the citizens and reassured that access to the records would not be hindered: "National Archives repositories around the country hold many records containing important information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their history. I would like to particularly emphasize the fact that the government will not change existing access arrangements for records relating to the separation policies imposed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; these arrangements were strengthened in response to the landmark 1997 Bringing Them Home report on the separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families."[96]

As transcontinental nations, national archives in Canada, Australia, and the United States have established regional offices across their territories. Australia and the United States did so long before Canada and have more regional offices by far than Canada's LAC. That may be understandable for the United States whose population is about ten times greater than Canada's, but is less so for Australia whose population is much less than Canada's. Canada has been marked in comparison with these two countries by the high degree of centralization of LAC's operations in Ottawa. It may be fair to say that no other Canadian government agency with a national public service mandate has been as centralized as LAC.

LAC in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries seemed to be moving in the direction of a greater regional presence with offices it established in Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Halifax that performed all archival functions with records created in their respective regions. But LAC has reduced the number of records centres it once had and restructured the three regional archival offices it has. The Halifax and Vancouver offices have been given a more visible public service mandate but have lost a role in performing other archival functions such as appraisal of federal government records in their regions and federal records they stored have been removed from Halifax and Vancouver (except for certain Indigenous affairs records) to Ottawa. Winnipeg retains a large volume of regional records and most archival functions with them. The Australian

---

[95] Special Minister of State and Cabinet Secretary, Senator the Hon. Joe Ludwig, "Ensuring access to Australia's National Archives," *Statement*, 23 February 2010.
[96] Ibid.

and American examples of regional archives, though not without their own setbacks and ongoing challenges, as outlined above, offer attractive models for successful regionalization that LAC could well move toward.

Conclusion

With the emergence of digital archives, why is a physical regional archives still relevant and fundamental to a nation and its citizens, if everything will be digital and can be accessed online? The simple answer is that although fewer records may well be created in analog form as we move deeper into the digital communications era, many records will still only be created and kept in analog form, both public and private. Also, the existing massive holdings of analog records will be with us for decades to come. It goes without saying that digitizing all of these records is not in the least feasible. Digitization will not even come close to accomplishing the reformatting of the vast volume of analog records. Thus, archives will always have analog records, such as those in regional centres such as LAC's. As digital archives technologies mature, access to them may well be straightforward from regional centres. The rationale for the service needed to support access to analog regional records at these centres will be the same for regional digital records.

Also at the core of this thesis is the idea that regional archives do not just provide basic access to their records. They have the specialized knowledge of regional records gained through relationships with regional government offices, appraisal, description, and reference work, for example, that helps researchers navigate through the masses of records. This expertise will be as relevant to work with born-digital regional records as it now is with their analog counterparts. Centralized preservation of born-digital regional records may well make sense, but that does not mean that regional expertise with them for all archival functions is no longer needed. And regional archivists are there to guide local researchers to other records in the national archives in all media, including digital. Their work is not simply focused on regional records in their areas but on the relationship between them and other records, both government and non-government records. The archivists of today are no longer just custodians of their documents. They are also there to share their knowledge of their collection and, in this case, of the federal agencies and regional and national historical information relevant to regional records.

The archivist in the regional archives has become the epitome of the jack-of-all-trades archivist. While archivists in national headquarters of a national archives usually specialize in a certain function, such as appraisal, the regional archivist does not have that luxury. Depending on the regional archival staff complement, these archivists may have to do appraisal and

descriptive work, be reference archivists assisting researchers onsite and by mail and telephone, review access and privacy legislation governing the records, retrieve documents, provide copies of them, and attend to their technical preservation requirements. They also have to manage relationships with regional agencies and physical acquisition transfers of records from them, arrange records in application of the concept of provenance, and ensure the authorized destruction of non-archival documents as well. For several years, the regional archives of the LAC in Winnipeg was staffed by a sole archivist who had to complete all of the tasks listed above on his own, which was remarkable to say the least.

