Postwar Canadian Academic Libraries, 1945–60

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ABSTRACT

This article undertakes a historical survey of university and college library developments in Canada between 1945 and 1960. It examines contemporary accounts in relation to library architecture, the acquisition and organization of collections, administrative library structures and staffing, services for faculty and students, and efforts by librarians to realize professional standing. A national review of academic libraries and librarianship expands our knowledge beyond the typical themes applied to this era: “growth” and “progress.” The architectural redefinition of libraries, the impetus to establish research collections, the maturation of academic librarianship, and the increasing complexity of library operations were prominent features in the postwar period. The gradual evolution of academic libraries toward more uniform organizational purposes and structures on a national basis following World War II can be considered a period of “midcentury modernization” that preceded the more memorable and better documented decades of the 1960s and later.

Keywords: academic librarianship · Canadian college and university libraries · Canadian librarianship · Canadian library planning · library architecture · library collections

RÉSUMÉ

Le présent article fait un survol historique de l'évolution des bibliothèques universitaires et collégiales au Canada entre 1945 et 1960. Il examine des comptes rendus contemporains sur l'architecture des bibliothèques, l'acquisition et l'organisation des collections, les structures et la dotation en personnel des bibliothèques administratives, les services aux professeurs et aux étudiants et les efforts de professionnalisation des bibliothécaires. Un examen national des bibliothèques universitaires et de la bibliothéconomie élargit nos connaissances et transcende les thèmes caractéristiques de cette époque : « croissance » et « progrès ». La redéfinition architecturale des bibliothèques, l'impulsion donnée à la constitution de collections de recherche, la maturation de la bibliothéconomie universitaire et la complexité croissante des opérations des bibliothèques étaient des éléments marquants de l'après-guerre. L'évolution graduelle des bibliothèques universitaires vers des structures et des objectifs organisationnels plus uniformes à l'échelle nationale après la Seconde Guerre mondiale peut être considérée comme une période de « modernisation du milieu du siècle », laquelle a précédé des décennies plus mémorables et mieux documentées à partir des années 1960.

Mots-clés : *bibliothéconomie universitaire · bibliothèques universitaires et collégiales du Canada · bibliothéconomie canadienne · planification des bibliothèques canadiennes · architecture des bibliothèques · collections des bibliothèques*

THE historiography of college and university libraries in Canada is an undeveloped subject.¹ There are few studies synthesizing the entire history of Canadian academic libraries, and normally two core themes are emphasized—library growth and progressive advances in librarianship (Briggs 1980, Peel 1977, Groen 2005). These two perspectives, which can be applied to many different historical periods, also permeate articles by librarians or briefer descriptions in institutional histories marking anniversaries, retirements, accomplishments, or significant building projects. The use of statistics, analytical methodology, and alternative explanations to examine library trends, practices, or ideas has been limited. Local narrative histories and biographical notices that parallel the history of their parent institutions usually do not employ historical socio-cultural context or critical analysis. The absence of secondary histories of libraries or librarianship in Canadian higher education can be attributed in part to the fact that scholarly work in this field did not begin until the decade of the 1940s, when a few theses were published by Canadians attending American graduate library schools (Hamilton 1942, Snider 1948, Redmond 1950). Today, the judgment that library history (including its academic library component) has been “an area of traditional neglect within Canadian history” compared to its American and British counterparts continues to be a reliable assessment (McNally 1986).

There are some valuable informative accounts of Canadian libraries in higher education. Because the library is positioned within its parent institution, librarians have understandably chronicled library support for the needs and plans of a particular university or college.² Individual libraries, such as those at the Universities of Toronto, Dalhousie, and Alberta, are notable in this regard (Blackburn 1989, Wilkinson 1966, Distad 2009). Histories of specific events and biographical studies (Jobb 1987, Greene and LeBlanc 2000) have appeared, but these studies are less common. The influence of American librarianship and philanthropy on Canadian activities has been documented partially (Glazier 1967, Bruce 2016). Investigations considering national perspectives of academic librarianship have provided a firmer basis to explore historical themes pertaining to the collective status and professional recognition of librarians (Savage 1982, Wilkinson 1983, Jacobs 2014, Sonne de Torrens 2014). Collective bargaining and governance issues have also received attention

