

THE APPRAISAL OF CANADIAN MILITARY PERSONNEL FILES  
OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

By

GARY A. MITCHELL

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Department of history

The University of British Columbia  
1956 Main Mall  
Vancouver, Canada  
V6T 1Y3

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## ABSTRACT

Faced with the great and expanding volume of modern records created by government and other bodies, archivists have necessarily had to make choices about what to preserve and what to destroy. The conceptual basis for appraisal and practical implementation of appraisal in any given body of records are still matters not thoroughly worked out by archivists and archives. This thesis examines the conceptual basis of appraisal as it has been revealed in the literature on the subject, and applies to concepts found in the literature to appraisal of World War I military personnel files.

The research strategy involves a reading of the professional literature on appraisal to determine the concepts which have been developed to rule the appraisal process, a survey of the disposition of military personnel records by several combatant states during World War I, and an analysis of Canadian military personnel records of the Canadian Expeditionary Force during World War I. Some attention has been paid to the military historiography and in particular to studies that appear to be relevant to a discussion of appraisal of military personnel records.

It was found that by and large military personnel records were not treated as are other personnel or case files, which have rarely been preserved in their entirety by archives.

Although the reasons for this are not entirely clear, a study of the CEF military personnel records suggests that they can be objectively analysed in the way archivists have proposed for other records. It is proposed that an initial analysis based on standards contemporary with the records can be undertaken, and a further, later appraisal can be made based on the research use to which the records are put in the interval. As well, the various options open to the Public Archives of Canada, which holds the CEF military personnel records, are discussed.

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CHAPTER ONE  
INTRODUCTION

In 1983, the personnel files of the Canadian Expeditionary Force were deposited into the custody of the Public Archives of Canada. With the Change of custodianship from the Department of National Defense to the Public Archives, a process of appraisal and selection was undertaken to evaluate the future disposition of these files. The appraisal decision reached by the Public Archives was to retain all the personnel files permanently. In the past, the initial appraisal decision, in this case that of permanent retention, would have been accepted without reservation. But recent trends within the archival community have placed into question the standards and guidelines used in the appraisal of material. The widespread use of "permanent retention" as an appraisal classification has been challenged by many archival authorities. They have declared that the term has become one which stands for the postponement of an archival decision, rather than one which stands for a decisive and confident appraisal judgement.

The personnel files of the CEF represent, as far as can be determined, a body of material which contains personal data on a wide group of Canadians who, in the period 1914-1919, form a representative cross-section of Canadian society. Their importance to the nation and its history, therefore, cannot be underestimated. Considering the importance which the files have

and the recent trends away from acceptance of the blanket use of permanent retention, what are the options available to the archivist if a re-consideration of the Public Archives' initial appraisal is undertaken?

In an attempt to reach some viable conclusions regarding any future appraisal of the CEF personnel files, our study will concentrate on three areas of discussion: the archival literature on appraisal; the policies of the international community towards the appraisal of military personnel files; and an analysis of the CEF personnel files. The next chapter will examine the literature on appraisal.

Although the literature on appraisal is limited, the thrust of the discussion will concentrate on the ideas presented by various archivists over time and the implications of these concepts for the appraisal of military personnel files. Included in the discussion will be the major treatise by T.R. Schellenberg and the recently published study of sampling by British archivist Felix Hull. The object of the discussion will be to examine the various appraisal ideas and methods which over time have gained the popular support of the archival community. By presenting these ideas and methods in a chronological fashion, the trends and changes in the application of appraisal can be seen and compared, so that the present situation in appraisal can be placed in its historical perspective.

The third chapter will deal with the practical application

of appraisal, specifically concerning military personnel files. A survey was undertaken of the treatment of military personnel files by the national archives of the World War I combattant states. Special attention was paid to the policies of the national archives to see if the military personnel files are treated in a unique fashion or if they are treated as ordinary case files.

With the background supplied by the literature and the practical policies highlighted by the international archives' survey, the fourth chapter will concentrate on the personnel files of the CEF. No proper appraisal of material can occur without an in-depth analysis of the documents concerned. Once the archivist has investigated the nature of the files, he can consider the various options which may be open to him to determine disposition of the files. Using a small sample of files, an analysis of the various documents present and their informational content was undertaken.

The final chapter will present the various options which an archivist may consider in the appraisal of the CEF personnel files. Drawing on the trends and methods highlighted by the literature, the practical applications presented by the international survey, and by using the analysis of the files themselves, we can then examine at least hypothetically the options open to archives. Although the discussion of the various appraisal options will deal specifically with the personnel files of the CEF, the approach taken in this study should be applicable to analysis of the value of all case files.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE CHANGING CONCEPTS OF ARCHIVAL APPRAISAL

For over five millennia the sacred task of the archivist was to preserve the records in his charge. He was dedicated to the preservation of the cuneiform tablets, the papyrus scrolls, the parchment and paper records from the ravages of time. It would have been inconceivable to him that one day archivists would select which records were to be preserved. To suggest that archivists would destroy records would have been sacrilegious. Yet the twentieth century has seen the appraisal of records for retention or destruction evolve into a major function of the archivist, forcing a change in his definition of his role from that of preserver-dustodian to selector-destroyer.

Contrary to popular belief, the appraisal of records did not simply emerge as an issue with the implementation of modern records management practices in the post-Second World War period. The issue of appraisal, which had been simmering since the turn of the century, merely began to boil at the same time that records management programs were introduced. The subsequent changes in the definition and management of archives, and the role of the profession, should not have been a surprise to archival practitioners. In this chapter, we shall trace the four major phases in appraisal literature, with an emphasis on sampling as an appraisal tool. The first phase encompasses the literature

which appeared prior to the publication of American archivist T.R. Schellenberg's treatise on public record appraisal in 1956.(1) The second phase of the literature deals with the work of Schellenberg and his colleague Paul Lewinson as they codified appraisal theory and guidelines. The third phase covers the years 1960 to 1981, a period in which few articles were presented concerning the issues of appraisal theory and techniques. The most recent is characterised by British archivist Felix Hull's 1981 report for the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on sampling and his re-assessment of appraisal theories and guidelines.

The first administrative regulations for selection of archives were issued by the French Ministry of the Interior as early as 1835. The criteria, applicable to the non-current prefectural records, required a records inventory before transfer and prohibited the destruction of records relating to litigation, awards of domain, and interests in real estate.(2)

In 1910, a British Royal Commission was appointed, under the chairmanship of Sir Frederick Pollock, to investigate the state of public records within England and Wales. For the first time since its establishment in 1838, the Public Record Office (PRO) as custodian of the public records was under review. The Commission's first report, issued in 1912, was highly critical of the PRO's methods regarding the appraisal and destruction

of "valueless" records, and the lack of state's awareness of records held in departmental offices. In their examination, the Commission found that specific provisions of the legislation governing the PRO were being neglected. Although the Commission found that in 1858 "the first systematic examinations of records of doubtful value was undertaken by a small official committee, under the Assistant Record Keeper, which was at work between 1861-1865 and destroyed nearly 400 tons of War Office and Admiralty records," no systematic method of appraisal had been instituted to encompass the entire bureaucracy.(3) Between 1861 and 1877, departmental record officials implemented a policy of "weeding", using skilled and unskilled staff, for the Treasury Papers and the Admiralty correspondence from 1839 to 1860. The Commission described the Admiralty records as being "ruthlessly destroyed" by the weeding procedure. Fortunately, the Treasury Papers had been placed in the care of an official who was aware of their historical value and little material of value was destroyed.(4) In the opinion of the Commission "the ulterior object of the official action taken in 1877 and 1898 for statutory action to destroy valueless documents was to make space for the reception of fresh transfers."(5) Evidence relating to the Royal African Company and the Slave Compensation Commission revealed the repeated efforts of officials to destroy these records in spite of the recommendations of other officials as to their importance and value to the historical

community. The Commission found that several provisions of the formalized procedure for destruction were not being followed, and that there was no evidence that

a) every document scheduled for destruction had been examined; b) lists of documents destroyed had been compiled; c) the preservation of specimens from the class of documents destroyed had been taken; d) an accredited official was present at the destruction site; e) examinations of archives had been conducted in order to regulate the transfer of material to the PRO.(6)

In their concluding remarks, the Commissioners insisted that a "fuller, more systematic and a more expert examination of documents supposed to be valueless should be carried out. Such documents should be considered in their relation with other classes of records and also in respect of the use that has been or might be made of them."(7)

Following the Commission's final report in 1919, the British archivist Hilary Jenkinson wrote, in 1922, the first English manual on archival principles. Jenkinson believed that the administrator of the records should be the "modern Destroyer" of his records. He regarded the subjective intrusions of archivists and historians into the process of selection as being a threat to the impartiality of the records. As he put it,

for an Administrative body to destroy what it no longer needs is a matter entirely within

its competence and an action which future ages ... cannot possibly construe as illegitimate or as affecting the status of the remaining Archives.(8)

It should be noted that Jenkinson believed that the archives of every administration should contain sufficient records to document the activity of the administration, which was his golden rule.

The Jenkinsonian notion of archival selection might have stood the tests of time if three nineteenth century developments, which had begun to alter government and its bureaucracy, had not accelerated after 1914. As summarized by Hull, these trends were:

a) the rapid expansion of government in terms of function and in the complexity of administrative organization resulting therefrom; b) the increasing ability over the period to proliferate records by means of carbon copies, photographic and xerographic copying and, latterly, all the paraphernalia of machine readable documentation; c) the growing tendency for public access for research purposes to be speeded-up, and the increase in open government in many, though not all, areas of activity.(9)

The Jenkinsonian belief that well-intentioned bureaucrats would schedule for destruction only the duplicates, the irrelevant and the non-important historical records would seem, in

hindsight, to be overoptimistic. The Pollock Commission found that poorly-trained, low-level clerks handled the security of the non-current departmental records with little reference to the regulations as set down in the Public Records Act as they weeded and destroyed the records in their charge.(10) The need for archival appraisal would appear to be inevitable under these circumstances in order to safeguard the valuable records for future research. Yet it was not until the 1950s that a codification of appraisal guidelines and procedures was articulated by T.R. Schellenberg and by another royal commission in Great Britain.

Prior to the 1950's, the majority of archivists failed to acknowledge the seriousness of the question of appraisal of records in their writings. Several factors may have been responsible for this failure. Firstly, the European and older American archives may have turned a blind eye to the problems of bulk and extent associated with the modern record and bureaucracy. The younger archives, especially the United States National Archives, may have concentrated their early efforts on establishing the foundation stones of archival legislation, proper archival repositories and facilities and qualified staff. But, unlike the older European national archives, the U.S. National Archives did not have to deal with medieval charters and scrolls. Consequently, the issues arising from the volume of records became evident sooner. The last factor which could have been partially responsible is the insular and individual

nature of archives and archivists. Each institution, believing that it was confronted by unique problems and dilemmas, sought unique resolutions. The seeking of separate solutions does not facilitate inter-action between institutions or archivists.

The failure to realize the importance of appraisal is clearly illustrated by the fact that the International Congress of Librarians and Archivists held in Brussels in 1910 did not discuss the appraisal question despite a plea that it do so. A quarter of a century later, at the first meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Washington D.C. in 1937, appraisal was also ignored.(11) However, the innovative staff of the newly created U.S. National Archives of the United States shone a new light on appraisal. The implementation of a records management program in the 1940s began the process of building a solid foundation for the acceptance of systematic appraisal as a tool for archivists. The archivists of the National Archives disregard the Jenkinsonian dictum and forged an appraisal policy based on the active intervention of the archivist-historian.

The new approach emphasized the role of the archivist as the active appraiser of the records in conjunction with departmental officers. The archivist would not wait, with apprehension, the delivery of records to the archives; the archivist would oversee appraisal of records while they were still

serving an administrative function.

In this phase of the literature on appraisal, the articles emanated from the National Archives which had, by default, assumed the mantle of pioneer as it blazed into the wilderness of appraisal. Therefore it should not be surprising that staff members of the National Archives contributed articles on appraisal to the journals. Their articles concentrated on two aspects of appraisal techniques: the ability to condense archival holdings with the aid of microfilming; and reduction of the number of records. It is at this point that the dual meaning of appraisal presents itself. Although not explicitly stated in the literature, appraisal has two forms of application in record selection. As a general rule, initial appraisal applies to entire series or groups of records, determining whether or not the entire series or group is to be retained for posterity in archival repositories. The second application can be termed as a reappraisal or reconsideration of the records. After a body of records has been transferred to the archives for permanent retention, the costs of handling and storing combined with low actual or potential research usage can alter the archivist's previous opinion of the records' value. With the factors of cost and ~~usage~~ usage confronting him, the archivist must choose either discarding all the records in the group or selecting a method of reduction. The reduction methods open



to the archivist are microfilming or sampling. The first appraisal activity occurs within the administrative realm of the record, with the archivist and the record officials deciding on value and potential use. The second appraisal, the reconsideration, occurs only within the archives, with the archivists in consultation with the research community selecting the method or methods to be implemented.

Among the early writers on appraisal, Oliver W. Holmes, who was on the staff of the United States National Archives, aptly described the mood and exhilaration of his colleagues as they faced the challenge of selecting and preserving the American modern records:

If we wanted future generations to know just how trains were operated, we might film the dispatches over a week, the trainmen's records for a week and whatever else might be necessary to complete the picture. The same thing could be done for an ocean liner or for a steel mill. To show development or change in administrative or operational control of a plant, samples of comparable data could be taken at significant intervals .... Through planned sampling and the use of modern technical innovations, such as microfilming, there exists now, for the time, an opportunity to bequeath to the future an adequate picture of present ways of life, and that despite the growing complexities of the modern age.(12)

Microfilming was seen as a great innovation for it allowed for

the retention of hitherto unretainable records. Alternatively, the archivist could take "snap shot" samples of the records of agencies of government or business to preserve a picture of the operational side of their activities. But, if microfilming served to preserve the information in records and to reduce the size of the record holdings, sampling was a method of reduction which saw some of the material destroyed.

The early literature on appraisal advocated three methods of reduction: transfer to outside archival agencies; microfilming; and representative sampling.(13) The cheapest and safest method was found to be transfers. Material deemed unsuitable for national deposit was made available to local and regional archives. The main advantage was that no destruction of records occurred and the records were accessible in local and regional repositories where they were of interest. Microfilming was, as Holmes stated, the great saviour; records which were considered borderline cases could be filmed as the archivist walked the thin edge of appraisal. The records in their original state were destroyed thereby reducing their volume, but their informational content was saved.

Transfer and microfilming appear to be straight forward operations, but in fact records for which there was no repository willing to take them would be destroyed, and inherent to micro-filming was appraisal of the worth of expending money to preserve records. However, sampling was another matter. No forum existed

for the discussion of appraisal techniques and one may inquire if the community realized the advantages of sampling. Emmett Leahy, an early advocate of records management in the National Archives, believed that operational records could be sampled to reflect the administration of government programs.(14)

Among the early writers, only Philip Brooks, a colleague of Leahy, raised serious points of debate. Citing Morris Copeland's address to the Society of American Archivists on the significance of archives to the economist, he raised three new issues. Firstly, he believed that appraisers had to view the entire body of records in their relation to other bodies of records to ensure accurate assessments. File by file investigation by archivists did not reflect the whole series and depended on very subjective criteria. Regarding sampling, Brookes found that newer governmental activities were highly susceptible to archival sampling. Finally he found that the archival community had to begin to view non-historians as potential archival researchers.(15) This article was the only American work to go beyond the practical application of appraisal and stress the importance of broadening the archival process to include the non-historian and the contemporary records of government.