A national archival presence for a national archives in Canada, Australia, and the United States -- and in fact, around the world -- is a necessity in today's archival world as regional offices provide a much-needed service for their citizens. It may seem that a centralized archive is an easy way to ensure that the resources of a national archives are best utilized to provide one glorious monument to national history. For many geographically small nations, this may be a reasonable approach. For these small nations, it may offer financial advantages. Unfortunately, in large countries such as Canada, Australia, and the United States, access to archival materials created outside the national capital would suffer. There is no reason to think that the longstanding pattern of considerable decentralization and spread of government offices across Canada will decline. The pressure to maintain and increase regional bases of operations will only grow. This means that an expanded LAC regional presence is required. This thesis argues that a proper balance in the allocation of resources between national archives and their regional offices would be the most efficient manner of creating a truly accessible national archives for all its citizens.

In recent years, regional presences for national archives have been problematic due to constant budget reductions, changing visions and procedures, changes in governments in power, and the move to digitization and born-digital records. Maintaining the national presence of national archives has meant struggling to keep pace with dramatic changes in archives. Trying to balance budgets, allocate proper resources while providing and maintaining service standards has been difficult, not only in Canada but in the United States, Australia, and probably, the rest of the world. For example, in the United States, there was a regional office of NARA in Anchorage, Alaska, but in 2014 it was closed and its records moved to the regional office in

Seattle[97]. This was not received well by the citizens of Alaska and created a lot of negative press. News of the closure spread "like wildfire" among Anchorage historians and researchers, said Katie Ringsmuth, an adjunct professor at the University of Alaska in Anchorage and the president of the Alaska Historical Society. "It's just hard to put into words what a loss this would be to us," she said. "It would be devastating," she added, "to see that national archives and all of the treasures that it holds, and those firsthand experiences of our past, disappear."[98] Alaskans were told that the records would be digitized in Seattle and made available to them online. This sounds simple to say but to digitize the near 12,000 linear feet of documents transferred from Anchorage to Seattle could not be done overnight. In fact, it was stated in January 2020 by Susan Karren, the director of the NARA Seattle regional office, that it has been digitizing its historical records but still only .001 percent of them have been digitized.[99] This includes the records already held by the Seattle facility prior to the transfer of records from Alaska but still shows that digitizing their complete holdings is a pipe dream. This is especially so with the kind of continuing lack of resources and budget reductions that the closure of the Alaska office indicates.

With the move of records from Anchorage to Seattle, it was thought that Seattle would become the centre for archival holdings of US government records in the Pacific Northwest. But in January 2020, NARA announced the closure of the Seattle facility. NARA stated that the closure is not imminent and it may take up to 18 months to sell the facility and that it plans to stay three additional years in the facility after the sale. It also offered digitization of these records as consolation: "Some of their most popular records have been digitized and are available online" and "We are planning to expand our digitization efforts to make more records available free of charge and regardless of location."[100] Yet, as mentioned above, the statement of the director of the Seattle facility that only .001 percent of its holdings have been digitized raises

---

[97] National Archives and Records Administration, *FRC Communication Memos to Agency Records Officers* https://www.archives.gov/frc/communications-archives/2014/frc-01-2014 (last accessed 28 September 2020).

[98] "National Archives Plans closure of Anchorage Facility" *Anchorage Daily News* (10 March 2014), https://www.adn.com/anchorage/article/national-archives-plans-closure-anchorage-facility/2014/03/11/ (last accessed 28 September 2020).

[99] Eric Lacitis, "Decision to close National Archives at Seattle deals a blow, to tribes, historians in Pacific NW and Alaska," *Anchorage Daily News* (25 January 2020) https://www.adn.com/nation-world/2020/01/26/decision-to-close-national-archives-at-seattle-deals-a-blow-to-tribes-historians-in-pacific-nw-and-alaska/ (last accessed 29 December 2020).

[100] National Archives and Records Administration, "Seattle Facility Approved for Closure" *Press Release.*

serious questions about whether that is anything close to a suitable substitute for the full service the regional office provides. Again, like the closure of the Anchorage office, the closure of the Seattle facility has caused an uproar in several communities in the Pacific Northwest, with the Indigenous and archival communities at the forefront.