1. I am grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their helpful recommendations and insights.

2. All major colleges mentioned in this paper evolved into degree-granting universities.

(Dekker 2014, Revitt and Luyk 2016, Bufton 2014). As well, some issues related to women's and gender history have been explored (Harris and Tague 1989, DeLong 2013). These recent studies provide detailed information and use more analytical methods. My emphasis will be on a national interpretation of contemporary statements and assessments bearing on general library developments following the Second World War.

This article reviews collective aspects of the history of Canadian academic libraries during the postwar era, approximately 1945–60. Two significant surveys of academic library holdings frame the body of historical evidence for this period: a shorter report on the humanities by two Canadian academics in 1947, and an extensive report by Edwin E. Williams³ on library resources in 1962 (Kirkconnell and Woodhouse 1947, Williams 1962). Secondary studies specific to this period commonly build upon the themes of “growth” and “progress.” From a historical perspective, library space, staff, and collections are typical measures of growth; progress, however, when applied to librarianship, professionalism, or leadership, can be an elusive, subjective term in need of critical consideration. This time period generally is regarded as a time of steady advances in library service preceding more dramatic activity beginning in the 1960s (Blackburn 1984). From a historical standpoint, the diversity of local settings between 1945 and 1960 can veil the similarities; for example, varying rates of library development, differentiated services, and regional inequalities among academic institutions may attract more attention. Nonetheless, there are common aspects to library buildings, the organization and improvement of collections, administrative structures, and efforts by professional librarians to develop services and facilitate use of resources. By reviewing these overarching features through contemporary statements, it is possible to elaborate upon national “growth” and “progress” and thus deepen our historical understanding about how and why these statements pertaining to academic libraries and librarianship in the mid-20th century evolved during this period.

Published writings on libraries are plentiful in the postwar period. Many sources provide primary evidence for factual matters as well as for analysis and interpretation. Most authors were closely connected with institutions: they were librarians, professors, alumni, and students. These predominately library-institutional sources normally addressed library services, consequently over-representing administrative matters. Of course, library administrators, who made frequent contributions to the library literature, were conversant with the status of other libraries through “senior channels.” Their emphasis is weighted to commentary on physical campus expansion, student enrolment increases, direction of personnel,

3. Williams held many senior positions at the Harvard University library from 1940 to 1980.

acquisition of resources, and organizing users' access to the library. Sundry sources, especially student newspapers, highlight contemporary events, social practices, or issues within a short-term context—a snapshot of different viewpoints in time and place. Official publications or survey reports can highlight the library's priorities or role vis-à-vis faculty and students. Accounts by external professionals, such as architects or consultants, offer helpful insights on building design, service delivery, and staffing. Observers frequently catered to a readership presumed to share their view, and they freely expressed their own perspectives.

Although caution needs to be exercised in the use of contemporary statements as primary sources, they can nonetheless help situate library development within broader educational expansion. The expansion of Canadian post-secondary education after 1945 was notable for several modernizing trends: the infusion of federal funds for academic research, the frequent erection of campus buildings, increased enrolments, the establishment of new universities, the independence of previously affiliated small colleges, and the creation of comprehensive research efforts and graduate programs. In this changing environment, the pre-eminence of the humanities and undergraduate teaching gave way to scientific and technological research, business and professional orientations, and graduate studies (Cameron 1991, Massolin 2001). The discourse on college and university libraries often refers to these substantial changes, thus transcending individual institutions and offering a window on shared changes occurring on a national stage.