The literature published during the Second World War and immediate post-war period concentrated on illustrations of practical application of appraisal techniques. Oliver W. Holmes discussed the retention of Fuel Administration records in three

states - Minnesota, Michigan and Massachusetts.(16) This retention was to provide future evidence for organizing state-wide programs but no discussion was undertaken to provide the reasoning behind the selection criteria. Why, for instance, were Southern and Western states not selected? A colleague of Holmes, Carl Kulsrud, provided an illustration of sampling using the Rural Rehabilitation records of the Farm Security Administration. For these records, the implementation of a percentage method, either the selection of one file from every 100 or the selection of the records from particular counties across the United States, was found to provide adequate documentation of the rehabilitation function of the program but the sample did not reflect the factors which made the program necessary.

In order to obtain a sample which reflected both the agricultural problems and the remedies applied, the National Archives, using data provided by the Farm Security Administration, identified 134 different agricultural areas within the United States. From within each of these areas a typical county was selected for record retention. The total volume was reduced from 20,000 cubic feet to 600 cubic feet.(17) Another archivist at the National Archives, Robert Lovett, wrote on the problems of appraising business records. Emphasising the sampling technique's ability to reflect an agency's administrative and operational history while reducing the total volume, Lovett illustrated the use of time samples. In sampling the yarn

bills of the Lawrence Manufacturing Company for the years 1897 to 1921, the records for 1900, 1910 and 1920 were retained, reducing the bulk by about 80%. Payroll records were sampled by retaining the four months January, April, July and October for every year.(18) Although the reduction of the material is adequately shown, no specific justification of the criteria or the validity of representative sampling was offered by Lovett.

The early literature highlights the practicality of sampling and the examples clearly illustrate the reduction capabilities of the technique. The emphasis on the "reconsideration" aspect of appraisal can be readily understood. The war-time bureaucracy and the New Deal programs of the Depression saw government services rapidly expand into new areas of the economy and social life of the citizenry. The amount of documentation created by the bureaucracy had to be reduced. No archival institution could be expected to handle all the material produced during this extraordinary period of history. However, the articles do not address any general rules or guidelines of appraisal. One must surmise that discussions of appraisal techniques were underway in the U.S. National Archives but that the pressing matters of archival legislation, primary surveys of record holdings and physical facilities were considered more important at this time than further theoretical probing of the question of appraisal techniques.

Interestingly, the post-war literature contained two trans-

lated articles published in 1950 in the American Archivist by Belgian archivists discussing contemporary archives. Leopold Genicot wrote of the practical solutions to the problems of appraising modern records while Renee Doehard spoke generally of the important issues confronting modern archives in the area of appraisal. Genicot reiterated the basic needs for appraisal: the need to destroy original documents if statistical summaries existed and the need to destroy records which did not possess historical interest. Using Belgian examples, he illustrated procedures that acknowledged regional and industrial differences. By selecting for retention the tax returns of a village in the Argonne, an agricultural village in the North, and an industrial town in the Basse-Sambre, the archivist had represented the spectrum of Belgian society and its development. Regarding the technique of time period sampling, Genicot found that the standard acceptance of retaining the first year of each decade was not responsive to crises or major fluctuations in the society. To avoid having a skewed data base, he recommended that records for years of major economic depressions and conflict be retained as well as the usual first year sample. By analyzing the criminal court case files since 1870, it was found that three depression years, 1871, 1884, 1902, and the First World War (1914-1918) ought to be added.(19) Researchers could then investigate the major crisis and their impact on the society as well as long term trends exemplified by the regular first year

in every decade sample. In performing such work, Genicot believed that "an archivist will cease to be a mere historian" as the pressure and demands of public records mounted. In his view, the archivist would need to develop his own specialized knowledge of administrative history and government organization in order to carry out his appraisal of records properly.(20)

Writing in 1950, Genicot's colleague Renee Doehard described appraisal in terms relating to the Roman god Janus. The object of appraisal was to preserve records of administrative and historical value, but its reverse was destruction. Doehard recognized that the uneasiness of archivists to destroy was a natural reaction for a profession which had prided itself as preservers of the records. The community could lessen the strain if, as Doehard points out, a supportive selection criterion existed which exhausted or attempted to exhaust all the possible areas of academic criticisms against appraisal techniques. By carefully developing justifiable techniques tested for their validity, the archivist could avoid future criticisms of his methods of appraisal. In a thoughtful and perceptive analysis, Doehard sets out the need for quantitative history and archives. The archivist chooses the picture of society which researchers will scan for their research material by his selection policies. Past practices allowed archives to supply the researcher with qualitative information for portraying individuals and events of the past, but no aggregate archives existed to meet the

demands of the new researchers who were seeking to paint the broad brush strokes of the picture. Quantitative data would give the archival record a depth which it lacked by the stress on qualitative information.(21)

Unlike the American writers, the Belgians were in advance of the archival community when they spoke of new ideas and changes in archives. The assertion that the archivist would have to change his stance and develop new methodologies was a major step forward. Their discussion of archives as the sources for quantitative study foresaw future trends in historiography and the need for archivists to retain those records which could be adapted to this new method of history.

In Great Britain, a Royal Commission was appointed in 1952, under the chairmanship of Sir James Grigg, a noted politician, to "review the arrangements for the perservation of the records of Government Departments." (22) Since the earlier study by the Pollock Commission, the expansion of government services and the acceptance of such inventions as the typewriter and duplicating machines had greatly increased the bureaucracy's ability to produce records. The situation in Great Britain had reached, by the 1950's, the point where only one quarter of the records marked for permanent retention were in the custody of the PRO. The remainder of the records, over 120 miles of shelf space, were in the hands of the creating departments.(23) The need to reduce and streamline the procedures of transfer and retention created the climate in which the Grigg Commission



was to work.

In their recommendations, issued in 1954, the Commissioners proposed the creation of a records management system and the implementation of a new selection procedure by calling for the establishment in each department of an office to oversee the creation, selection and retention of records. This newly created office would assign records officers to work in the departments to insure the records were reviewed and scheduled for retention or destruction. The Commission's most interesting recommendation was for a selection procedure which consisted of two review phases. The Commissioners decided that the first review of the records would be undertaken by the creating department and its Records Officer not later than five years after the records had passed from active use. Those records which would be needed for further Departmental purposes would be retained, the remainder could be destroyed after obtaining PRO approval. The second review of the records would occur when they were 25 years old, at which time those considered not of further historical or administrative importance would be destroyed. The second review decision would be consultative venture between the department and the PRO's officers. Those records retained after the second review would be transferred to the custody of the PRO.(24)

The Commissioners, in their deliberations, recognized that

"particular instance" or "case" papers were of a special nature and interest. While they found that each document was of little importance by itself, taken as a whole or as a sample these papers enabled "broad conclusions as to historical, economic, or social trends to be drawn." (25) Their recommendations for the handling of particular instance papers revolved around the establishment of a committee which would:

- a) conduct a census to identify all particular instance papers in government.
- b) determine what papers would render the greatest amount of information for the smallest storage cost.
- c) decide which papers, and in what quantities, should be preserved.
- d) consider the issue of confidentiality. (26)

The Grigg Commission's recommendation for a records management system within the British government placed great emphasis on appraisal and the ability of the departmental records officers and the archivists to devise and implement sound appraisal techniques and to preserve those records of historical and administrative importance.

At this juncture, the spectre of appraisal had been brought to the attention of the archival community. The need to broaden the community's perception of its clientele was recognized. The requirement of appraising the records in their entirety and in their context was acknowledged. The question of appraisal and

its methods had passed an initial experimental stage in its development. But a codification of theories and guidelines was needed to facilitate acceptance. The need for a theoretical, definitive work was clear; who was to carry the torch? The resulting attempts to create a consolidation of appraisal ideas marks the beginning of the second phase.

T.R. Schellenberg, the great advocate of archivist as appraiser, and his colleagues at the National Archives realized by the 1950s that records management was encroaching upon the function of archives. In 1949, as a result of the recommendations from the Hoover Commission on the organization of the federal government, the National Archives was incorporated into the newly created General Services Administration. With the resulting loss of archival autonomy, an awareness grew that the records management bureaucracy was considered more relevant to the administration of the state than archives. The archivist was not assured of his role as record appraiser or of his influence on the records management process. The scenario of record managers deciding on the retention of records, their destruction and their transfer to archives while the archivists mutely accepted the situation was a distinct possibility. This overwhelming issue of who was ultimately responsible for records and archives was paramount to the archival community and was, naturally, paramount to Schellenberg. In his attempt to set

down the un-written guidelines and theories that would guide the National Archives, Schellenberg reasserted the role of the archivist in appraisal. One could say that he was responding to the challenges raised by Renee Doehard to provide the supportive criteria of appraisal.

Challenging historian W.J. Wilson's assertion that "unless the masses of administrative and operating files are summarized in intelligible narratives, they are almost useless for historical work." (27) Schellenberg clearly stated that archival activity was "to preserve the evidence on which re-interpretation [of history] can be based, not merely to preserve official interpretations of evidence; and to preserve this evidence impartially without bias of any sort and as fully as public records will permit." (28) To assess the public records accurately, a method of appraisal supported by general rules and principles had to be established. Schellenberg found that two values were inherent in modern records: "primary values for the originating agency and secondary values for other agencies and private users." (29) The public records were created to serve the administrative needs of the agency and that these needs were of primary importance to the agency. But records held in archival repositories had another value, a secondary value, beyond their administrative uses. These records could be utilized by other agencies and individuals as they seek information on a variety of concerns beyond those addressed during

records' active administrative life. For discussion purposes, Schellenberg split the secondary value of records into two areas of concern - evidential and informational. Evidential value can be defined as the value of those records of an agency that are "necessary to provide an authentic and adequate documentation of its organization and functioning." (30) Informational value refers to the value derived from the information contained in records "on persons, places, subjects and the like with which public agencies deal; not from the information that is in such records on the public agencies themselves." (31) By using a number of practical examples, Schellenberg illustrated, for the first time, that the evidential and informational value of records are not mutually exclusive.

Having established his theoretical definitions, Schellenberg turned to the application of his appraisal ideas. He clearly pointed out that the archivist must pay attention to social scientists and broaden service to include students of local history, genealogists, and antiquarians. (32) Historians could no longer be viewed as the only clientele of an archives; the modern records had opened up the archives to a wide range of studies in other disciplines. Schellenberg states that the final decision regarding archival retention remains the archivist's despite the change in the scope of the institution's selection policy. The changes in technology and in the nature of the records resulted in the undeniable fact that many

archivists would not be specialists in the subjects of the records. In these cases, archivists must turn to a consultative group of experts from the bureaucracy and academia for information before a final decision is made. The co-operation between bureaucrat, scholar and archivist would, in Schellenberg's view, protect against the destruction of valuable information.

Schellenberg emphasised that the selection of records for their evidential values must not be made on a piecemeal basis. The archivist must have a knowledge of all the documentation of an agency and its administrative history before any appraisal decisions can be made. Once the organizational structure and the functioning of the agency's programs are understood, the archivist can select the relevant records depicting the origins and administrative details of the agency. In Schellenberg's view, those records worthy of preservation would include budgetary records, legal and research records, and policy and program directives. However, in his discussion of internal management or "housekeeping" records, Schellenberg found that the procedures followed in handling property and supply matters were performed "pretty much the same way in all agencies" and that these records seldom provided essential evidence for an understanding of the functioning of a particular agency.(33) Therefore, Schellenberg recommended that these records should not be preserved unless they were of a distinctive nature or highlighted unique problems experienced by the agency.

Turning to the informational value of records, Schellenberg indicated that many of the modern public records were selected for archival preservation because of the information they contained on events, people and social conditions. Included in this category of records would be census records, land grants, military service records and other types of case files.

Discussing the selection of records for their informational values, Schellenberg defined two alternatives of action. The first course of action involved the selection of records which had "concentrations of information, such as census schedules, in which single documents provide extensive, intensive or diversified information in a concentrated form." (34) The second alternative was "to select a limited number of documents or case folders that are representative or illustrative of the whole or that are adequate to throw light on the phenomena under investigation." (35) For the latter alternative, Schellenberg stated two principles could be followed: a) special selection and b) statistical sampling. Special selection was described as applying to more recent records relating to individuals of import and to documentation of social or other phenomena. (36) Simply stated, special selection meant that "a few records are selected for preservation because they contain data that are representative or illustrative of the whole, because they deal with an important or significant event or action, or because they contain data that are considered adequate for a study of

particular social or economic conditions."(37)

Statistical sampling was, according to Schellenberg, a field where few archivists possessed an understanding of its techniques and methods. Therefore if statistical sampling was to be used as an archival tool, the assistance and knowledge of experts would be needed to implement the procedure. The major differences between the archivist and the statistician were that "the archivist preserves records for unknown uses; the statistician must know in advance the particular ways in which his sample is to be used. The archivist selects records that have characteristics illustrative of the whole; the statistician, in accordance with well-defined mathematical formulae, selects a sample that presents information of measurable reliability on particular characteristics of the universe from which it is taken."(38) Although Schellenberg admits that many archivists were not capable of statistical sampling, he states that it is a more exact form of sampling than the representative samples preserved by archives.

In his conclusion, Schellenberg stressed that the standards used in the appraisal of records cannot be exact nor can they be applied with absolute consistency. Moderation and common sense were the keys to archival appraisal. Furthermore, he reiterated that the appraisal of records should not be subject to intuition or arbitrary suppositions of value; it should be based on the analysis of what the records documented.



Schellenberg considered analysis to be the essence of archival appraisal without which the archivist could not arrive at an informed opinion on the value of the records.(39) If the archivist fails, through analysis, to produce the needed information upon which to base an opinion, then he must seek expert help. The credit of writing down the first set of selection guidelines for the archivist must go to Schellenberg. In his time and place, this accomplishment cannot be overlooked or ridiculed by later archivists or researchers. His acknowledgement for changing times in the broader scope of archives and his refinement and definition of archival theory and principles have become the foundation stones of archival appraisal.

Following Schellenberg's study, Paul Lewinson wrote a formative article on archival sampling. For Lewinson, "sampling of Government archives consisted in the selection of some part of a body of homogeneous records so that some aspect of the Government's work or the information received or developed by the State may be represented or illustrated thereby."(40) This approach, which he called archival sampling, requires no measure of reliability as needed in statistical samples. Furthermore, Lewinson emphasised that the records must possess homogeneity in their general form, in the manner in which they are created, and in their subject matter before any sampling can occur.