Similarly in Canada, the same can be said of what happened to the Regional office of the Library and Archives in Vancouver in 2016. The announcement of the closure of the Regional Service Centre and that all records were to be moved to Ottawa, created a major problem, especially with the Indigenous communities and those using Indigenous records in BC. Due to the input from regional representatives, mainly from the BC Indigenous organizations, the LAC determined that it would be best for all Canadians to maintain its AANDC holdings in Vancouver following the closure of the Regional Service Centre in the region. This would amount to approximately 4500 linear feet of AANDC records.[101] This meant that the regional office of the LAC in Vancouver would keep its AANDC records and still be able to move to a more direct service-oriented office for the people of BC. As Librarian and Archivist of Canada Guy Berthiaume explained in October 2016, "Having a significant footprint on the West Coast is a priority for Library and Archives Canada and this new partnership represents an exciting opportunity. It will allow us to offer greatly enhanced in-person services thanks to this collaboration with the Vancouver Public Library, an institution renowned for being at the cutting-edge of innovation."[102]

The travails of some of the Canadian, Australian and American national archives regional offices are a warning about how vulnerable regional offices can be. The push back against these threats (with some success in Australia at least, so far) shows how important these offices are to people in these regions. And at the same time the Australian and American regional offices also offer a welcome example of what thriving regional offices can offer. They are full-service branches of their national archives. As such they also do much more public service and outreach and have much higher public profiles than LAC's regional offices and operations have had over the nearly 150 years of LAC's history. Although LAC clearly recognizes the great volume and

---

[101] Library and Archives Canada, *Regional Services - Points to Register,* LAC's internal Collaboration Portal.
[102] Guy Berthiaume, *Library and Archives Canada to offer its public services from a new service point in Vancouver,* 5 October 2016. Government of Canada website: https://www.canada.ca/en/library-archives/news/2016/10/library-archives-canada-offer-public-services-new-service-point-vancouver.html (last accessed 21 October 2020).

distinct nature of regional federal government records (as records not simply duplicated in holdings in Ottawa), LAC's commitment to regional archival offices remains limited by comparison with Australia and the United States. The latter two countries have seven (Australia) and twelve (NARA) regional archives offices (not counting NARA's Presidential Libraries). LAC has three regional archival offices. LAC's legislated mandate is to "be a source of enduring knowledge accessible to all, contributing to the cultural, social and economic advancement of Canada as a free and democratic society." For LAC to fulfil this obligation, it must have a national presence through full service regional offices that are highly visible and well integrated into their regional communities. LAC could have at least as many regional offices as the NAA, which has seven. There is no reason why they could not be full-service offices, with regional records (both of government and non-government origin) preserved onsite, and not just public service access points. Countless numbers of Canadians who cannot travel to Ottawa would thereby be better served. Indigenous Canadians in particular have a great need for access to their records, as the retention of such records in the Vancouver office indicates. Why not then similar service for other Indigenous Canadians in other regions? To ensure that Canada's national archive is accessible by all, it must have this national presence. The digital era, with the expanded research and public interest in more accessible archives that it promises, requires it, rather than makes it superfluous.

Bibliography

Atherton, Jay. "The Origins of the Public Archives Records Centre, 1897-1956." *Archivaria* 8 (Summer 1979).

Feliks Banel, "After numerous "red flags" AG Ferguson sues Federal Agencies over Seattle National Archives facility," *MyNorthWest* August 18, 2020 MyNorthwest website: https://mynorthwest.com/2096964/wa-ag-ferguson-seattle-national-archives-lawsuit-filed/ (accessed December 29, 2020).

Bannon, J. C. "Battling the Bureaucrats: Access to the National Archives." *The Flinders Journal of History and Politics* 26 (2010).