General Postwar Development

By the early 1960s, education in Canadian colleges and universities was regarded as a necessary public investment. Federal and provincial governments were considering increased investment in universities and colleges (Harris 1976, 455–591) that would have a dramatic impact on the academic library sector. Federal interest in higher education, a provincial constitutional responsibility, had commenced with National Research Council support for university research. Student aid multiplied after 1945, when discharged veterans became eligible for special federal loans to pursue post-secondary education. For libraries, the report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, chaired by Vincent Massey from 1949 to 1951, was an important catalyst for federal support. The commission recommended that the Dominion government establish a national library and fund public universities. At the same time, the Massey report observed library inadequacy: “If a list of North American universities were to be arranged in accordance with the number of volumes in their academic libraries, the best-equipped Canadian universities would be distressingly far down in the roster” (Canada 1951, 139).

The Canadian Library Association (CLA), formed in 1946, was particularly warm to the Massey report's recommendations. Academics also felt that a national library would aid researchers through the collection of books, creation of a national union catalogue to facilitate interlibrary loan, and publication of a national bibliography (Donnelly 1973, 45–77). Contemporary librarians such as Bruce B. Peel, the University of Alberta's library director from 1955 to 1982 (Distad 2000), and H. Pearson Gundy, chief librarian at Queen's University from 1947 to 1965, recognized that all of these activities improved library coordination and fostered a stronger national outlook among librarians (Peel 1982–83, Gundy 1961). Yet for most of the postwar era, the National Library was a developing institution working in concert with larger research libraries. In retrospect, its stimulus effect was a measured process beset by frugal budgets, limited staffing, and unsatisfactory housing before a new building was erected in 1967, Canada's centennial year (Donnelly 1973, 108–60).

By the mid-1950s, senior university administrators recognized that unmet research-library issues needed to be addressed. Continued—indeed, prompt—library development was emerging as a necessity. The expansion of undergraduate programs, the addition of medical, law, engineering, and business professional schools, and the deepening of graduate research demanded upgraded facilities, richer collections, increased staffing, and better services. A colloquium held at the opening of the University of Toronto's Sigmund Samuel wing in November 1954 stressed the need to organize specialized collections and develop effective systems of nationwide cooperation, especially by the nascent National Library. The Toronto speakers and guests also divined a strategy for the future: “The next step is to have the problem studied not by the librarians but by the university presidents” (*Research Library* 1955, 8). Several years later, presidents attending the National Conference of Canadian Universities and Colleges agreed to fund a report by the American consultant Edwin Williams to appraise holdings in the humanities and social sciences at 14 larger universities. The Williams report (1962, 61) concluded that there were some outstanding collections but that “Canadian universities, for the most part, are only beginning to face the cost of providing resources genuinely adequate for advanced work.” Of course, its outlook was oriented to future action, not to the earlier history of the postwar era.

A more extensive review beyond 14 institutions reveals that the evolution of university programs, facilities, and consequent library development began cautiously before 1960. There were almost 65 000 undergraduates and 4 500 full-time university teachers in Canada in 1945; by 1961, there were 129 000 students and 8 800 teachers.⁴

4. Full-time university enrolment, by sex, Canada and provinces, selected years, 1920 to 1975 (Series W340–448), and full-time university teachers, Canada and by province, selected years, 1920 to 1975 (Series W475–85). *Historical Statistics of Canada*, 2d ed. (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1983).

The Appendix demonstrates that academic libraries realized considerable advances in the number of books, periodical holdings, and circulation associated with this influx. Development quickened in the later 1950s. The 1961–62 Dominion Bureau of Statistics survey of universities and colleges reported increased book stock to meet new demands. In comparison with 1956–57, larger libraries with 500 or more full-time students increased book holdings by 50.4%, to 77 volumes per student, and expenditures by 162.7%, to \$76.87 per student. For the same five-year period, 1957–62, in smaller colleges with fewer than 100 full-time students there was a 48.5% increase in books, to 101 volumes per student, and an expenditure increase of 160.2%, to \$87.54 per student. Most reporting libraries (42 out of 67) were now conducting library-instruction programs for students: Acadia, Carleton, Dalhousie, Laval, and St. Francis Xavier reported such work for credit.⁵ A few programs, such as the one described by Sister Dolores Donnelly⁶ at Mount Saint Vincent, were uncredited short courses (Donnelly 1956). Many sources indicated improved reference services, longer hours, and expansion of interlibrary loan to senior undergraduates. These changes were noteworthy components in the evolution of library service after 1945 that go beyond quantitative statements about growth.