Lewinson identified three types of records to which

sampling could be applied: a) case files; b) submissions; and c) miscellaneous. He defined case files as "a body of records, kept together, dealing with a particular transaction or with closely related transactions; originally, such a body of records pertaining to a judicial or quasi-judicial case, but - increasingly - pertaining to an administrative decision or series of decisions (as in a personnel case file), or to a work project or series of work projects (as in a loan case file or a construction case file.)"(41) Submissions were defined as records "having in common that they give the Government requested or required information," such as applications, returns, schedules and questionnaires.(42) At the time, the National Archives rarely sampled submissions. Miscellaneous records could be the form letters of a politician, the records of special programs and the minutes of local boards.(43) These three categories of files are usually homogeneous in character and are further linked by having a low concentration of interest and value in comparison to their bulk. By emphasizing the need for homogeneity, Lewinson expanded on Schellenberg's treatment of case files.

As to preserving the evidential and informational values of records through sampling, Lewinson indicates that the sampling for evidential value involves typical records, records which document the administrative operations of an agency. In the sampling of records for their informational value, the procedure

concentrates on the non-typical records which possess information on important or significant matters.

In defining the specific methods of selection, Lewinson indicates that "archival sampling is sometimes akin to statistical sampling when it aims at the preservation of typical or representative records but that it is often quite different in its objectives when it aims at the preservation of significant and atypical records only." (44) In his discussion on archival sampling, two methods of selection were mentioned: the random sample and the selected sample. Random sampling was described as "removing from the files every fifth, tenth, twentieth, etc., case depending upon the percentage required." (45) The archivist's chief concern in using random sampling is the size of the sample required to represent adequately the whole series of records. However, in selected sampling, the archivist establishes a criterion of significance. By indicating priorities of importance, the archivist decides on what files are to be retained for preservation. The size of the sample is not a major concern of the archivist. The concern is that all the files of importance relating to significant events and the like be retained.

When Lewinson's thoughts turned to the method of statistical sampling, he admitted that few statistical samples had been undertaken. But he argues that archivists should acquaint themselves with the method, because future developments

may make its use feasible as an archival tool.

Lewinson found that in selecting a statistical, mathematically-based sample one was primarily concerned with reliability. An unreliable sample will not be of use to any researcher or archivist. The reliability fo the statistical sample depends on its randomness and its size. The randomness of the sample is vital for it insures that no subjective criteria exist which could prejudice the sample - each record must have an equal chance of being selected for preservation. The size of the sample depends on the degree of reliability, decided by the statistician, needed to represent the whole adequately. In addition, Lewinson emphasises that the cost factors force the statistician to compromise degrees of reliability with the availability of funding. Therefore, the statistician and the archivist must balance the cost of sampling against the possibilities of potential research uses in their decision to sample or not to sample archival records.(46)

With the publication of Lewinson's article on sampling the second phase, the codification of appraisal theory and guidelines, was complete. Lewinson's application of Schellenbergian ideas to the study of sampling created a work which has become the formative American article on archival sampling. Maynard Brichford used Lewinson's definitions when he compiled his 1977 manual on appraisal and accessioning. Brichford's work illustrates the lack of attention to this area of study during

recent years and the continuing dominance of Lewinson's work.

The literature of the sixties and early seventies concentrated on appraisal in the context of records management. In a program of records management appraisal occurs initially during the process of scheduling to determine the disposition of records. Records managers and archivists use their knowledge of records' administrative and archival values to set specific time periods for the retention of records in active use and their disposition to records storage, archives, or destruction. The time periods are then applied to all record series throughout the agency. The archival community focussed on the differences between records managers and archivists. Who was to appraise? Who was more qualified to appraise? Archivists began to redefine their roles in this third phase of appraisal, the new age of records management.

In this connection, W.K. Lamb, formerly the Dominion Archivist of Canada, believed that the archivist has ceased to be primarily a custodian and has become a gatherer of records and manuscripts.(47) According to Lamb, the major influence on this change was the introduction of records management programs which allowed the archivist to take part in planned disposition of records.(48) The archivist was now dynamic and active and no longer a passive element in the life span of a record.

Wilfred Smith, then Assistant Dominion Archivist of

Canada, declared that the compromise of the Jenkinsonian theory was inevitable. Administrators simply were not in a position to judge the value of archives. The archivist was the only official who could be responsible for appraisal because of his historical training and the broad oversight he brought to all public records. Smith also rejected the use of microfilming as an effective tool of appraisal. Microfilming was too costly and it demanded additional staff time to arrange the records and create the finding aids.(49) Smith's refutation of microfilming as a panacea was particularly directed at its use in the appraisal of entire series of records.

Although the number of articles on appraisal during this interlude period were few, the direction of appraisal was set. The records management function of archives was now considered to be essential to the administration of records. Archivists had confirmed their role as appraisers of the ultimate disposition of records. Lastly, microfilming was rejected as an efficient method of preservation and records were now to be stored in records centres until their transfer to archival institutions or their destruction.

As the records held by the records management centres were declared archival and eligible for transfer to archival repositories, the volume of modern records began to strain storage facilities and staff time, and therefore threaten research accessibility. The criticisms of appraisal began to appear in

the literature as the archival and research communities realized the dilemma they faced and its impact on their time and services. In 1969, one of the academic critics, historian David Lewis, declared that all the payrolls, ledgers and punchcards held in archives ought to be destroyed en masse. In his opinion, the archival community was collecting records which would not reflect the social changes that the research community wished to study. Lewis desired that archivists take a more conservative stand in their appraisal and preservation of records. He believed that the archival profession had adopted the social history trend wholeheartedly and were not being critical enough in their assessments of potential usage and significance.(50)

In 1970, in a commentary on the appraisal of national records, American archivist Meyer Fishbein found that the automation of records keeping in the workplace and the advent of computers in quantitative research forces archivists to review their appraisal procedures.(51) No longer can archivists claim that volume deters research or that scientific or economic data should be destroyed after aggregate tabulations have been compiled. In fact, Fishbein found that the technological changes were outdistancing the abilities of archivists and records managers to control the ever-increasing volume of material. Acknowledging the successes of the records management program in solving the problems of the past, Fishbein reveals that the newer problems created by technological change are

only slowly being addressed.

Despite the clear evidence that profound changes are occurring in the creation of records, Fishbein found that many archivists were clinging to the belief that historians were their chief non-government clientele. In his attempt to provide a solution to the difficulties facing archivists doing appraisal, Fishbein argues for the profession to set quality standards for the selection of archivists and to set guidelines for the appraisal of records. Among his proposals for standards of professional competence Fishbein desired to see archivists who had demonstrated a skill for administrative history and political affairs doing appraisal work.

With better standards and education, several of the questions Fishbein posed could find solutions. But he questioned the common assumption that "source material for special studies are more valuable than source material for recurring studies" and "that biographical information in national records is of marginal archival value" by asking "where does that leave the appraisal of case files, submissions, personnel records, and the like?"(52)

The need for reassessment of appraisal was evident. The questions raised by researchers and archivists alike demanded answers. It was not until the presentation by the Swedish archivist Dr. Ake Kromnov<sup>o</sup> on contemporary records at the International Congress of Archivists (ICA) that these issues



were openly discussed in an international forum.

In Kromony's view, although

the appraisal of records is one of the most important and sensitive problems of archival science, the amount of literature has not been in proportion to its significance. Throughout the world the difficulties of terminology has provided the barrier of understanding. Also the profession has tended to concentrate on practical matters rather than the theoretical.(53)

Appraisal had, in Kromnov's opinion, two reasons for its existence: one being that the enormous flood of records was too great for any archives to accommodate; and the other that the economic consequence of maintenance in the age of recession was too great to overlook. The pressures on government to destroy records so as to reduce costs were increasing.(54) The orderly destruction of records promised to save the costs of storage and allow manpower and facilities to be utilized for other purposes.

Cutting against the grain of government economy measures was a new trend. As Kromnov saw it,

materials once considered expendable because of lack of demand and the belief that the contents were un-manageable were now actively sought by quantitative Social Scientists and Social-Historians.(55)

Kromnov identified two elements vital to the solution of the problems of appraising this sort of material: faith in experience-based judgement of the archivist and the need to find more objective criteria for appraisal and selection.(56) He acknowledged that the archivist's experience with historical questions is invaluable, but, in the long run, his limitations must cause him to develop more objective criteria.

An interesting point raised by Kromnov is the theory promoted by German archivist Hans Boom. Boom proposed that "after fundamental study, records should be preserved which are judged to be valuable by the standards which are contemporary to the origins of the material."(57) Kromnov admits that the difficulty with Boom's theory is that certain areas of later research, such as environmental concerns, are not immediately noticed at the time records are created and even when their disposition is being determined.(58)

Kromnov's presentation to the ICA signals a renewal of appraisal literature. Recent writers have concentrated on the question of reappraisal, and have mixed practical examples with theoretical ideas in their approach to the problem. In her discussion of the papers of American congressmen and senators, Eleanor MacKay found that the overwhelming volume combined with small staff resources and a small budget created an intolerable condition. Using examples from her acquisitions, she illustrated her concerns for volume: Hubert Humphrey had

transferred 154 cartons of correspondence, most of which were form letter replies; Senator Alex Wiley of Wisconsin transferred 805 Hollinger boxes covering his 24-year Congressional career.(59) What to do with these records? Their importance to their local regions and to historical research are undisputed but the total volume created a problem that called out for some rational solution.

In an attempt to find a rational solution, MacKay and several colleagues investigated research demands and the statistical requirements for the sampling of Congressional records. They concluded that "the retention of as much as 20 percent of a large, homogeneous series ... would preserve a large enough universe for most statistical studies.(60) The researchers noted that scholars often needed as little as "2 or 3 percent samples from a total body of records," therefore the proposed 20 percent sample would provide ample research data.(61)

When the method was applied to the papers of former Congressman George W. Grider, the archivists retained the non-selected material as a precaution. In their post-selection analysis of the non-selected material, few items of a valuable and unique nature were discovered. Therefore, the archivists decided to discard the non-selected material and retained only the original twenty percent sample. The historian-archivist's fear of destroying valuable material by random sampling could be set aside and new archival options could be discussed.

MacKay claimed that if every archival institution reduced certain series of papers by 80 percent, researchers would find little difference between archival collections. By using the 20 percent sample, MacKay proposed that co-operative retention policies concerning homogeneous files could be implemented. Through their co-operative policies, archival institutions could specialize in certain areas of research, in a fashion similar to libraries, which have instituted inter-institutional collection policies for rare books and periodical holdings.

MacKay cautions that the area of archival appraisal requires the highest professional judgement of the archivist. To aid and guide in the archival decisions of retention and selection, MacKay urged the profession to develop appraisal standards to prepare archivists to handle and control the increasing documentary resources of the nation.

In 1979, the Public Records Committee of the British Record Association resurrected several appraisal alternatives in their submission to the Committee on Modern Public Records, chaired by Sir Duncan Wilson.(62) The Association's committee strongly endorsed the idea of transfer to other archival repositories of public records deemed unsuitable for deposit in the PRO. But, in contrast to the American method of transferring only that not retained by the National Archives, the committee members recommended that a record group should be transferred in its entirety to a repository which specializes in the area

relating to the records. Modern methods of computerized testing of records could provide the linkage between the repository and the national archives. The main point stressed was that no sample should be taken by the national archives while the remaining material is housed elsewhere. The separation of the material would not be convenient for the researchers who would be required to visit two repositories if they wished to use the entire body of records.

If the committee endorsed the transfer idea, they rejected microfilming as a means of reduction. The committee argued for a system of half-way houses. These archival record centres would house archival material in low-cost storage, not necessarily environmentally controlled, until the final decision for retention or disposal was reached. Associated with their plan for storage was the retention of records for only set time periods. This would allow researchers to use the material but would save the government money in archival storage and permanent preservation.(63) The British committee did not address themselves to the issue of sampling and were content only to advance arguments which would aid the disposition of administrative records. Their ideas were not new but were fresh in the context of the recession-minded bureaucracies of government.

In America, archivists Frank Boles and R. Joseph Anderson reexamined sampling as an appraisal method. Boles reiterated

Lewinson's case that statistical sampling needed a high measure of reliability. To his dismay, Boles found that the technology and the terminology of the computer age had frightened archivists away from implementing statistical samples. Stressing Schellenberg's statement that the archivist would be required to seek expert opinions and aid in handling modern records, Boles states that the archivist should only lay down the guidelines and requirements of the sample. Experts in statistics could be called in to handle all the delicate details. Boles defines two sampling techniques: random sampling in which each document has a unique number; and systematic sampling or selective sampling. To use random sampling, "each element of the population to be sampled must bear a unique identification number." (64) Due to the difficulties and cost of implementing random sampling archivists have tended to rely on an alternative technique - systematic sampling. "Instead of random tables for choosing elements, in systematic sampling elements are picked by their location within the total population." (65) For example, a systematic sample could be based on selecting every 1,000th element from the total population, the rest being scheduled for destruction. Combinations of the two methods could reflect regional concerns or major issues thus satisfying qualitative criticisms. Boles did not address himself to this issue of qualitative selection; one may surmise that this was not within his area of concern as these samples would not have a measure of reliability to their selection.

R. Joseph Anderson surveyed the state archives of the United States with reference to their appraisal of public welfare case records.(66) Of the 46 respondents, 11 states denied the archival value of the records. Yet of the 35 states who admitted value, only seven had accessioned case records. Confidentiality and bulk were the main drawbacks to the acceptance of the records. Of the states which had accessioned social welfare case files, five used some form of sampling, one state microfilmed all the records and the last state kept all the original documents. One state, Wisconsin, was planning to create a data base which would store the major fields of information gleaned from the files. Anderson did not discuss in detail the methods of sampling used but he did clearly illustrate the lack of communication between archival institutions, which Kromnov had also noted. In view of the fact that over a decade after microfilming was rejected as a means of storing records one of these states was still involved in the program, one may inquire how well the archival network in the United States is working and how well the national and state archives communicate with each other. The lack of application of sampling by the state archives shows that the misgivings expressed by Renee Doehard still persist. No criteria exist to provide support of the archivist faced with sampling, therefore no sampling is undertaken.

All of the appraisal issues and problems raised by the archival community in the post Second World War period were

conveniently brought together by Felix Hull in his study of sampling commissioned by the International Council on Archives (ICA) and published in 1981.(67) Hull's study ushers in the most recent phase of discussion of appraisal.

The Hull report may be regarded as the major work on appraisal sampling since the pioneering days of Schellenberg and Lewinson. By surveying the members of the ICA, several important reassessments were presented in the theoretical discussion of sampling. Hull defined sampling, in the archival sense, as the "deliberate selection of certain units (files, volumes or whatever is the normal format within the class or series) as an example of that class or series for permanent preservation."(68) Recognizing that the selection of records at any stage in a records life cycle is a form of sampling, Hull clearly states that sampling is a very specific method of selection employed by "the statistician to answer problems in quantitative analysis, and also a determinable process whereby the archivist attempts to reduce bulk, not at an early stage of the management process, but as part of the final stage of control."(69) In other words, sampling is not an administrative tool but is a technique which determines the future status of a record based on reference and research needs and on historical and similar criteria.(70) For Hull, the archivist and not the administrators of the records, must decide on the adoption of sampling for any record series.