Bureau of Canadian Archivists, Rules for Archival Description, revised version (2008), Canadian Council of Archives website: http://www.cdncouncilarchives.ca/rad/radcomplete_july2008.pdf (hereafter cited as RAD), Appendix D, D-5 (accessed December 29, 2020)

Canada. *The Royal Commission on Government Organisation*. J. Grant Glassco, chairman, F. Eugène Therrien, and Watson Sellar, Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1962-1963.

Council of Australian Archives and Records Authorities. "Policy 15, Models for the distributed custody and management of government archival records. Adopted: 16 March 2006." http://www.caara.org.au/index.php/policy-statements/models-for-the-distributed-custody-and-management-of-government-archival-records/ (accessed February 1, 2018).

Cox-Paul, Lori. "There is a NARA Near You! Exploring the Regional Archives." *Prologue Magazine* 37, no. 3 (Fall 2015). https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2005/fall/regions.html (accessed February 1, 2018).

Cook, Terry. "Archival Records in the Regions: Options for Immediate Action – Report for Senior Management Committee." Central Records File 9135-1, Vol. 1. Library and Archives Canada. 28 February 1988.

Cook, Terry. "Commentary, Indian Legacy, Aboriginal Future" *The Archivist* No. 112, 1996.

Cook, Terry. "Paper Trails: A Study in Northern Records and Northern Administration, 1898-1958." In *Canadian Archival Studies and the Rediscovery of Provenance*, ed. Tom Nesmith. Chicago: The Scarecrow Press, 1993.

Cook, Terry et. al.. "The Archival Legacy of the Department of the Interior." a special supplement of *Archivaria* 25 (Winter 1987-88).

Corbett, Brian and Eldon Frost. "The Acquisition of Federal Government Records: A Report on Records Management and Archival Practices" *Archivaria* 17 (Winter 1983-1984)

Darcy, Sean. "The Evolution of the Department of Indian Affairs' Central Registry Record-Keeping Systems: 1872-1984," <u>Archivaria</u> 58 (2004)

Dever, Gail. "LAC's Atlantic office moving to Pier 21." Genealogy à la carte. (blog) posted April 19, 2016). http://genealogyalacarte.ca/?p=14032 (accessed February 5, 2018)

Dever, Gail. "LAC officially opens at Pier 21 in Halifax — and 'Signatures' magazine" Genealogy à la carte. (blog) posted June 23, 2017. http://genealogyalacarte.ca/?p=19769

Dever, Gail. "Former Prime Minister Kim Campbell attends opening of LAC office in Vancouver." (blog) posted November 10, 2017. http://genealogyalacarte.ca/?p=21482

Dozois, Paulette. "Beyond Ottawa's Reach: The Federal Acquisition of Regional Government Records." *Archivaria* 33 (1991-1992).

Eastwood, Terry. "Reflections on the Development of Archives in Canada and Australia." *In Archival Documents: Providing Accountability Through Record Keeping*. ed. Sue McKemmish and Frank Upward. Melbourne: Ancora Press, 1993.

Facebook, "National Archives at Seattle," facebook.com https://web.archive.org/web/20150721015338/https://www.facebook.com/nationalarchivesseattle (accessed April 14, 2015, Internet Archive snapshot July 21, 2015).

Government of Canada, "The Constitutional Distribution of Legislative Powers" https://www.canada.ca/en/intergovernmental-affairs/services/federation/distribution-legislative-powers.html (accessed December 29, 2020).

Graham, Katherine A.H. and Gene Swimmer. "The 'Ottawa syndrome': The localization of federal public servants in Canada." *Canadian Public Administration* 52 (2009).

Groover, Myron "The Wrecking of Canada's Library and Archives." *The Tylee* 7 June, 2012. https://thetyee.ca/Opinion/2012/06/07/LibraryCuts/ (accessed December 29th, 2020)

Hubner, Brian. "'An Administered People': A Contextual Approach to the Study of Bureaucracy, Records-Keeping and Records in the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs, 1755-1950." MA thesis, University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg, 2000.

Hodgetts, J.E. *The Canadian Public Service: A Physiology of Government 1867-1970*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973.