Many significant improvements to library service evolved before the Williams report. Changes were managed locally, but the ideas and practices employed had a common basis. Throughout the sixties, the Williams report was a touchstone for building research collections. Long-serving library directors such as Robert Blackburn, the University of Toronto's library director from 1954 to 1982, and Paul-Émile Filion, the director of Laurentian University's libraries from 1960 to 1970, appreciated its forward-looking recommendations. Filion (1968) left a lasting impression about its dramatic impact. Although Edwin Williams acknowledged that a foundation for library improvement already existed, he stressed that much work remained to be done (Williams 1962, 60–61). The following examination of the postwar situation—the buildings, collections, library organization, and librarianship—through the lens of contemporary sources affords more details about associated library improvements and professionalization of librarian work.

Library Planning and Design

With the return of war veterans seeking advanced education and the ensuing raised enrolments, expanded facilities became an immediate concern for library administrators. Between 1945 and 1953, an unprecedented investment of \$4.8 million was expended on new or improved facilities at 16 reporting universities; a further

5. *Survey of Libraries. Part II: Academic Libraries, 1961–62* (Ottawa: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1964), 14–17.

6. Donnelly was University Librarian at Mount Saint Vincent, 1957–68.

\$3.8 million was committed to existing projects in 1953 (John Price Jones 1953, 6–7). Increasingly, major new buildings and ubiquitous “library wings” appeared in the 1950s:

- Alberta, 1951, Rutherford Library
- Assumption, 1958, main library
- Bishop’s, 1959, John Bassett Memorial Library
- British Columbia, 1948, wing; 1960 Koerner wing housing the undergraduate library
- Carleton, 1951 and 1959, Murdoch Maxwell MacOdrum Library
- Lakehead, 1960, extension to main building
- Manitoba, 1953, additions in 1960, named in honour of Elizabeth Dafoe in 1961
- McGill, 1953, Redpath extension with undergraduate facilities
- McMaster, 1951, Mills Memorial Library
- Mount Allison, 1960, William Morley Tweedie annex
- Mount Saint Vincent, 1951, housed in Evaristus Hall after fire
- New Brunswick, 1951, extension, renamed Bonar Law-Bennett Library
- Memorial, 1961 main, named after Henrietta Harvey in 1970
- Saskatchewan, 1956, Murray Memorial Library
- Sir George Williams, 1956, in new Norris Building
- Toronto, 1954, Sigmund Samuel wing
- Victoria (Toronto), 1961, named in honour of E. J. Pratt in 1967
- Western, 1954, Lawson north wing; 1962, Lawson south wing

After many years of austerity during the Depression and World War II, the postwar years marked an unprecedented time of library construction that extended the life of older buildings while fostering the creation of separate structures.

New architectural practices blended with tradition between 1945 and 1960. The University of Alberta’s Rutherford Library, opened in 1951, exemplified waning tradition. Contemporaries admired its load-bearing brick and stone walls, interior marble staircase, multiple oak-paneled rooms, decorative ceilings, and closed tiered stacks housing 265 000 volumes (Sherlock 1950 and 1952). Nevertheless, Rutherford stood in contrast to new architectural styling, construction methods, and interior planning. A decade later, when University of Alberta administrators explored expansion of Rutherford, the American consultant Keyes Metcalf⁷ recommended

7. Metcalf was director of Harvard University libraries (1937–55) and a notable library planner. Rutherford South continues to be admired for its attractive and striking architectural qualities.

a completely new building (Distad 2009, 82–90). Canadian libraries were evolving because conventional wisdom advised that “the best solution to our planning problems is generally to be found in a freer, more modern conception of [library] building” (Hilton Smith 1947, 38). Modernist architecture accentuated flexible-interior modular planning with subdued exteriors, combined with new construction materials and techniques (Macdonald 1948, Cooperative Committee on Library Building Plans 1949). The principle that “form follows function” was one of the pillars of the International Style and the Midcentury Modern movements that emphasized rectilinear forms; plane surfaces; the “open plan” for interiors; the use of glass, steel, and reinforced concrete in construction; and inviting decor, featuring geometric patterns and simple furnishings.