Ideally, all records should be retained for preservation. But if this proves impossible, what methods of sampling are available to the archivist? Hull identified four methods of sampling used in the archival community:

- a) the taking of specimens;
  - b) purposive sampling or qualitative sampling on a pre-determined pattern or basis;
  - c) systematic sampling also on a pre-determined basis; and
  - d) random sampling employing a specific and scientific objective process;
- both (c) and (d) may at times be referred to as quantitative sampling.(71)

The taking of specimens is, according to Hull, "simply the selection from an ephemeral series of papers to some specimens to illustrate administrative practice at a particular date."(72) This method was described as having limited historical merit with uncertain research potential; it could only be used as an indicator of a series and never for statistical or comparative studies.(73)

Purposive sampling is a more systematized method of qualitative sampling. This method of sampling occurs "when a selection is made on a pre-conceived set of criteria, the intention being to retain the most significant or important records of a class or series."(74) Hull admits that a biased sample results from this subjective application of criteria but it allows for the retention of important information from series of general significance.

Systematic sampling depends upon the archivist "establishing a particular pattern of selection in that either every nth file is preserved or else all the papers for a particular month, year or other chronological unit." (75) Hull emphasises that previous writers had termed this method as being "random". But with the adoption of statistical terminology by archivists, random sampling acquired a new definition, a definition that requires that every piece in a series has an equal chance of being selected for preservation. (76) Hull indicates that researchers find this method unsatisfactory for the provision of an objective data base. Archivists, on the other hand, favour systematic sampling because of its easy application.

Random sampling, as previously mentioned, is based on the principle that every piece in a series has an equal chance of representing the series. Selection based on particular interests, patterns within a series or any other subjective criteria must be avoided if the random sampling is to be used in quantitative or statistical studies. Hull indicates that the size of the random sample depends on the degree of accuracy desired by the archivist. It should be remembered that absolute size of a sample is more important than proportional size. Only in the determination of the sample's size is the subjective judgement of the archivist brought to bear. This archival decision must weigh the future research potential with the costs of maintenance and the initial cost of sampling.

Hull sets forth, for the first time, the requirement that all information on the sampling procedures must be presented with the sampled material. The archivist must record the decisions made, the material and volume destroyed, and the exact measures used to create the sample. By providing this information, the research community will at least be able to judge whether the sample is of any use for a particular purpose.

By acknowledging the demands for quantitative data and the "natural tendency" for archivists to be qualitative, Hull realistically portrays recent trends. He also indicates that appraisal in its reappraisal aspect is not widely accepted. Hull implies, following Kromnov's discussion, that the reality of the current archival situation is one where finances are of prime importance. The historical training of the "main stream" archivists cannot combat the tendencies for cost and storage savings. Sampling is an archival tool that is used out of necessity. The economic downturn in government revenues has forced the sampling issue to the forefront of the archival community. Hull has, in his report, made a sad situation clearer and more relevant by his exacting definitions and guidelines for usage. The Boles assertion of frightened archivists wary of arcane terminology and methodology can be shelved as Hull's definitions and guidelines are expressed in archival terms and not "computer-ese".

The separation of the report into the theoretical and the practical applications of appraisal illustrates the Kromnov belief that archivists are more practical than insightful. Hull's examples closely resemble those found in the literature of the forties when illustrations were the only method used to communicate sampling techniques. It would seem that if the practical application of a technique can be shown to the archival community then a theoretical discussion will follow.

So, as Schellenberg and Lewinson provided a foundation of ideas grounded in practical examples for their generation, Hull has built another pillar to the structure which addresses the issues faced by his generation. The criticisms of appraisal sampling will not be silenced by the report. Rather the archival community and their research clientele now have a solid work to assail or to reinforce. The issues raised by the previous writers cannot be resolved because many of them relate to ideal situations or to perceptions and attitudes held by the community.

The verdict on quantitative sampling and its benefits to the historical community is still out. In a recent article, British historian G.M. Moss criticized the notion that sampling will result in a body of records useable for quantitative research.(77) Questions relating to the optimal limit of a sample were raised as the author took a very conservative stand. What was the exact number of case files needed to be researched

before any accurate trends could be stated? Was it 5,000 files? Or 50,000? The issue of the size of samples to be preserved to accommodate the essential service of an archivist to a researcher will be one of the major topics of this decade. The accessibility of the material sampled to the researcher will be another hotly debated issue. Should archives create data bases for research use from their archival material? Is this a violation of provenance? Or is it merely another method of allowing easier access to historical information?

In 1981, American archivist Leonard Rapport wrote an article attacking the lack of reappraisal methods for archival holdings.(78) His argument revolves around the realization that the space, the material, and the funding needed by archives is becoming more expensive. The storage, preservation, and serving of records is not free nor is the funding limitless. With these mounting costs, Rapport believes that archivists must face the crucial decision as to "what records we are going to be able to afford to preserve."(79) Furthermore, Rapport asserts that these records are not the sole preserve of any interest group, such as historians, genealogists and archivists; they belong to each and every citizen.(80) The archivist must begin to justify the preservation of archival holdings based on their utility and research use to a clientele which is larger than the traditional archival users.

In his discussion as to how and why records of questionable value were accessioned, Rapport lists several possibilities:

a) the records could have been accessioned after a faulty appraisal, the appraising archivist neglecting to use the contemporary standards; b) the appraising archivist could have implemented the standards of the time but the standards have changed rendering the records valueless; or c) the records may have been acquired without any appraisal criteria being applied, as was the case in the early years of the National Archives of the United States when storage space and funding were abundant.(81)

Rapport found it easier to understand how the records were accessioned than to understand the inability and reluctance of the archival profession to reappraise them. The inability to dispose of valueless records, according to Rapport, involved a) a sense of permanence established over time by the records' inclusion in the published guides and catalogs of the institution; b) the misgivings of possible repercussions if desired material is destroyed; c) the fear of conflict with fellow staff members if their appraisal judgements are reversed and, finally, d) a sense of mystique surrounding certain types of records, such as maritime and military records, seem to be endowed by our society with a sense of immortality. This sense creates a situation where objective appraisal is difficult if not impossible. He frankly states that he does not "know how

anybody gets rid of any records relating to a warship, whether or not the vessel ever fired a round in anger." (83)

Although Rapport sets no specific recommendation as to the implementation of reappraisal methods, he stressed that the reappraisal methods must allow time for the public to become aware of the records through published inventories, guides and catalogues; and to allow time for analysis of the uses of the records.

Challenging Schellenberg's emphasis on the importance of evidential value, Rapport claims that archivists have retained too many records on the basis of their having evidential value. The need to record the responsibilities and duties of public agencies is important, as Schellenberg stated, but the retention of so many records from so many agencies must be questioned. Some of the records have never been used, and many were used once for an administrative history and have remained unused ever since. The retention of these unused records raises the issue of permanence. Rapport advocates the dropping of the definition "permanent value" from the archival glossary and in its place a term such as "worthy of continued preservation" should be adopted. This term or one similar to it would indicate that the life of some records is something less than eternal. The change in terminology would permit archivists to "entertain the thought that appraisal standards can change." (84)

Describing appraisal as "at best an inexact science

perhaps more an art:, Rapport raised three questions which any reappraisal program must consider.(85) Finding that researchers often consider unique information and important information to be synonymous when they are not necessarily so, Rapport states that researchers will seek to retain every bit of available information on particular vessels, officials, and agencies regardless of the information's importance. An archivist must determine whether scholarship will suffer if information is destroyed and not whether the information is unique. Secondly, the archivist must decide, if the reappraised records are to be retained, is there a reasonable expectation that research will occur? The final question which an appraisal archivist must ask is if the records were offered today, would they be retained? These three questions reflect the issues which confront the archivist doing reappraisal and the importance of that task.

Rapport's article is the first serious article to address the issue of reappraisal. Although Hull mentioned reappraisal, he acknowledged that the profession had not yet embraced the concept. This issue will be one of the major areas of discussion in the coming decades and more articles are likely to appear advocating the implementation of systematic reappraisal.

In 1983, the Principal Assistant Keeper of the PRO, A.A.H. Knightsbridge, raised a new issue in his presentation to the Civil Service College in London, when he spoke of the non-use of sampled material. The Public Record Office has over 700



classes of particular instance papers (PIPS) or case files, many of which are of potential use to the social scientists. Yet genealogical researchers have been the main users and not the academic researchers. As Knightsbridge summed it up:

The experience of other national archives which have taken samples of PIP has been very similar. User interest in them for statistical use is reported as negligible or non-existent; they are used, if at all, in searches for genealogical or other specific items of information which may happen to have been preserved in the sample. This is largely because quantitative studies require substantial funding to reduce the information contained in the PIP to machine-readable form for computer analysis; costs arising mainly from the work of preparing the data and inputting it to the computer ... are so expensive that even a small sample would be too big for study unless very substantial funding was available to reduce them to machine-readable form.(86)

Knightsbridge's comments raise a very important issue for contemporary archives. Sampling assumes a user clientele but if the researchers who are intended to use the sampled material are not using the material, the reasoning behind the procedure is placed in question. With the high costs of maintenance and the pressures of Government to cut expenditures, archives may be forced to institute reappraisal procedures for their sampled holdings. After all, if the material is not used by its intended clientele, its usefulness must be challenged. Knightsbridge's

comments reinforce Rapport's demand for systematic reappraisal of all archival holdings. Furthermore, his comments place in question the entire policy of sampling material for research use. Is sampling fulfilling the goals set by the archivist or has the archivist miscalculated the worth of sampled materials? Like the issue of reappraisal, the value of sampling material is likely to be another major area of discussion in the coming decades.

Although the literature of appraisal is not extensive, several general issues relevant to the preservation of military personnel files have been discussed in it. The nature of the personnel files, as a form of case files, has not been examined in any detail and no specific guidelines have been created to aid archivists in selecting and preserving them. Questions relating to the importance of an individual's records over a sample of the records remain unclear. Should archivists retain samples which represent or illustrate the personnel files and their subject matter or should they retain all the files?

Furthermore, if sampling is found applicable, which method should be adopted: qualitative or quantitative? The present literature does not strongly suggest any method which is universally acceptable for case files. Moreover, Knightbridge's assertion that sampled collections are not being used by their intended clientele raises serious questions as to the validity of the suppositions behind sampling as an appraisal method.

Leonard Rapport's argument for reappraisal procedures evokes another issue which must concern the archivist appraising military personnel files. These files are classified as historical, but, by their nature, they have remained in the custody of the military until recently. With their release to the archives, will future research potential be met? Will the archives retain the files permanently? Or will they accept the idea that the archival value of the personnel files may decrease over time, and thus institute a reappraisal program?

If these issues were not enough for the archivist to consider, there is the matter of society's emotional feelings about war service. Do personnel files, like other military records noted by Rapport, possess an aura of mystique? Have the personnel files been accorded a unique place in archival repositories? To examine whether or not military personnel files have been accorded a unique place within archival repositories and the other issues mentioned, we should first turn to a survey of the appraisal policies implemented by the various national archives for the World War I military personnel files.

CHAPTER THREE

DISPOSITION OF MILITARY PERSONNEL FILES:  
A MULTINATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Within the military establishment, records are created to document the workings of the military system, namely the activities of units and the duties and location of personnel. To accomplish this task, the military record offices keep files bearing on a wide range of military activities, such as the collection and custodial care of soldiers' documents; the reporting of casualties; the maintenance of a complete record of all honours and awards gained by military personnel; the compilation of statistical data covering strength and casualties of units, supplies and quarter-master stores, wastage returns, and so on; and the custody of unit diaries and the proceedings of boards of military inquiry.

Although all the diversified activities of the records offices are of interest, the creation and preservation of military personnel files are important to our discussion. The personnel file of the serviceman can be described as the military establishment's history of a serviceman's career. When a civilian enters military service, his enlistment and medical documents create the beginnings of a personnel file. Throughout the duration of service the military record office will preserve the details and incidents of military importance connected with the life or death of the serviceman so that at

the end of the service, the personnel file will contain documentation relating to the serviceman's enlistment or conscription, training, stationing, service time, conduct, health, and discharge or death. The military administration possesses a personnel file on each and every serviceman in order to know the whereabouts of its personnel. A second aspect of the administrative use of the personnel files is that the file records the documentation of the contractual agreement between the serviceman and the state. While the military's immediate administrative need to know the details of a serviceman's record lapses upon completion of military service, the second aspect, that of the obligations of the contract, does not lapse until the death of the serviceman. Personnel files are used by other government departments to establish the benefits and entitlements of the civilian veterans. In essence, then, personnel files can only be considered administratively dead when the serviceman has died.

As one can see, the importance of the military's personnel files extends into both the military and civilian aspects of a serviceman's life. Yet despite the importance of these files, the archival literature on the appraisal and preservation of these types of files is nonexistent, so that the only way to discover the actual appraisal policies implemented by governments and their archival agencies is to conduct a survey of national archives on an international basis. As the specific records under our consideration are the personnel files of the

Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF), a survey of the other World War I combatants will provide a measure of comparison as to the treatment and preservation of the files. Each state combatant in World War I was contacted for information about policies regarding the disposition and appraisal of 1914-1919 military personnel files. Responses were received from the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Austria and Canada.

#### United Kingdom

Prior to the publication of the report of the Grigg Commission on the state of public records, the military establishment had maintained a policy of placing all military service records on permanent retention.(1) Each Royal Navy ship or station kept a ship's ledger, within which the personal characteristics of each crewman were recorded. In addition, the Admiralty maintained a central registry of all servicemen in the Royal Navy. The information recorded in the register corresponded to that found in each ship's ledger.(2) The War Office retained for each serviceman (Army personnel), his attestation papers and his Medical History Sheet. The Royal Flying Corps/Royal Air Force recorded on ledger sheets the personal facts of its officers and used record cards for its airmen.(3) The RFC/RAF cards were more detailed than the Admiralty or War Office records.

The Grigg Commission was informed that administrative interest in the personnel records of an individual ceased several years after his death. It was proposed by the Admiralty and War Office that personnel records be kept for a period of sixty years after creation.(4) In its report, the Commission recommended that public records should pass through a system of reviews to insure the retention of valuable records. However, for the class of records defined as "particular instance papers" or PIPs, a special system of review was to be established. The solution proposed was the creation of a committee to take a census of all PIPs in the government, on which the archivists and records officials could base their decisions on preservation. Furthermore, the Commission recommended that, due to the massive bulk of PIPs, only those series capable of reduction into statistical samples should be retained.(5) The Commission stressed that no effort should be made to preserve PIPs solely for their biographical or genealogical information.(6)

In 1957, the PIPs Committee (PIPC) began its meetings to investigate the status and extend of PIPs within the Government. It examined 118 major series and several minor series. By 1965, the work of the committee was seen to be losing its effectiveness because departmental record officials had begun to perform many of the committee's duties as part of their records management function. The ad hoc approach which was taken by the Committee especially with regard to academic consultation created a situation where no formalized rules of behavior were set for the Public Record Office (or for any

other government agency) to follow. Questions as to the committee's effectiveness were being raised by the archival community because it appeared that the original recommendations by the Grigg Commission were not being followed.(7) The PIPC abandoned regular meetings, without the formal permission of the Lord Chancellor, so that in 1965 it effectively ceased to exist. No replacement committee was appointed but the Advisory Committee on Public Records maintains an eye on the situation of PIPs within the government bureaucracy.