Horky, David. "Manitoba History and the Penitentiary at Lower Fort Garry, 1871-1877" *Library and Archives Canada Blog* https://thediscoverblog.com/2020/11/16/manitoba-history-and-the-penitentiary-at-lower-fort-garry-1871-1877/ (accessed December 29, 2020).

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, "About British Columbia First Nations," Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100021009/1314809450456 (accessed October 21, 2020).

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, "Alberta Region," Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100020655/1100100020659 (accessed October 22, 2020).

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, "Atlantic Region," Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016942/1100100016946 (accessed October 19, 2020).

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, "First Nations in Manitoba," Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100020400/1100100020404 (accessed October 19, 2020).

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, "Ontario Region," Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100020284/1100100020288 (accessed October 19, 2020).

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, "Ontario Region- Offices," Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100020391/1100100020392 (accessed October 19, 2020).

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, "Regional Offices," Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada website: https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100016936/1100100016940 Regional office websites for these offices have limited information at this time where location is all that is listed. (accessed October 21, 2020).

Indigenous Services Canada, "First Nations in Saskatchewan," Indigenous Services Canada website: https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1601920834259/1601920861675 (accessed October 19, 2020).

Indigenous Services Canada, "Quebec Region," Indigenous Services Canada website: https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1100100019255/1582306532791 At the time of this paper, the Quebec Regional office of the Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada website only listed COVID information and nothing on the regional offices location or what they managed. (accessed October 19, 2020).

Kratz, Jessie. "A Coast-to-Coast Archives." *Prologue Magazine* 47, no. 2 (Summer 2015).

Jessie Kratz, "The First Records" *Prologue Magazine* 49, No. 42. (Summer 2017).

Laine, Edward N. "" Kallista Perintöä–Precious Legacy!": Finnish-Canadian Archives, 1882-1985." *Archivaria* 22 (1986)

Lamb, W. Kaye "Development of the National Archives," Report, Australian Government Publishing Service, 1974

Langham, Josephine. "'The Lively Archives'." *Archivaria* 14 (Summer 1982).

Lecours, André. "Dynamic De/Centralization in Canada." *The Journal of Federalism* Volume 49 number 1, pp.57-83. Oxford University Press, 2017.

Le Goff, Philippe. "Moving Public Servants to the Regions." PRB 05-100E. Ottawa: Library of Parliament, Parliamentary Information and Research Service, 2006.

Leonard, David W. "Establishing the Archives of the Northwest Territories: A Regional Case Study in Legality." *Archivaria* 18 (Summer 1984).

Library and Archives Canada. *Annual Reports.*
 https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/annual-reports/Pages/AnnualReports.aspx (accessed February 1, 2018)

Library and Archives Canada. http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/ (accessed February 1, 2018)

Library and Archives Canada, *"*Business Plan 2013-2016." Library and Archives Canada website: https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/three-year-plan/Documents/business-plan-2013-2016-eng.pdf (accessed October 13, 2020).

Library and Archives Canada. "Conducting Research on Residential Schools: A Guide to the Records of the Indian and Inuit Affairs Program and Related Resources at the Library and Archives of Canada." http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/020008/f2/020008-2000-e.pdf (accessed February 1, 2018).

Library and Archives of Canada, "Gabrielle Roy" lac-bac.gc.ca. archived website http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/200/301/lac-bac/gabrielle_roy-ef/www.lac-bac.gc.ca/2/7/index-e.html (accessed April 14, 2015).

Library and Archives of Canada, "Government Records Accessible outside of Ottawa," collectionscanada.gc.ca https://web.archive.org/web/20150427004757/http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/the-public/005-3050-e.html (last accessed April 14, 2015, Internet Archive snapshot April 27, 2015).

Library and Archives of Canada. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada fonds. Record Group 10 (RG 10). vol. 8586, file 1\1-6-4, Memo (Robert Sinclair?) to DSGIA. February 26, 1890.