With the erection of the 35 400-sq. ft. Mills Memorial Library at McMaster (Figure 1: Mills Memorial Library, c. 1950s), it can be said that “the architectural revolution came to Canadian university libraries in 1951” (Harland 1968, 164). Mills’s exterior featured large windows and a rectangular-block stone-faced facade. Inside, the modular design permitted flexibility and allowed columns to support stacks on three floors. According to Marget Meikleham,⁸ “Modular construction and the absence of bearing walls will simplify future alterations to meet changing conditions” (Meikleham and Hudson 1951, 2). She was correct: subsequent expansions to Mills in the 1960s, 70s, and 90s increased floor space to more than 230 000 sq. ft. Another

FIGURE 1
Mills Memorial Library, 1950s. Credit: William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections, McMaster University

8. Meikleham directed the McMaster library from 1944 to 1966.

striking example of innovative design principles was the main 50 000-sq. ft. library at Victoria University, Toronto (1961), a plain, two-storey, granite-clad cube with extensive windows allowing users to view landscaping (“Victoria University Library” 1962). McMaster and Victoria manifested new, modern library features that obviously broke with the past.

The Universities of Manitoba (1953) and Saskatchewan (1956) followed a less dramatic course but also declared themselves to be modern. At Manitoba, the main library exhibited expansive glass panels, flat surfaces, and an open interior for large reading rooms: one for reserve books, the other for reference books and periodicals (Figure 2: Elizabeth Dafoe Library, 1950s). Manitoba’s stacks were reserved for faculty and advanced students. Elizabeth Dafoe⁹ considered the library to be graceful, functional, and flexible (Dafoe 1959). The rectangular four-storey Murray Memorial Library used steel-frame construction and allowed open-stack access (“Murray Memorial Library” 1959, Appelt 1954). During the planning stage, David Appelt, the university librarian from 1946 to 1980, explained (Library Building Plans Institute 1953b, 9): “The plan has been strongly influenced by the desire to group around the catalog the elements likely to use it most—Reference, Technical Processes, and Charging Desk—and by an insistence on clarity of arrangement.” Yet, the Murray library retained the traditional reading room with books, as did Assumption’s new main library (1958) in Windsor. Rooms in the latter college were adjoined by stacks

FIGURE 2
Elizabeth Dafoe Library, 1950s. Credit: University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections

⁹. Dafoe headed the University of Manitoba’s libraries from 1937 to 1960.

on two levels and adorned with internal glass partitions and large exterior windows (“Assumption University Library” 1959, Mate 1959).

The accent on interior planning and future requirements manifested alternative approaches regarding the integration of resources, users, and staff. At Mills, the architect William L. Somerville (1952, 248) planned a modernist building: “There are four tiers of stacks, each on a separate concrete slab, which allows for the rearrangement of stacks or the substitution of additional seminar or other rooms when stack rooms are extended by addition to [the] rear of [the] building.” In the ensuing decade, the era of restricted, inflexible stack levels underwent re-examination. A young architect, Fernand Tremblay, proposed “de placer les étudiants en relation la plus directe possible avec les livres” (“bringing students as close to the books as possible,” Tremblay 1957, 93). Tremblay’s concepts (1955) would be realized in 1968 when Laval’s library opened in the Pavillon Jean-Charles Bonenfant. The future lay in use of open stacks, individual carrels, carpeting, unobstructed sightlines, and improved heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning systems, placing less emphasis on the typical noisy reading room with tile floors, lengthy tables, and perimeter shelving.