In the same year as the PIPs Committee was disbanded, the Advisory Committee recommended that military departments possessing large bodies of personal or individual records created since 1900 should see to their proper disposition at the end of their administrative life. This recommendation was in accordance with the philosophy of the Grigg Commission as seen in their resolution regarding biographical and genealogical material. The 1900 cutoff date had no special significance; it merely reflected the terminus ad quem of service records held in the Public Record Office in 1965.(8)

In 1976, prodded by changes in the research methods and in the scope of historical inquiry, the Advisory Committee reconsidered the matter and recommended that:

- a) all records of service of soldiers who were discharged or who died between 1901 and 1913 should be transferred to the PRO.



- b) the fire damaged series of World War I records of service should be destroyed when their administrative value ceases, in accordance with a Grigg recommendation.
- c) a separate collection of undamaged documents of some soldiers discharged between 1914 and 1920 who received disability pensions should be transferred to the PRO, as a sample, 75 years after the date the last soldier became non-effective (i.e. 1996).
- d) records of service in the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force for their period 1901-1918 should be treated in a similar manner. But due to their relatively small quantity, the records of the RAF should be preserved in their entirety.(9)

In 1980, through its Advisory Panel, the Ministry of Defence recommended that all service records of the armed forces should be retained for a period of 85 years from date of creation, after which transfer to the PRO could occur; and that a common standard for retention and disposal should be developed with regard to these records. In the following year, the Defence Ministry restated their recommendation for a common practice and noted that with the 85 year rule the post-1914 records would not be due for a decision until 1999.(10) The acknowledgement by the Defence Panel that the archival community has until 1999 to create a common standard is very important. The realization that for fifteen years the records of military personnel may not be under consideration allows for more studies which may result in specific recommendations as to the future

preservation of the service records.

### United States

The military personnel records of the United States are held in the National Record Centre in St. Louis, Missouri but legal custodianship remains with the military establishment. (11) The National Archives and Records Service (NARS) has delayed making any definite appraisal decisions until 75 years after an individual's discharge from active service. In fact, due to the interfiling of post-1939 personnel files into the pre-1939 personnel files, the archival decision on appraisal can be delayed until the 21st Century, when according to Assistant Archivist David Peterson of the Federal Records Center, "miniaturization may permit their retention in toto." (12)

A fire in 1973 at the St. Louis Personnel Center destroyed a significant number of Army records dating from 1912 - 1959 and a small portion of Air Force records. This unfortunate fire may have eliminated the need for an archivist to impose sampling criteria.

### Commonwealth of Australia

The personnel files of the Australian Army are held in the Central Army Record Office (CARO). (13) In 1982, the Commonwealth Archives and CARO reached a disposal agreement which authorized the retention or destruction of various

military record series after stipulated time periods. The military personnel files from the First and Second World Wars have been designated for permanent retention. However, permanent retention of post-1947 personnel files was abandoned due to the cost of storage and the volume of the files.(14)

With the decision not to place post-1947 personnel files on permanent retention, the Archives, faced with the realization that these records had administrative and research value, developed comprehensive criteria for weeding files. Sampling was not even considered. Instead the basic categories of documents contained in each file were identified on the basis of administrative and/or research value. After some experimentation, two broad categories were devised:

Class 'A' documents

Essential service records or substitute documents and documents required for administration of continuing rights and entitlements of service personnel after discharge.

Class 'B' documents

Documents of ephemeral value required only for in-service administration.

Each records schedule then indicates which categories of documents are to be weeded (Class B) and which retained (Class A) for historical and administrative uses.

The Commonwealth Archives does not use statistical sampling because of the high costs incurred in designing a valid procedure. In its place, the method used attempts to capture the main elements in the series. The records of permanent value are identified and retained, while the remainder are sampled. A ten per cent sample of this remainder was found to be adequate but provisions have been made for a reappraisal of the sample at a later date to determine whether it can be further reduced. The Archives does not sample files on an alphabetical, topographical or agency basis but rather uses chronological and specialized systematic sampling in their reduction techniques. In addition, specimen samples are taken in order to provide evidence of government records procedures. The exact results of the Australian methods are not clear as they have not been employed over any great period of time.

#### New Zealand

The World War I personnel files of New Zealand's military forces are held in the National Archives in Wellington.(15) The National Archives and the Defence Ministry have scheduled the military personnel files of World War I, along with those dating back to the South African War and all their post-1918 personnel files. The New Zealand archival authorities did not elaborate on their scheduling methods or on the material retained in the personnel files. In the 1960s, the South African and World War I personnel files undersent extensive microfilming, the exact nature and scope of which were not discussed by the

archival authorities. It is known that the military records relating to the Maori Wars of the nineteenth century have been retained in their entirety.(16)

### France

The World War I personnel files of the French military are divided among several archival agencies.(17) The files on officers are held by the Historical Section of the Army. Those of the non-commissioned officers and other ranks born after 1892 are held in the Military Archives at Pau. For those born before 1892, records are held in the archives of the "department" where the soldier resided on his 20th birthday. The Military Archives at Pau has responsibility for the other military records, such as regimental diaries, unit and combat reports as well as the records citing individual decorations and citations. Correspondence from French archival authorities did not include any mention of sampling related to these records.(18)

### Germany

The German Empire, with the Prussian King acting as the German Emperor and War Lord, fielded seven armies as parts of an "Imperial Army" in the First World War.(19) The Prussian Army formed the largest part of the Imperial Army, incorporating many of the smaller northern German states such as Saxony and

Hanover under its military umbrella. The southern kingdoms of Württemberg and Bavaria and the Duchy of Baden sent their small armies to form part of the Imperial Army, which was under the command of Prussian officers. At the end of the war, the monarchies and aristocracies of Germany were overthrown in favour of a republican form of government and their armies were combined into a single national force.

The personnel files and military records of the Prussian Army were destroyed during the Second World War.(20) The military records for the Württemberg Army are held in the Hauptstaatsarchiv in Stuttgart. The files on officers and other ranks comprises 50 metres of holdings and are arranged in alphabetical order by surname. In addition, the Hauptstaatsarchiv had the administrative files, such as combat and unit diaries, the extent of which exceeds 300 metres.(21)

The military archives of Bavaria are maintained in the Hauptstaatsarchiv-Kriegsarchiv in Munich. The names of the 1,400,000 men who served within the Bavarian army are registered in 23,000 volumes according to unit designations. The archives has not compiled a complete index of all personnel for this period; therefore, access to these registers is difficult if the exact volume and unit designation are now known. For the 500,000 servicemen listed as missing in action, killed in action or having died of wounds, registers exist which are similar to our honour rolls. For members of the Bavarian officer

corps, a finding aid exists which directs the researcher to the location of individual personnel files.(22)

### Austria

The military records of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire are held in the state of archives in Vienna.(23) However, with the break up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire after 1918, many of the military records destined for the archives were scattered, destroyed, or lost prior to their transfer or their surrender to the successor states.(24)

Within the state archives, the War Archives or Kriegsarchiv is responsible for those military records which were safely transferred or were designated as belonging to the new state of Austria. This being the case, the archives possesses only the records of the general military commands of Vienna, Graz and Innsbruck; the remainder are held in the archives of the successor states or have been lost.

The Kriegsarchiv has within its collection the records of the Ministry of War for the period 1606-1918, the judicial courts of the military, the military institutions and commands, the navy, Imperial decorations and awards, as well as the memoirs and manuscripts of noted military personalities. The collection suffered heavy losses with the delivery of documents to the successor states after 1918 and during the course of

removal from Vienna in the Second World War.

The Kriegsarchiv holds 40,000 fascicles (bundles) and 5,500 volumes of personnel records, ranging from rank tables and muster rolls to pension records of the Imperial-Royal armies from 1740 to 1918. For the years before 1869, the material is arranged according to troops and institutions; thereafter, according to the proper names of the individuals concerned. To find access to the dossiers containing information about a specific individual, one must know a person's birthdate, his place of residence, and the troop corps in which he served. A large number of personnel records of the First World War (those concerning people born after 1864) remained in the successor states after 1918 or were surrendered to them.

Supplementary information on military personnel can be found in the awards and decoration records (Belohnungs Akten). The archives set aside these records, which range from 1789 to 1918, as a separate holding. The records of the military's training and educational institutions have proven invaluable to the study of military personnel. The sickness memoranda of these institutions have come to serve as a substitute for personnel records that have been lost. Information on the education and composition of the officer corps is also available from these records.

The records of regimental and higher field commands were to be part of the Kriegsarchiv holdings, but, as a result of



the events of 1918, many of the records were destroyed or lost during the transfer of power and authority to the successor states.(25)

Correspondence with the Austrian archival authorities indicates that no comprehensive study has been undertaken to examine the extent of the Austro-Hungarian military records in the custody of the archives of the successor states.

### Canada

The impact of the First World War on Canadians and their society has been well documented, but few realize the exact scope or extent of our nation's military involvement in this experience. With a population of over seven million and a peacetime military establishment of 74,213 personnel, the enrollment for military service from 1914 to 1919 was 619,636 Canadians into the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Canadian Naval enlistments numbered about 10,000 but their service was in the Royal Navy and not as a separate naval force. The Royal Air Corps had a Canadian contingent of roughly 24,000. During the period of hostilities, 232,494 Canadians were listed as casualties, of whom over 60,000 died. Of the surviving veterans, 91,521 were classified as invalided and on military pensions at the end of 1919. Vocational school training programs had enrollments of over 20,000 veterans by the end of 1919. Overall, eight percent of all Canadians enlisted, of whom one

of every four was wounded and one of every ten died in military service. The sheer number of deaths and casualties had an impact on Canadian society without precedent in our history. It is from within this framework of statistics that the archival community must attempt to appraise military personnel records.

The military records of the Canadian Armed Forces and its predecessors, the Royal Canadian Navy, the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Canadian Army which have been declared archival are held in the custody of the Public Archives of Canada (PAC). The military records covering the activities of military units and military bases such as regimental diaries and station reports are in the custody of the Federal Archives Division of the PAC. The personnel files of all Canadian military servicemen (as well as the records of civil service personnel) are kept in the National Personnel Records Centre, a separate branch of the PAC.(26) These files remain under the administrative control of their creating departments. It is only recently that the personnel files of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919, were declared archival. With the change in custody from the Department of National Defense to the Public Archives of Canada, the Federal Archives Division was faced with the issue of appraisal and retention of the files in their entirety or retaining a sample of the whole. After consultation with the Department of National Defense, the Public Archives decided to place the personnel files of the First World War, as well as those of the Second World War

and the Korean conflict, on permanent retention. The personnel files of servicemen serving during peacetime will be sampled, due to cost and storage factors. Appraisal criteria for this procedure have not yet been fully devised.

When one surveys the various appraisal policies discussed, one feature inherent in all the policies stands out. Each of the archival repositories has decided to keep its first World War military personnel files in their entirety. The only files which are missing are those which have been lost or destroyed inadvertently. The sense of mystique, identified by Leonard Rapport in his reappraisal article, would appear to apply to military records as it does to ships' records. The universal decision to retain virtually all extant First World War personnel files raises questions as to why these files are kept in their entirety and whether they need to be kept. Are they kept for scholarship? Or for patriotic reasons? One can only speculate as to the possible reasons.

The activities and the exploits of the military have long been a favoured subject of historical research. Even today, scholars continue to be fascinated with the details and policies surrounding military operations. Often the official histories of military service and events are written before the military records have ceased to be administratively active. Academic scholars have continued to revise and alter the historical picture of the armed forces as time has distanced the author from the actual event. In addition to the scholarly works,

there exists a different type of historical work of importance - that of the regimental or unit histories. C.E. Dornbusch, in his compilation of Canadian regimental histories stated that the histories of regimental and other military units are often the work of dedicated amateur historians.(27) Unlike the scholarly work which seldom deals with specific military units, the regimental and unit histories concentrate on the activities and personnel of a particular unit. These histories are not directed to a national audience but to the community and region directly affected by the actions of the regiment or unit involved.

The writing of these types of military history relies heavily on the official reports, the communiqués, and the personnel records filed in the military records offices. It is difficult to determine whether or not specific records are used more than others or if certain types of military records are never used in the compilation of data. However, one can safely state that the writing of regimental and unit histories relies on the individual personnel files for its information regarding the activities of the men in the units. Within recent years, the historical community has drifted away from military histories based on battles and strategies into areas of quantitative study and analyses of the social conditions, education, and background of the military. For example, S.F. Wise, in The Official History of the Royal Canadian Air Force, uses statistical analyses to describe the Canadians who served with the Royal Flying Corps, the Royal Naval Air Service, and the Royal Air Force.(28)

Prior to the creation of Wise's data base, no comprehensive body of information existed on Canadian servicemen in the British flying services. A computerized data base of some 13,000 names with brief biographical details on known Canadians was created. For this information, the analysis concentrated on the fields of origins (city, province), dates and methods of enlistment, and number of casualties. Other areas of interest, such as age at enlistment, trades before enlistment, and awards and decorations were not considered for inclusion due to biased or sketchy information. Through this study, Wise has revealed some hitherto unknown characteristics of the Canadian element in the Royal Flying Corps.

Although quantitative studies of military personnel have been done in European historical circles, only one North American historian has ever written an article specifically on the potential usages of military records for social history. In 1981 article published in the American Historical Review, Richard Kohn addresses the issues of "old fashioned" military history and the areas of exploration opened up by the "new" social history.(29) Although the drift away from "drum and bugle" military history is clear, Kohn protests that few social historians have looked at the military in an attempt further to describe the American experience. According to Kohn, the stereotyped image of the American soldier has been fostered by the government, the veterans, and the historical community alike to the point where

Americans believe "that how they behave in service and in battle reflects their character as a people and their nature as a nation."

(30) The mythology and legends of the American fighting man have been challenged in recent years by studies and by new source materials. The homogeneity of the forces has been questioned by new studies which reveal that as many as 25% of the enlisted ranks in the United States Army were immigrants prior to 1890s. The perception that Americans were willing to fight for their beliefs has been shattered by evidence that the militias of New England refused to fight in the War of 1812, and that eleven per cent of all draftees in the First World War evaded service. Using this type of evidence and statistics, Kohn argues that the typical American serviceman as portrayed in patriotic accounts has never and will never exist.

To find out who the American soldier is, what he had done and from where he came, Kohn sets out three goals of research for social historians: to discover who served and who did not; to reconstruct the military life and environment; and to fully investigate the interaction between the military and its society. To attain these goals, the academic community must look beyond the memoirs, the diaries and such of the literate soldier, who has for so long provided the source material for study, and search the military records with its enlistment papers and personnel documents so as to reveal the "unknown soldiers".