Library and Archives Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada fonds, Record Group 10 (RG10). vol. 8586, file 1/1-6-3, Memorandum of A.E. St. Louis to IAB Director H. McGill. August 3, 1937 and February 1, 1944.

Library and Archives Canada, "LAC's Future National Presence: Business Case." *Internal Report*. Library and Archives Canada, unpublished, 2015.

Library and Archives Canada, "Library and Archives Canada (LAC) - Ottawa Public Library (OPL) Joint Facility Project." Library and Archives Canada website: https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/transparency/briefing/2019-transition-material/Pages/lac-opl-joint-facility-project.aspx (accessed October 13, 2020).

Library and Archives Canada. "Mandate." http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/about-us/012-204-e.html (accessed February 1, 2018).

Library and Archives Canada. "Modernization and the Documentation of Society in the Digital Environment" *Speeches.* Dr. Daniel J. Caron, Oslo 2010. http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/news/speeches/Pages/Modernization-and-the-Documentation-of-Society-in-the-Digital-Environment.aspx (accessed October 30, 2018)

Library and Archives Canada, "New Preservation Facility - About the Project." Library and Archives Canada Website: https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/our-infrastructure-projects/new-preservation-facility/Pages/About-the-project.aspx accessed October 13, 2020.

Library and Archives Canada, "Policy on Making Holdings Available", https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/about-us/policy/Pages/policy-making-holdings-available.aspx (accessed December 29, 2020).

Maclean, Ian, "Australian Experience in Record and Archives Management." *American Archivist* 22 (1959).

Macleod, Donald. "Our Man in the Maritimes: 'Down East' with the Public Archives of Canada, 1872-1932." *Archivaria* 17 (Winter, 1983-1984).

Macleod, Donald. "'Quaint Specimens of the Early Days': Priorities in Collecting the Ontario Archival Record, 1872-1935." *Archivaria* 22 (Summer 1986).

Martin, Sarah. "Archives Offices to Combine, 7 Jan. 2011." http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/archives-offices-to-combine/news-story/5bacdc634a76c993e4cb22c1ed8cdceb?sv=ab7be31ce26bd1e14c993cbd2467294f (accessed August 4, 2017).

National Archives and Records Administration, "A short history of the National Archives Building, Washington D.C." archives.gov https://web.archive.org/web/20150318002322/https://www.archives.gov/about/history/building.html (last accessed April 13, 2015, Internet Archive snapshot March 18, 2015).

National Archives and Records Administration. *Annual Performance Plan and Reports*. archives.gov https://www.archives.gov/about/plans-reports/performance-accountability (accessed February 1, 2018)

National Archives and Records Administration, "FRC Communication Memos to Agency Records Officers." NARA website: https://www.archives.gov/frc/communications-archives/2014/frc-01-2014 (last accessed September 28th, 2020).

National Archives and Records Administration. "Guide to records in the National Archives: Central Plains Region." Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration. "Guide to records in the National Archives: Great Lakes Region." Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration. "Guide to records in the National Archives: Mid-Atlantic Region." Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration, "Guide to records in the National Archives: New England Region." Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration. "Guide to records in the National Archives: Northeast Region." Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration. "Guide to records in the National Archives: Pacific Northwest Region." Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration. *Guide to records in the National Archives: Pacific Sierra Region*. Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration. "Guide to records in the National Archives: Pacific Southwest Region." Washington D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration. "Guide to records in the National Archives: Rocky Mountain Region." Washington D.C. National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration. "Guide to records in the National Archives: Southeast Region." Washington D.C. National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration. "Guide to records in the National Archives: Southwest Region." Washington D.C. National Archives and Records Administration, 1989.

National Archives and Records Administration, "Historical Records Near You: Selected Guides and Research Aids for Archival Holdings at the Regional Archives," archives.gov http://www.archives.gov/research/guides/regional-resource-aids.html (accessed April 14, 2015).

National Archives and Records Administration, "Historical Timeline: Congress Passes the Federal Records Act of 1950." archives.gov https://www.archives.gov/about/history/timeline.html#event-/timeline/item/congress-passes-the-federal-records-act-of-1950 (accessed December 28th, 2020).