Hilda Gifford, Carleton’s librarian from 1948 to 1969, who assisted plans for the erection of two separate libraries in the 1950s, outlined her experience concisely. Carleton’s small two-storey building, opened in 1951 to accommodate 40 000 volumes, rapidly outgrew its usefulness (Gifford 1952). She noted that multiple questions needed resolution beforehand: whether to allow open or closed stacks; adjoin reading and book areas or retain larger reading rooms with perimeter shelving; confine supervision to exit points or continue surveillance throughout the building; resist the provision of space for administration, lecture rooms, or an auditorium; and unify staff in a central area (especially technical services) or disperse staff to assist the public on designated floors, perhaps on a subject-divisional basis (Gifford 1959, 104). At Carleton, the 1959 two-storey MacOdrum Library, extended to three levels by 1963, abandoned the reading room in favour of interspersing carrels and seating for reading areas; the librarian was satisfied that “nowhere are books more than thirty feet from reading tables” (Gifford 1963, 45).

Traditional features did persist alongside new elements, especially in larger institutions where architects faced the prospect of modernizing older structures to satisfy new requirements. The Universities of Toronto, McGill, and British Columbia built extensions to main libraries in the 1950s that blended new styling and construction methods with older Collegiate Gothic, Romanesque, and Tudor styles. These libraries held to the idea of large reading rooms or sections primarily for undergraduates. Space for collections and readers was the primary objective: all

FIGURE 3

Knowledge Denied at Carleton, 1955. Credit: *The Carleton*, 3 February 1955.

three libraries had expanded collections significantly since 1939 (see Appendix) and faced serious congestion by the early 1950s. McGill's new wing, promoted by Richard Pennington, University Librarian (1947–64), accommodated an undergraduate library

of almost 40 000 volumes, 400 seats, and stacking for 650 000 volumes (Pennington 1955). Toronto designed its undergraduate section, the Stewart Wallace Room, for 20 000 heavily used volumes and 380 seats (Foley 1957, "Addition to Library" 1960). British Columbia's major extension, the Walter C. Koerner wing, opened in September 1960 and featured a "college library" for first- and second-year students as well as subject-division areas with stack access and specialized reference service. The Koerner extension allowed freer access to staff assistance and collections, now reaching 350 000 volumes (Harlow 1961).

It was evident that more diverse, functional solutions were being employed in building construction and design by 1960. The frequency of articles devoted to academic library architecture by librarian administrators suggests a heightened realization that building design was an essential factor in how students and professors used space and interfaced with staff. Publications reveal more clarity about how the physical environment of libraries influenced working relationships and the patterns of activity and communication that users could enjoy. Elements such as room size, decor, and placement of furniture or equipment were more carefully arranged to accommodate user traffic and satisfaction. The awareness of interaction with clientele influenced the location of staff and the degree of access for users. The reaction of McGill students to a "brighter atmosphere" was not uncommon (*McGill Daily* 1953). Of course, there were student criticisms about the regulated environment, mostly about bothersome noise, cigarette use, overcrowding, and missing or stolen books (Figure 3: Knowledge Denied at Carleton, 1955). Student reactions to loud conversations were mixed because talking was ubiquitous during assignments (*McGill Daily* 1957). University of Alberta students were irritated when their request to relax the smoking ban under Rutherford's rotunda was rejected (*Gateway* 1955a and 1955b). Even with state-of-the-art facilities, there was always room for improvement. After the new Assumption library opened, a student editorial suggested the installation of vending machines for soft drinks, coffee, and cigarettes (*Purple and White* 1958). Obviously, the particular image or message each new library building conveyed about its atmosphere differed, but each one followed a modernist orientation after 1950. It was evident that the character of exteriors and planning of interior space had changed dramatically after 1945 to accommodate improved access for users and allow more efficient deployment of staff and holdings.