In this century, scholars have turned away from the "drum

and bugle" romance of military history to a more statistical objective, style of military history. Yet distinctions among the various types of military records are not generally made by historians, or the general public. Military records appear to be viewed as one series of records, particularly those which involve the activities of the military during periods of hostilities. One can surmise that the archival profession, steeped as it is in the methods of principles of history, would be reluctant to view military records critically when for so long they have played an important role in historical writing and have seemingly gained a sense of permanence, a mystique.

One may speculate that archivists believe that society possesses emotional attachment to the military records. For those servicemen who were involved in the cauldron of war, the records of that experience are very special, particularly their own personnel file and the files of their living and dead comrades. Veterans organizations, such as the Royal Canadian Legion, have been very vocal against government policies which seem to endanger the records of the war or the memory of the dead. Genealogists who are seeking their family roots have a special attachment to the military records, in particular those records which possess personal details of the lives of the servicemen. The personnel files and muster rolls would be of great importance for any research into the background of service personnel. Any scheme which involves the destruction of material or the failure to preserve material would create ill-will between genealogist

and archivist. One may speculate that for the majority of people, the records may be seen to represent the sacrifice, the hardships, and the memory of those who served in war. If the presence of this sentiment is correct, any administrative action which could be seen as endangering the records would create a political furor which could seriously hurt the government's image. There must be some truth to this belief since the government archives of Australia and Canada have proposed the sampling of their peacetime military records, which apparently do not excite the same sentiments as wartime records.

Another reason for universal retention is that the archival community thereby postpones an appraisal decision on the records, perhaps in the hope that technology will provide a cheap and easy method to reduce the records onto some type of microform thus avoiding any public protest over the destruction of records.

Regardless of the reasons for the universal retention of the personnel files, the various archival agencies have accorded them a unique status among case files. These files like the other military files have gained an aura of immortality over time. Is this immortality of these files justified? To understand this question, a close examination of the personnel files of the CEF is necessary to see just what information is recorded in order to discuss the value of preserving the files permanently. Moreover, are there any options open to archival authorities other than complete retention or destruction?



## CHAPTER FOUR

### CANADIAN MILITARY PERSONNEL FILES: AN ANALYSIS

As Schellenberg has noted, the essence of archival appraisal is found in a thoroughgoing analysis of the context in which records are created and used and their content. We have seen why military personnel records are created and how they have been treated by several administrations. However, the long term preservation of military case records will probably depend on an analysis of their content, that is, their informational value, and it is that question to which we must now turn. In this chapter, the personnel files of the CEF will be examined to reveal the types of forms which were used by the Canadian military from 1914 to 1919, and to describe the information which the completed forms contain. Using this information, we can then bring out the factors to be taken into account and options to be considered in developing appraisal criteria for the entire series.

A small sample of ten of the original files held in the National Personnel Record Centre in Ottawa was acquired for this analysis in compliance with the federal Privacy Act. No personal information tags remain on the files such that identification of individuals is impossible. For our purposes, the censored material is not important as we are concerned with the documentation in each file and the informational value of those documents.

The personnel file can be best described as the military establishment's history of a serviceman's military career.

Documentation concerning enlistment, training, stationing, appointments and demotions, service time, pay lists and allowance payments, and discharge can be found in each individual file. Taken collectively, the 619,000 files constitute the most detailed documentation available to students of the experiences of an entire generation of Canadians who served during the years 1914-1919.

Upon examination, the contents of the personnel files can be divided into four areas, each representing an important aspect of military service: 1) enlistment; 2) career and service; 3) medical history; and 4) discharge. The enlistment aspect contains the attestation papers which represent the contract between the enlistee and the Crown for military service. The career and service documentation can include conduct reports, the findings of military courts of inquiry, civil punishments, and casualty forms. The medical information that a file may contain ranges from medical and dental histories, the findings of medical boards of inquiry, and "invalided histories", to reports from first aid stations and military hospitals. The fourth and last aspect relates to the discharge process of an individual from military service, the severing of the contractual agreement. The documentation can include kit inventory, last pay certificates, allowance payments, "Proceedings to discharge" papers and copies of the discharge parchment. A file may possess these documents or it may not; a file may possess other

miscellaneous documents relating to change of name, last will and testament, desertions, inquiries into pension benefits and papers relating to service in the British armed forces.

To begin, a composite picture of the documents in the sample of ten files was created as displayed in Table A. It should be noted that the actual contents of the files do not correspond to the list of discharge documents marked on each docket cover. The most striking example is that the docket covers indicate that each file at one time possessed conduct forms of a regimental, field or company nature, as shown in Table B. The absence of the conduct forms, as illustrated in Table A, would indicate that a weeding process was undertaken by military personnel after the cessation of hostilities. The housekeeping nature of the conduct forms may have facilitated their destruction after the termination of military service. At the present time, the Canadian Armed Forces destroys conduct forms after set time periods have elapsed.

As Table A indicates, attestation papers, medical histories and discharge papers are to be found in each file. The policy of the CEF was that for discharge the minimum documents required were the attestation papers, the "Proceedings to Discharge" form, and the medical histories such as were completed at the time of discharge. For enlistees who were rejected at the enlistment hall after medical examinations, the medical histories may not have been completed for inclusion into the personnel files. For service of longer duration, a medical history would have

Table A \*

INFORMATIONAL AREAS	FILE #									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1) ENLISTMENT										
ATTESTATION PAPERS	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
2) CAREER AND SERVICE										
CASUALTY FORMS	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
TRAINING HISTORY	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FIELD CONDUCT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
REGIMENTAL CONDUCT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
COMPANY CONDUCT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3) MEDICAL										
MEDICAL HISTORY	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
DENTAL HISTORY	x	-	x	-	-	x	x	-	-	x
INVALIDED HISTORY	-	x	x	x	-	x	-	x	x	-
MEDICAL EXAMINATION	x	-	-	-	-	-	-	x	-	-
MEDICAL REPORT	-	-	x	-	x	x	-	-	-	x
4) DISCHARGE										
KIT INVENTORY	x	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
LAST PAY CERTIFICATE	-	x	x	-	x	x	x	-	-	x
DISCHARGE	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Table B \*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
FIELD CONDUCT(MFW 178)	x	-	x	-	x	-	-	-	-	x
REGIMENTAL CONDUCT (MF B263)	-	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	-
COMPANY CONDUCT (MF B263a)	-	x	x	x	-	-	x	-	-	-

\* (x) indicates that documentation is present within the category.

been completed and would have been essential to the individual and to the Medical Corps.

When searching the medical area of the ten files, each individual was found to have a medical history but, in addition, half of the files possessed dental histories. It was the policy of the CEF that persons assigned for overseas duty were to have a dental examination prior to their transfer, and that dental histories were to be updated upon discharge from military service. Six of the files contained invalidated histories, which would, on the surface, indicate that being rendered an invalid was due to injuries sustained while on active service. However, it was the policy of the CEF to use invalidated histories for recently enlisted men who were declared medically unfit for military service upon close medical examination. For example, men with fallen arches or a blindness in one eye who had passed the initial medical examination would have been discharged as being medically unfit, and this would have been recorded in their invalidated histories. Hence the presence of an invalidated form does not necessarily indicate war related injuries.

Turning to the discharge aspect, kit inventories were listed on the docket covers but not on the discharge list. The kit inventory was a checklist of a serviceman's military equipment returned to military stores upon demobilization. These checklists were completed by the servicemen at the concentration camps in the United Kingdom prior to transport to Canadian

demobilization centres.(1) The housekeeping nature of the inventory would have made their retention in the files highly unlikely and we can assume that the presence of inventories within the files will be by chance. However, the last pay certificates and the "Proceedings to Discharge" papers are important to the individual serviceman and to the military for they represent the termination of the military contract between the serviceman and the Crown.

Within each file, miscellaneous documents can be found and can be considered as supplementary to the essential documents retained. Copies of pay ledgers, allowance payments, and war gratuity applications are examples of the documents which can be present. The lack of uniform representation of these documents indicates that they are not essential in establishing or maintaining the contractual agreement between the serviceman and the Crown. They can be deemed as housekeeping documents and their retention can be likened to that for the kit inventory.

Table A reveals that certain documents can be considered as essential to the personnel file in that they establish the contractual commitment of the serviceman and the Crown. An investigation of the documents themselves will reveal the information possessed in a typical file.

The attestation papers used during the First World War consisted of three forms: a) the CEF (volunteer) enlistment form - Militia Form W.23; b) "Particulars of enlisted personnel in the CEF" - Militia Form W.67; and c) the draft form used under

the Military Act 1917 from January, 1918 to the cessation of hostilities - Militia Form W.133. Within the ten files analysed, eight possessed the volunteer form and two had draft forms. Within the CEF, over 140,000 Canadians were drafted into military service out of the 200,000 called up. The Militia Form W.67 was associated with the M.F.W.23 form and not with the M.F.W.133 form as Militia Form W.67 applied to volunteer or regular servicemen and not to those conscripted into service.

Three data clusters can be recognised as being common to each of the attestation documents. These common clusters are present in each form but their corresponding elements may differ in very subtle ways. The first cluster consists of the serviceman's name, birthplace, birthdate, next-of-kin, trade and marital status, which constitute what could be termed the personal data cluster. The second cluster is related to the physical description of the serviceman. Its data elements are age, height, chest measurements, complexion, colour of eyes and hair, distinctive marks, and in the military's terms, religious denomination. The last cluster is often found by examining the military stamps which validate the documents, this military cluster indicates the military district and enlistment hall where the attestation papers were filed, the military unit being organised and the names of the officer commanding and the medical examiner. The presence of each cluster within the documents does not mean that each data element is to be found but the presence of the majority of elements is highly likely.

The Volunteer form (Militia Form W.23) has unique information ranging from an account of the previous military experience of the enlistee to whether or not the enlistee approves of vaccination. The Particulars form (Militia Form W.67) requests detailed information concerning the enlistee's family members such as the ages and names of children and parents. The Draft form (Militia Form W.133) is the shortest form of the three and its unique areas are those related to the draft number and to the draftee's voluntary or involuntary presence at the enlistment depot.

Within the second informational section of the ten files, only the Casualty form (Militia Form W.54 or A.F.B.103) is usually present. This form records the serviceman's complete tour of military service. Containing the basic information of the personal data cluster, this form has detailed information on transfers to units, on arrivals into theatres of activity, re-assignment, stations, punishments, casualties, hospitalization, character remarks, demobilization transports, designated depots and the discharge date. The casualty forms would be fundamental in the reconstruction of a serviceman's actual military duties and service.

When examining the medical section of the file contents, one may assume that each serviceman had a medical examination prior to or shortly after entrance into the CEF. The file should contain either a medical history (Militia Form B.313 or A.F.B.178) or an invalided history (Militia Form B.227).



As mentioned previously, the invalided history form was often used for those who were judged medically unfit at the time of enlistment. However, the issuance of the invalided form was upon the recommendation of medical boards of inquiry. Therefore, in many cases, medical board findings (A.F.B.179 or A.F.A.45) are to be found in conjunction with the invalided history. For individual cases relating to separate medical ailments or to injuries, medical reports (M.F.W.129 or D.M.S.1375) were filed as evidence for the consideration of the medical boards. Cases of serious injury resulted in the accumulation of more medical documents in the personnel file.

The medical history sheet (M.F.B.313 or A.F.B.178) contains the physical description of the serviceman in a manner similar to that in the attestation papers. But, in addition to this information, the form contains information on vaccination results and marks, the findings of medical boards of inquiry, the record of hospitalization with the listing of treatments and medical remarks relating to the disease or injury. The forms are very similar to the casualty form (M.F.W.54 or A.F.B.103) in that the medical history sheet attempts to fully record the medical condition and treatment of each serviceman.

The dental history sheet (M.F.B.465) records the condition of the individual's teeth upon notification of overseas assignment and upon discharge. The sheet contains a diagram of a set of teeth upon which the examiner marks in red ink the condition before assignment and every dental treatment thereafter.

Upon discharge, the servicemen would fill out one of two medical forms. For those servicemen who had no disability, a short form (M.F.W.129) requires the individual to record his physical condition upon discharge and to sign that no serious health problems are present as a result of military service. The information solicited resembles the physical data cluster of the attestation papers with provision for recording of scars or marks received as a result of hostilities. For those with disabilities, an invalided history (M.F.B.227) would be completed.

The invalided history sheet contains personal and physical information as well as the military service time of the person by unit and period of assignment. The form has areas for description of physical and mental condition in a subjective and objective manner and for findings of medical boards of inquiry or of the medical officer in charge of the case. For those injured due to hostilities, records of treatment and the extent of injury are included. The invalided form requests that the civilian address of the discharged individual be listed so that the Board of Pension Benefits has a contact point.

Upon examination of each file's medical contents, the inter-relationships among the documents become clear. The supporting documents are integral parts of the medical history sheet, each expanding on the medical condition of the individual and recording the medical treatment of each ailment. The importance of these documents lies in establishing the injuries of personnel and in establishing the right of a serviceman to pension benefits.

Therefore, one may surmise that the medical documents within each file have not been weeded except, perhaps, the M.F.W.129 form which deals with servicemen with no disabilities. All injury related or medically unfit cases would be retained due to the rights of an individual to claim government assistance in health matters relating to military service.

As with attestation, the discharge documents are of extreme importance to the individual and to the Crown. With the completion of the discharge process, the contractual agreement between the Crown and the individual for military service is terminated. Like the attestation forms, the "Proceedings to discharge" form (M.F.B.218 or M.F.B.218a) recorded the personal and military data clusters. The home address of the serviceman is recorded for future reference. The form records the serviceman's military character, his awards and decorations, his training certificates, and whether or not the individual was paid out.

In some cases, copies or originals of the discharge parchment are included within the file. The discharge parchment is the serviceman's evidence of military service and his right to wear decorations and awards for military service. The discharge parchment can be regarded as a short version of the discharge form.

With the contractual end of the military agreement, last pay certificates (Militia Form W. 44) declare that the serviceman has been paid in full for military service and there is no back pay outstanding. The form indicates the rate of pay per

day and the combat allowance, gratuity payments and allowances for dependents. Copies of military ledgers can be found attached indicating pay receipts and dates. Within this area, miscellaneous documents relating to dependent allowances and war gratuities may be found when a serviceman had applied for special benefits.

From the analysis of the files, four documents can be declared as being vital to the personnel files. The attestation papers, the casualty forms, the medical documentation, and the discharge documents are the major ones as indicated in Table A on p. 79. From within these four documents, three data clusters relating to the serviceman's personal history, physical state and military service can be recognised. The absence of the other documents such as conduct forms illustrates that they were not considered as important to the military as the other forms. The retention of the major forms can be readily understood for they identify the period of service, the medical condition, and the career of each serviceman. They represent items which are of importance to the civilian ex-serviceman when future claims are made against the Crown for injuries suffered during military service. The administrative and legal value of those documents lapses when the serviceman dies. The maintenance due to legal and moral obligations is thereby terminated, only the archival value remains to be determined.