National Archives and Records Administration, "National Archives at Seattle", archives.gov https://web.archive.org/web/20150329050504/http://www.archives.gov/seattle (last accessed April 14th, 2015, Internet Archive snapshot March 29, 2015).

National Archives and Records Administration, "National Archives History" archives.gov https://web.archive.org/web/20150315032501/http://www.archives.gov/about/history/ (accessed April 13, 2015, Internet Archive snapshot March 15, 2015).

National Archives and Records Administration, "Research our Records." Archives.gov https://www.archives.gov/research/start/gather-information (accessed December 28, 2020).

National Archives and Records Administration, "Search Census Records Online and Other Resources", website: https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/census/online-resources (accessed December 14, 2020).

National Archives and Records Administration, "Seattle Facility Approved for Closure", *Press Release,* January 27th, 2020, National Archives and Records Administration website: https://www.archives.gov/press/press-releases/2020/nr20-37 (accessed September 28, 2020).

National Archives and Records Administration, "Strategic Plan 2018-2022", (February 2018), https://www.archives.gov/about/plans-reports/strategic-plan/strategic-plan-2018-2022 (last accessed December 29th, 2020)

National Archives and Records Administration. "The National Archives Narrations, The Blog of the U.S. National Archives." https://narations.blogs.archives.gov/ (accessed February 1, 2018).

National Archives and Records Administration. "The National Archives at New York." archives.gov https://www.archives.gov/nyc/ (accessed May 27, 2016).

National Archives and Records Administration. "The National Archives at Seattle." archives.gov http://www.archives.gov/seattle/ (accessed May 27, 2016).

National Archives of Australia. "About us" naa.gov.au https://web.archive.org/web/20150228092658/http://naa.gov.au/about-us/ (accessed April 9, 2015, internet archive snapshot March 30, 2015).

National Archives of Australia, "Access to Records under the Archives Act." naa.gov.au https://www.naa.gov.au/help-your-research/using-collection/access-records-under-archives-act (accessed on December 29, 2020).

National Archives of Australia, "Adelaide Office," naa.gov.au

https://web.archive.org/web/20150316202746/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/locations/adelaide.aspx (accessed April 14, 2015, Internet Archive snapshot March 16, 2015).

National Archives of Australia. *Annual Reports: National Archives of Australia and National Archives of Australia Advisory Council*. naa.gov.au http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/publications/annual-reports/ (accessed February 1, 2018).

National Archives of Australia, "Location and Opening Hours" naa.gov.au https://web.archive.org/web/20150408043943/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/locations/index.aspx (accessed April, 13, 2015, Internet Archive snapshot April 8, 2015)

National Archives of Australia. "Opening of National Archives Preservation Facility: Director General. Speech by David Fricker, Director General of the National Archives of Australia, at the opening of the National Archives Preservation Facility, Mitchell, 9, June, 2017." naa.gov.au http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/media/speeches/napf-opening-fricker.aspx (accessed May 11, 2018)

National Archives of Australia, "Our History". naa.gov.au https://web.archive.org/web/20150316160633/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/history/index.aspx (accessed April 9, 2015, internet archive snapshot March 16, 2015)

National Archives of Australia, "Our organisation" naa.gov.au https://web.archive.org/web/20150314235238/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/ (accessed April 9, 2015, internet archive snapshot March 14, 2015)
Ormsby, William. "The Public Archives of Canada, 1948-1968." *Archivaria* 15 (1982-83).

National Archives of Australia, "Research Centres" https://www.naa.gov.au/help-your-research/research-centres (accessed December 29th, 2020).

National Archives of Australia, "Service Charter" naa.gov.au https://web.archive.org/web/20150316173906/http://www.naa.gov.au/about-us/organisation/service-charter/index.aspx (accessed April 13, 2015, Internet Archive snapshot March 16, 2015).