In 1980, slightly over 25,000 veterans of the 1914-1919 war

survive from the over half million who saw service.(2) The value of these files remains but those of their departed comrades-in-arms are now administratively dead. The passing of this generation of Canadians leaves to the archival custodians of these files the decision of appraisal and of what techniques must be employed to confront the issues of volume, historical evidence, and potential research value - a most difficult task for it must combine archival principles and financial restraint of storage with the emotional attachment of a people who, acting as a nation, were bloodied in combat.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

During the past decade, the literature on the appraisal of case files has concentrated on the issues relating to the volume of the files, the costs of preservation, and the viability of "permanent retention" as a proper archival option. Faced with the rising costs of preservation and the ever-increasing volume of records flooding into archives, archivists have begun to reassess the concepts underlying appraisal. Appraisal, as an archival function solely associated with the accessioning of material, has been challenged. In its place, archivists have begun to view appraisal as an archival activity which must be conducted periodically throughout the life cycle of the records. Therefore, the decision of the Public Archives of Canada to retain the personnel files of the CEF permanently is not the end to the appraisal process. Because this decision reinforces patterns set by the international community, some archivists might argue that any further discussion of the ultimate disposition of the files is merely an academic exercise. However, current trends in archival literature indicate that archivists are willing to entertain reappraisal of decisions which were once apparently made finally. As Kromnov stressed before the International Congress of Archivists, the pressure of modern government to reduce expenditure and the massive volumes of modern records have forced archival agencies to look towards alternative methods of appraisal and preservation. The reappraisal of

existing holdings can be considered as a possible solution to the problem.

No archivist or historian can challenge the decision that military records, with the personnel files being a distinct body within those records, are historically and archivally important. Furthermore, few if any will deny that in our society military records do possess the aura of mystique or "immortality" that Rapport attributes to them.(1) Personnel files and other military records are seen and are treated in a different light than are other records and case files. Yet, to the conscientious archivist, major questions remain. Was the choice of "permanent retention" a valid archival decision? Will the research use justify retention of all the files?

To rely simply on the original appraisal decision to retain the personnel files is to deny that standards and conditions change. For the archival community to cling to the old policy of no reappraisal is to advocate at best the status quo and, therefore, a stagnant position for archives.

At this time, it would be impossible for an archivist or historian to challenge or defend the appropriateness of the "permanent retention" designation that has been assigned to World War I military case files. As Rapport indicates, a suitable period of time must lapse before any reappraisal and new judgements can be made. Although the CEF files have existed for nearly 70 years, they have remained in the custody

of the Department of National Defense and access to the files has been restricted. Therefore upon transfer to the Public Archives of Canada, a time period must be set to allow the public and research communities to become aware of the files' new status and also for the archival officials to measure the research uses of the files. Only then can the archivist determine whether "permanent retention" is justified or not. If justification is not forthcoming, the archival agency should reassess its original decision.

To those archivists who deny the usefulness of a reappraisal procedure, one may query the exact meaning of "permanent retention". With regard to our specific files, the personnel files of the CEF, the information stored in the original forms will be subject to deterioration as the documents themselves age. Is "permanent retention" applied in the sense that the information will be preserved only in its original state, or does it imply that the information will be of continuing value and preserved regardless of the physical state of the original records? Any solutions to these questions will constitute a reassessment or reappraisal of the files' status. Will the information be converted onto microforms? Is sampling a more suitable solution? What are the options, which remain after the initial appraisal, to preserve the information for future research needs?

Several options can be proposed which could be considered when the necessary reappraisal will occur. They are:



1. Complete retention within archives -
  - a) without conservation;
  - b) with conservation;
  - c) on microforms.
2. Sampling within archives -
  - a) qualitative sampling;
  - b) quantitative sampling;
  - c) combinations of a and b.
3. Conversion to a machine readable database.
4. Destruction.

The informational value of the personnel files is undisputed. The analysis of the files' contents clearly indicates that information relevant to researching the particulars of military service, personal background and medical history exists. Total destruction is therefore undesirable, and the examination of the options will concentrate on how to preserve the information and in what volume the information will be retained.

If the reappraisal archivist opts for the first solution, that of retaining all the files without any form of conservation, the status quo will continue in effect. This would provide access to the information only until a degeneration of the files' physical properties makes consultation impossible. Considering that the files are already over sixty years old, the deterioration of the material will be quite substantial by the turn of the century. This course of action would raise the issue of whether the material is of a continuing value or if the value is permanent only as long as the original forms exist? If the information is of enduring

value, then this first option can only be adopted as a temporary measure until sufficient funding is found to convert the information into a more stable form.

But if the first option is adopted only for the interval before conversion to microform, the danger exists that the physical properties will decay to the point where information loss will occur prior to microfilming. The greatest drawback to this solution is that if no action is taken to convert the information, it will be permanently lost. One must note that of the national archives surveyed only New Zealand has undertaken a microfilming project. The great costs involved to preserving the information in a more permanent form forces archives to delay the process. So far, most archives have only refrained from destroying material and have not begun the necessary cost-benefit analysis of microfilming or other methods of preservation.

As to the second option, that of retention with conservation, the cost of conservation treatments for the entire collection of over 600,000 files (or roughly 10 kilometres of linear shelving) would be staggering. If the archives believed that certain specific forms were of value, then specimens could be conserved to illustrate the form types. However, the conservation of all the actual documents is not the proper archival course of action. Although the original forms may have an emotional value to the veteran considered, they do not have a

national value, as would the Constitution or the British North American Act. For the archivist, the information contained in the documents is the key and that is best preserved by other means.

As with conservation treatment, the cost of microfilming the entire collection would require massive amounts of funding and intensive work by archival staff members. Without the assignment of file numbers and the creation of finding aids and indexes, research access would be severely impaired. Another major concern for the archivist would be the microfilming of material which was not of continuing value. Much material has remained on the files due to the lack of proper scheduling before accessioning and to the lack of an intensive survey of the files to insure all duplicative material was discarded. Although microfilming would reduce the staggering bulk into a more manageable size, the danger of preserving material having little utility is great if unaccompanied by weeding.

The fourth option, the retention of selected material from each file, would be an adoption of the Australian appraisal system. The Australian Archives scheduled the documents within their post 1947 personnel files into two classes, Class A for documents of administrative and historical importance, and Class B for document which would not be retained beyond their administrative life.

Within the CEF personnel files, four areas of records having informational value can be detected. The areas, previously

mentioned in the third chapter, are the enlistment papers, the medical documents, the discharge documents and the casualty forms. From these four areas, the major documents to be retained should be: a) either enlistment form M.F.W.23 (volunteer) or M.F.W.133 (draft) and M.F.W.67 (Particulars of enlistment) if present; b) any medical documentation (including dental; c) the "Proceedings to discharge" form, M.F.B.218 or M.F.B.218a, but not the discharge parchment which duplicates the same information in less detail; and d) the casualty form, M.F.W.54 or A.F.B.103. It should be mentioned that certain documents which are not found in the average file may be marked for retention when discovered, for example, any court martial proceedings. The remainder of the documentation can be destroyed for the above forms represent the major categories of information relating to a serviceman's career. The advantages to this method are that each and every file is retained with documentation which represents the major fields of information. Historical research will not suffer severely as the major informational areas related to service, personnel and medical details are retained. Regimental histories and more general histories will not suffer because each serviceman's file has been retained. Only duplicated and minor information will be removed from the files.

As extension of the above option of selecting certain specified documents from each file for retention, one might retain a further sample of those documents which were not automatically retained.

This follows the Australian practice in which, once the major documents have been retained, the remainder are sampled randomly to give the researcher an idea of the nature of the typical files. Any file retaining more than the essential documents should be so identified.

If the archivist decides to implement the selection of specific documents from each file then a strong effort should be made to convert the information into a more stable form. Without conversion, the deterioration of the original documents will result in a further loss of the information.

If, however, the appraisal archivist finds that the cost of maintaining each file, even if not completely, is too great for its potential research use, the following options deal with the sampling of the files, those selected to be retained in whole or (as in the earlier discussed option) in part. Unless otherwise mentioned, all materials not selected for retention will be destroyed. It has been assumed that if the institution has gone to the cost and time to devise sampling procedures, a permanent form of storing the resultant information should be considered as a part of the decision.

Firstly, the archivist can entertain the idea of qualitative sampling. As Schellenberg and Hull indicate, qualitative sampling is a subjective method of appraisal in which the archivist assesses the historical importance of areas of information and their potential use in historiography and the social sciences before designating specific areas of information for retention.(2)

The following are examples of criteria for qualitative sampling which could be applied to the CEF personnel files:

a. the retention of all personnel files of officers who were above the rank of major within the CEF.(3)

b. the retention of personnel files for those killed or listed as missing in action. This sub-area may be rendered impractical if the archives, the military and the veterans organizations indicate that the Honour Rolls will suffice in reflecting the memory of the fallen.

c. the retention of personnel files for men who rose to positions of national prominence within the governments of Canada. This category would include men such as John Diefenbaker, a former Prime Minister; George Pearkes, a former Canadian General and Minister of Defence, George Drew, a former Leader of the Opposition; George Black, a former Speaker of the Commons; Senators such as Aristide Blais, William MacDonald, Stanley McKean, to name a few.(4)

d. the retention of the personnel files of the CEF battalions which served in specific battles, such as Vimy, Ypres, or Amiens. These battles, particularly Vimy, are revered and honoured as the places where the Canadian nation was tested and our identity as a people secured in much the same way that Australians honour the memory of Gallipoli.(5)

e. the retention of all personnel files of those who were gassed on the front. The medical difficulties that these men faced during and after the conflict set them apart from the other servicemen. The retention of their files could be combined with the selection of their files from the Department of Veterans Affairs where their post-service medical histories are located, to provide a complete medical history of the veteran.(6)

f. the retention of all personnel files of the men from selected battalions, either on a regional basis or for their contribution to the war effort. For instance, the archivist could choose one of the 20 battalions raised in British Columbia or perhaps a battalion from the Canadian Railway Troop or the Forestry Corps.(7)

g. the retention of all personnel files of servicemen awarded decorations domestic or foreign. At present, the Department of Veterans Affairs maintains an Awards Office where the registers for medals awarded are kept. The archivist could ascertain whether or not the material kept by the Department of Veterans Affairs is duplicated in the personnel files. If so, then arrangements could be made to cull one or the other to preserve the most complete record.(8)

h. the retention of all personnel files of those who were drafted under the provisions of the Military Act 1917.(9)

i. the retention of all personnel files of ethnic minorities such as Japanese Canadians, Americans or Irish.(10)

Secondly, the archivist could apply quantitative sampling in response to the significant increase in statistical research projects undertaken in the social sciences. This method is based on the scientific sampling of files and relies on randomness and reliability as its key factors. Each file must have a unique number, which is not at present the case for the CEF files. The method does not select special categories and therefore each file has an equal chance of being selected, thus retaining the characteristics of the whole series. As Boles and Hull indicate in their writings, the archivist must employ sound statistical methods to devise the sample following the guidelines set down by the archivist.(11) The size of the sample will depend on the economic constraints and the minimum level allowable for reliability. MacKay advocated a 20 per cent sample, which would result in preservation of 120,000 CEF files. She estimated that a two to three per cent sample would be used on any single project.(12) It would be highly unlikely that the

sample would be larger than 20 per cent.

An alternative which is available to the archivist when considering sampling is the use of a combination of the qualitative and quantitative options to attempt to satisfy the traditionalist and the quantitative historian. For instance, a quantitative sample of eight per cent (48,000 CEF files) could be combined with qualitative options, such as 6e, the retention of the personnel files of those who were gassed at the front; or 6g, the retention of the personnel files of servicemen who were awarded decorations.

The implementation of any type of sampling procedure will result in a reduction of bulk and, unavoidably, the destruction of the material not chosen. The archivist must weigh the gains in space and cost versus the loss of historical information. The retention of 100,000 of the personnel files in their entirety would reduce the storage area from 10 kilometres to roughly 2 kilometres of linear shelving. But the drawback of this saving is the loss of any ability to write the regimental or local histories of the CEF battalions. Canadian historian Jean-Pierre Gagnon, in his investigation of the 22nd Battalion of the CEF, found random sampling to be inadequate. "It did not allow him to include the unique dimension of individual cases that gave flesh and blood to the Battalion." (13) In place of random sampling, Gagnon undertook an intensive examination of all the personnel files of the 22nd Battalion, the evidence from which will form the basis for his history of the unit. For the eastern regions of Canada,



where settlement was firmly entrenched by the 1900s, the loss of the information may not hinder historians and their research. But for Western Canada, where massive settlement and immigration was just beginning, the loss of the personnel files would destroy information relating to the pioneering families and their society.

With regard to regimental histories, past historical trends indicate that few histories have been written on the CEF battalions since the 1930s. In his 1965 book on regimental lineages, C.E. Dornbusch indicated that only 37 of the 204 battalions in the Canadian Army have had their histories written. In recent years, as the anniversaries of the Second World War battles near, a renewed interest in regimental histories has emerged. Recent publications have acknowledged their regimental lineages but have tended to concentrate on the events and personalities of the 1939-1945 war, which perhaps reflects the waning audience for histories of First World War units. The Directorate of History may focus its attention on those CEF battalions without adequate histories but it must be assumed that the primary concern will lie with those regiments on active service. It would seem highly unlikely that the histories of specific CEF battalions will be written in the future; the events are too distant in our past.

Another option which is open to the archives is the creation of data bases which would house the information fields selected for preservation. The information in the three data clusters

found in the files could be stored in a data base as well as the information on casualty forms so that the major areas of information would be covered. The fields selected could reach as high as forty to fifty if a comprehensive data base were devised. The key issue is whether or not archives should create data bases? The current trends towards computerization may force archival agencies to create data bases so that researchers will be able to obtain the greatest amount of material. However, before archival resources can be committed to such projects, an extensive analysis of the costs and the usefulness of the information and its methods of access will be needed. The costs of computer facilities and staff are often prohibitive, and, like microfilming projects, are probably beyond the financial resources of even large national archives. Questions regarding the usefulness of data bases also arise.

The last alternative for any archivist doing appraisal is destruction. If, after a period of monitoring, the reappraisal archivist finds that the records have not been used by the research community or that the informational value of the records is duplicated in other documents, then the archivist may recommend destruction. As long as the archives has monitored the users and uses of the records for a reasonable time, as Rapport recommends, then the decision to destroy will be based on sound evidence and documentation. When the decision for destruction is made, then the decision to destroy will be based

on sound evidence and documentation. When the decision for destruction is made, information relating to the destruction of the records should be placed in the finding aids so that future researchers will be aware of the disposition of the files.

So far, the discussion has revolved around the options available to an archivist during a reappraisal examination. Each of the options, save that of destruction, assumes that at least some of the records have some continuing value. But what tests may be applied to determine such value?

According to Schellenberg, the archivist makes his initial assessment taking into account three areas of concern: a) the uniqueness of the material and the records; b) the form of the information and of the records; and c) the importance of the information.(14) The first two areas, uniqueness and form, are easily tested and assessed. But "in applying the test of importance, the archivist is in the realm of the imponderable, for who can say definitely if a given body of records is important, and for what purpose, and to whom?"(15) The imponderability of assessing importance makes appraisal subjective. The archivist must weigh research methods, historical trends and potential users against the costs of preservation and storage to form his appraisal decision. The decision of appraisal inevitably relies on the judgement of the archivist. In such a circumstance, it is incumbent on archivists to perform analysis of the actual use and therefore social and cultural value of the records in order

to give some substance to the judgements.

At the International Congress of Archivists, held in Washington, D.C. in 1976, German archivist Hans Boom's ideas on appraisal were discussed. Boom contended that records should be appraised using analysis of the contemporary situation of records. To deal with the problem of bulk, the archivist must necessarily intervene actively to appraise records. Boom's theory of active appraisal depends on two assumptions. First, he assumes that the costs of preserving all archives which might potentially be valuable is simply too high. Second, he assumes that there is a societal limitation to the amount of information that can be digested. In such circumstances, the only course of action is to preserve less information so that at least some may be productively used. In Boom's view, archivists must analyse current social structures and the records they create to identify a socially useful and comprehensive residuum of documentation to transmit to posterity.(16) Although his proposal has been challenged by archivists who favour a more speculative approach, its application to the personnel files and to other similar case files may solve some of the appraisal dilemmas facing archivists.

To implement Boom's theory on appraisal, the archivist must base his appraisal decision on an analysis of the files' origins, administrative uses, composition, informational content, and completeness. The guesswork about future research needs can be replaced by an in-depth study of the records and their

use by administration. In the case of the CEF files, the archivist will have to study the entire range of documentation about military affairs in order to place the files in their proper context. In doing so, the archivist will gain an understanding as to the creating agency's purpose in creating the files and their administrative uses. An analysis of the files' composition will reveal the completeness of the files, the informational content present and whether or not the information is reliable. As to the problem of emotional attachment or mystique, the archivist cannot objectively deal with the issue. By attempting to place a value on the emotional aspect of the files, the archivist becomes subjective in his judgement. The archivist, therefore, must concentrate his efforts on the analysis of the records in question in order to give evidence of any appraisal decision taken, and leave the issue of the mystique surrounding the records to others.

After the analysis and the appraisal decision to retain the files in one form or another, the question of the usefulness of preserving the files remains. In order to answer this question of utility, the analysis of the files should be followed up by a reappraisal procedure. Following Rapport's recommendations, the files should be reappraised after a set time period. In the intervening period between appraisals, the research uses of the files should be monitored, thus providing the evidence of an assessment of the social utility of continuing to expend money to preserve the files.

Although it is apparent that the decision of the Public Archives of Canada to preserve the CEF files in their entirety was not based on a searching analysis of the files' origins, uses, and informational content, the failure to use objective appraisal techniques does not seem unique. All of the countries surveyed seem not to have made any objective study of the value of First World War military personnel files, or at least have not revealed what study of the question they have made.

Archival appraisal is no longer solely an activity associated with the function of accessioning. It has become a recurring archival function which serves to reexamine the benefits and drawbacks of each archival holding. As the concepts and principles relating to appraisal have changed, the two facets of appraisal, that of initial appraisal upon entry to the archives and reappraisal after entry, have become more clearly defined. In the initial appraisal of records, Boom's concept of using contemporary standards in the appraisal of the records is sound and has merit. It will provide the archivist with an approach which places emphasis on analysis of the records' origins, use and content thus placing the records in the context of their time and society. Moreover, implementation of reappraisal procedures by archives is long overdue. Rapport's recommendations concerning the establishment of monitoring systems to evaluate research use and periodic reappraisal evaluations must be implemented if archives are to be responsible for insuring that only

records of significance are preserved for future use. The emphasis of reappraisal is on the uses and benefits that records have for society. Reappraisal forces archives to be more accountable for their holdings and, therefore, more responsive to their society. The goal, as American archivist Nancy Peace puts it, is "a rationally structured total social documentation of public life in all its varieties." (17) The acceptance of Boom's and Rapport's ideas on appraisal are only the beginning of a change in archival concepts regarding appraisal. The changes in appraisal approaches and policies will continue as archivists seek more objective ways to evaluate and preserve our documentary heritage.

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NOTES FOR CHAPTER II

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30. T.R. Schellenberg, Modern Archives: Principles and Techniques (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956), p. 148.
31. Ibid., p. 140.
32. Schellenberg, Appraisal of Modern Public Records, p. 16.
33. Ibid., p. 20.
34. Ibid., p. 30.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid., p. 31.

37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., p. 41.
39. Ibid., p. 45.
40. Paul Lewinson, "Archival Sampling," AA 20 (1957): 292.
41. Ibid., p. 293.
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43. Ibid.
44. Ibid., p. 304.
45. Ibid.
46. Ibid., p. 312.
47. W.K. Lamb, "The Changing Role of the Archivist," AA 29 (1966): 4.
48. Ibid., p. 5.
49. Wilfred I. Smith, "Archival Selection: A Canadian View," Journal of the Society of Archivists 3 (1964): 83.
50. David L. Lewis, "Appraisal Criterion for Retention and Disposal of Business Records," AA 32 (1969): 21.
51. Meyer H. Fishbein, "A Viewpoint on Appraisal of National Records," AA 33 (1970): 175-87.
52. Ibid.
53. Ake Kromnov, "The Appraisal of Contemporary Records," Archivum 26 (1976): 45.
54. Ibid., p. 45.
55. Ibid., p. 47.
56. Ibid., p. 48.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
59. Eleanor MacKay, "Random Sampling Techniques: A Method of Reducing Large Homogeneous Series in Congressional Papers," AA 41 (1978): 282.
60. Ibid., p. 285.

61. Ibid.

62. On 18 August 1978 the British government appointed an inquiry under the chairmanship of Sir Duncan Wilson, to review every aspect of the work of the Public Records Office. The committee interpreted the terms of reference as applying to modern departmental records only. The Committee's findings were published in March 1981 as Cmd. 8204, Modern Public Records: Selection and Access.

63. "Public Records Committee of the British Record Association: Submissions to the Wilson Report," Archives 14 (1979): 92.

64. Frank Boles, "Sampling in Archives," AA 44 (1981): 127.

65. Ibid.

66. R. Joseph Anderson, "Public Welfare Case Records: A Study of Archival Practice," AA 43 (1980): 171.

67. Felix Hull, The Use of Sampling Techniques in the Retention of Records: A RAMP study with guidelines (Paris: UNESCO, 1981).

68. Ibid., p. 9

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid.

71. Ibid., p. 10.

72. Ibid., p. 11.

73. Ibid.

74. Ibid.

75. Ibid., p. 12.

76. Ibid., p. 13.

77. M.S. Moss, "Public Record Office: Good or Bad?" Journal of the Society of Archivists 7 (1980).

78. Leonard Rapport, "No Grandfather Clause: Reappraising Accessioned Records." AA 44 (1981): 143.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid., p. 144.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid., p. 145.

84. Ibid., p. 148.

85. Ibid.

86. A.A.H. Knightsbridge, "Particular Instance Papers." (Paper delivered at the Civil Service College, London, England, Sept. 28, 1983), p. 8.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER III

1. Within this century, over twenty million servicemen have seen duty in the British military. In the First World War, 5,704,416 were in the services, of whom 2,626,743 were listed as casualties. Over one million were killed in action, died of wounds or listed as missing. These figures do not include the armed forces of the Dominions or the colonies who were part of the British Imperial Army.

2. Great Britain. Parliamentary Papers, vol. 11 (Reports from Commissioners, Inspectors, and Others, vol. 4), "The Report of the Committee on Departmental Records," Cmd. 9163, 1954, p. 37.

3. Ibid., p. 38.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., p. 40.

6. Ibid., p. 38.

7. Letter from A.A.H. Knightsbridge, Principal Assistant Keeper, Public Record Office, London, to the author, 4 November 1983.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Ibid.

11. The United States mobilized 4,355,000 personnel, of whom over 250,000 were killed or wounded.

12. Letter from David F. Peterson, Assistant Archivist, Federal Records Centre, National Archives and Records Service, Washington, D.C., to the author, 28 November 1983.

13. The Australian Imperial Force consisted of 416,807 men and women, of whom 330,000 were transferred to theatres of war. Casualties within the AIF numbered 226,073, of whom 59,258 were killed in action or died of wounds.

The correspondence from the Archives dealt only with army records as they do not have any extensive dealings with the other branches of the Australian Military Forces.

14. Letter from K. Penny, Assistant Director-General, Federal Records, Australian National Archives, to the author, 03 January 1984.

15. New Zealand mobilized 105,629 personnel for the First World War, of whom 99,822 were shipped overseas. Casualties for the conflict were 57,887, of whom 16,483 were killed in action or died of wounds.
16. Letter from B. Symondson, Archivist, Records Division, New Zealand National Archives, Wellington, to the author, 19 March, 1984.
17. France mobilized 8,410,000 personnel, of whom 1,357,800 were killed, and 4,266,000 were wounded.
18. Letter from Director Delmas, Chief of Historical Service Branch, Ministry of Defense, France, to the author, 21 February, 1984.
19. The German Imperial Army consisted of roughly 11,000,000 personnel, of whom 1,808,546 were killed, 4,247,143 were wounded.
20. Letter from Dr. Kehrig, Director of Military Archives in the German National Archives, Koblenz, to the author, 10 February, 1984.
21. Letter from Dr. Cordes, Director of the War Archives, Wurttemberg State Archives, Stuttgart, to the author, 12 March, 1984.
22. Letter from Dr. Hely, Director of the War Archives, Bavarian State Archives, Munich, to the author, 20 March, 1984.
23. The Austro-Hungarian empire mobilized 7,800,000 men for the First World War, of whom 3,620,000 were listed as casualties and 922,000 were killed in action.
24. The term successor states applies to the nations which were created, after the peace treaties of 1918, from the remains of the Dual Monarchy of Austria-Hungary.
25. Letter from Dr. Wagner, Director of the War Archives, Austrian National Archives, Vienna, to the author, 13 March, 1984.
26. The files of Canadians who served in the Royal Navy or the Royal Flying Corps are in London and in Ottawa, although the files may not be as detailed as those of Canadians serving within Canadian units. The files of the personnel of the "Royal Newfoundland Regiment" were transferred to the Public Archives in 1949 when the colony joined Canada. The files are not considered part of the CEF files as the 'RNR' was part of the Imperial Army and was considered as part of the colonial contribution.

Letter from O.A. Cooke, Senior Archivist, Directorate of History, Department of National Defence, Canada, to the author, March 22, 1984.

27. C.E. Dornbusch, The Canadian Army 1855-1965. (Cornwallville, N.Y.: Hope Farm Press, 1966).

28. S.F. Wise, The Official History of the Royal Canadian Air Force, Volume 1. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), pp. 633-635.

29. Richard Kohn, "The Social History of the American Soldier: A Review and Prospectus for Research," American Historical Review 86 (1981): 533-567.

30. Ibid., p. 555.



NOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

1. G.W.L. Nicolson, Canadian Expeditionary Force, 1914-1919.  
(Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1962), p. 531.
2. World Almanac 1984, p. 578.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER V

1. Leonard Rapport, "No Grandfather Clause: Reappraising Accessioned Records," AA 44 (1981): 143.

2. Theodore R. Schellenberg, The Appraisal of Modern Public Records. National Archives Bulletin No. 8. (Washington: National Archives and Records Service, 1956), p. 30-31; Felix Hull, The Use of Sampling Techniques in the Retention of Records: A RAMP study with guidelines. (Paris: UNESCO, 1981), p. 9.

3. Over 1,000 appointments were made to positions of command within the Canadian Forces Overseas.

4. The Right Honourable John Diefenbaker sat in the House of Commons from 1940 to his death in 1979, serving as Prime Minister from 1957 to 1963. Major-General George R. Pearkes, B.C. sat in the Commons from 1945 to 1960, serving as Minister of National Defense from 1957 to 1960. In late 1960, he was appointed Lt.-Governor of British Columbia where he was the Queen's Representative until 1968. His First World War service was with the 2nd Canadian Mounted Rifles (Victoria) and the 116th Battalion which he commanded. George Black served as the Speaker of the House of Commons from 1930 to 1935, his Parliamentary service extending from 1921-35, 1940-49 as the Member from Yukon. George Drew saw action with the 16th Battery, CEF and commanded the 64th Battery after being invalided home in 1917. His public service began in Ontario where he was a MPP from 1939 to 1948 and Premier and Minister of Education from 1943 to 1948. Elected leader of the Conservative Party, he ran for federal parliament in 1949 and remained until his resignation in 1957. Aristide Blais was a Medical Officer (Major) with a No. 6 Casualty Clearing Hospital in the 'Great War' and was summoned to the Senate in 1940, where he remained until his death in 1964. William Ross MacDonald was a Member of Parliament from 1935 to 1953, when he was appointed to the Senate. After serving as a Minister and Government Leader in the Senate, MacDonald resigned in 1967. In the following year, he was appointed Lt.-Governor of Ontario and served in that post until 1974. During the 1914-1918 war, MacDonald saw service with the 2nd Cycle Corp, 4th Battalion. Stanley Steward McKeen was with the Royal Flying Corps in the First War. In 1947, he was summoned to the Senate from Vancouver, and remained in the Upper House until his death in 1966.

5. Over 97,000 Canadians were involved in the Vimy Ridge area on April 9th, 1917.

6. Over 12,000 Canadian servicemen were gassed in France and Belgium.

7. The names of the CEF battalions, their originating cities and their present designation are taken from Charles H. Stewart's "OVERSEAS".
8. The total number of Canadians serving within the CEF who received decorations and awards was 28,549.
9. Over 140,000 were drafted for military service, which including approximately 28,000 who refused to report for service.
10. Although Japanese Canadians did not form a separate CEF Battalion, the Americans resident in Canada formed five units, the 97th "Toronto Americans", the 211th "Alberta Americans" the 212th "Winnipeg Americans", the 213th "Toronto Americans", and the 237th "New Brunswick Americans". The Irish in Canada formed three distinct battalions for overseas action, these being the 121st "Western Irish" from New Westminster, the 208th "Canadian Irish" from Toronto, and the 218th "Edmonton Irish" from Edmonton.
11. Frank Boles, "Sampling in Archives," AA 44 (1981): 127; Felix Hull, The Use of Sampling Techniques, p. 9-11.
12. Eleanor MacKay, "Random Sampling Techniques: A Method of Reducing Large Homogeneous Series in Congressional Papers," AA 41 (1978): 282.
13. Letter from W.A.B. Douglas, Director, Directorate of History, Department of National Defence to J. Atherton, Director-General, Records Management Branch, Public Archives of Canada, August 30, 1982.
14. Theodore R. Schellenberg, The Appraisal of Modern Public Records. National Archives Bulletin No. 8. (Washington: National Archives and Records Service, 1956), p. 22-26.
15. Abid., p. 25.
16. Nancy E. Peace (ed.), "Deciding What to Save: Fifty Years of Theory and Practice," in Archival Choices (Toronto: Lexington Books, 1984), p. 10.
17. Ibid., p. 11.

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