National Archives of Australia, "Uncommon Lives" naa.gov.au https://web.archive.org/web/20150403213915/http://uncommonlives.naa.gov.au/index.aspx (last accessed April 14th, 2015, Internet Archive snapshot April 3rd, 2015).

Piggott, Michael "The Visit of Dr. T.R. Schellenberg to Australia," MA Thesis, University of New South Wales, (1989)

Public Archives of Canada, Bryan Corbett and Eldon Frost, "Public Records Division: Acquisition Methods," (December 1976) p. 25.

Public Archives of Canada, Public Records Division, Committee on Acquisition and Access Policy, "Report: Acquisition and Control of Field and Regional Office Material," File 9435-1, August 1976.

Russell, Bill. "Records of the Federal Department of Indian Affairs at the National Archives of Canada: A source for genealogical research." (The Ontario Genealogical Society, 1998).

Russell, Bill. "The White Man's Paper Burden: Aspects of Records Keeping in the Department of Indian Affairs, 1860-1914." *Archivaria* 19 (Winter 1984-1985).

Roberts, Alasdair. "A Fragile State: Federal Public Administration in the Twentieth Century." In *The Handbook of Canadian Public Administration*, ed. Christopher Dunn, Don Mills, Ont: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Robinson, Brian. "NARA plans online public access to relocated Alaska Archives", Apr. 4, 2014, GCN, Government Computer News
Website: https://gcn.com/articles/2014/04/04/nara-alaska.aspx (accessed August 4, 2017).

"National Archives to close in Alaska, relocate in Seattle," *The Seattle Times,* March 11, 2014, http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/national-archives-to-close-in-alaska-relocate-in-seattle/ (accessed August 4, 2017).

Schellenberg, Theodore R. "Archives and Records Management Resources" National Archives and Records Administration, Archives Library Information Center, Staff Information Paper Number 18 (1951) http://www.archives.gov/research/alic/reference/archives-resources/principles-of-arrangement.html (accessed December 29, 2020).

Sharman, Robert C. "Australian Archives in Lamb's Clothing," *Archivaria* 1 no. 2 (Summer 1976).

Simeon, Richard. "Considerations on Centralization and Decentralization." *Canadian Public Adminstration,* Volume 29, No. 3. (Fall/Automne 1986)

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. *Canadian Archives: A Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada by the Consultative Group on Canadian Archives*. Ottawa: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 1980.

Smith, Wilfred. "'Total Archives': The Canadian Experience, "*In Canadian Archival Studies and the Rediscovery of Provenance*, ed. Tom Nesmith. Chicago: Scarecrow Press (1993)

State Records of South Australia. Office of the Director and State Archivist, Records related to the possible closure of the National Archives of Australia Adelaide Office. 2009-11.

Statistics Canada. "Canada's Population Clock (real time model)". https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/71-607-x/71-607-x2018005-eng.htm (accessed December 19, 2020).

Turnbull, W. J. "Development of Decentralization in the Post Office." In *Canadian Public Administration,* ed. J. E. Hodgetts and D. C. Corbett, Toronto: The Macmillan Company, 1960.

Wilson, Ian E. "Short and Doughty: The Cultural Role of the Public Archives of Canada, 1904-1935," *The Canadian Archivist* 2, no. 4 (1973).

Wilson, Ian E. "'A Noble Dream': The Origins of the Public Archives of Canada," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982-83).

Wilson, Ian E. "'One of the Closest and Truest of Friends I Have Ever Had': Mackenzie King, Arthur Doughty, and the Public Archives of Canada." In *Mackenzie King: Citizenship and Community,* ed. John English, Kenneth McLaughlin, and P. Whitney Lackenbauer, (Toronto, 2002).

Wellstead, Adam M., Richard C. Stedman, and Evert A. Lindquist. "The Nature of Regional Policy Work in Canada's Public Service." *Canadian Political Science Review* 3 (2009).

Worsham, James. "How the National Archives Evolved over 75 Years of Change and Challenges." *Prologue Magazine* 41, No. 2. (Summer 2009).