Collections

"All in all, the general picture of university and college libraries in Canada is not a happy one," Kirkconnell and Woodhouse (1947, 157) surmised in their review of academic library holdings immediately after World War II. Their judgment was based mostly on evaluations with established, wealthier American counterparts. The

outcome of this kind of comparison was predictable. Earlier, in 1944, Ann Smith¹⁰ had suggested that the disparity in library budgets between the two nations might be redressed only by provincial or federal financial transfers (Smith 1944). On balance, most Canadian libraries were treading the path of modest evolution that Fred Landon had described when he outlined the University of Western Ontario's collection-building efforts (Landon 1945). However, other service considerations, namely, the potential of interlibrary loan, led one respected librarian, Sister Francis de Sales,¹¹ to opine optimistically: "Fortunately, libraries are no longer judged solely by the number of the volumes, but on how well the collection fulfills the avowed aims of that library and satisfies the needs of its clientele" (de Sales 1946, 49).

In fact, the state of collections was not entirely bleak: by 1951, a dozen institutions held more than 100 000 volumes, and seven circulated more than 100 000 items.¹² Two detailed explorations of western (Hamilton 1942) and eastern (Redmond 1950) academic libraries revealed collection strengths as well as weaknesses. Using American accreditation checklists published by the North Central Association based in Chicago, periodical holdings at the Universities of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba indicated some "strength" (in the range of 31 to 55 percent of 428 titles) in biology, chemistry, classics, English, geology, philosophy, and physics. For reference books, only Saskatchewan fell below the median, set at 490 titles. For 894 current book selections published after 1930, Saskatchewan held the fewest, with the other three libraries reporting that they owned approximately 50 percent (Hamilton 1942, 105–21). Applying similar methodology, the resources of major Maritime libraries—Dalhousie/King's, Acadia, Mount Allison, and New Brunswick—were studied. This analysis found possible research caliber in six fields: theology, history, Canadian literature and history, English literature, law, and law, and biological sciences; it conceded, however, that work at the master's level sometimes was conducted with holdings that were "hardly adequate" even for undergraduates (Redmond 1950, 113). Many collections reflected the cumulation of selections made by teaching faculty or library committees and featured materials suitable for specific courses.

Altered postwar circumstances radically accelerated collection building for established and entirely new universities as well as formerly affiliated or denominational colleges that were acquiring public university status. Several major university libraries—York, Waterloo, Sherbrooke, Laurentian, and Carleton—were created during the postwar period. Establishing core collections "from scratch" and

10. She worked in various administrative capacities at the University of British Columbia from 1930 to 1964.

11. She was head librarian at Mount Saint Vincent, 1932–57.

12. *Survey of Libraries, 1950–52* (Ottawa: Dominion Bureau of Statistics, 1954), Table 4.

acquisition programs while dealing with the midcentury information explosion was a difficult although achievable undertaking: Lakehead, in Port Arthur, held 3 628 volumes in 1956 and 30 902 in 1962–63.¹³ York University's situation at the onset of the 1960s presented a greater challenge than most, yet its ambitious plans met with success. York's university librarian, Douglas Lochhead, was determined to build a collection as rapidly as possible. A small core moved to Glendon Hall in North York in 1961, and by the academic year 1962–63, when there were 303 undergraduates, the library already held 30 870 volumes and was expanding its book accessions at a rate of 10 000 per year.¹⁴ At the same time, York enlisted the aid of Stephen McCarthy, an American library consultant from Cornell University, to plan future expansion. He recommended a unified administration of decentralized services, with a collection of 100 000 volumes by 1965 and 250 000 by 1970. In fact, by 1965, York's collection reached 100 000 at its new Leslie Frost and Stacie Science libraries (O'Connell 1965 and 1969). York's initial experience demonstrated the ascendancy of library consultancy and multi-year planning. The trusted standby of yesteryear, a report from the chief librarian to the president, such as the projections for Memorial University by Sadie L. Organ,¹⁵ was receding in importance (Organ 1951).

Cooperative endeavours and technology boosted the potential of library holdings. At the end of World War II, *The Humanities in Canada* (Kirkconnell and Woodhouse 1947, 165–67) addressed the inadequate collections in higher education by recommending nationwide coordination via the establishment of a national library in Ottawa, interlibrary loan, photo reproduction, and microform purchases. All of these services matured throughout the postwar period. The principal advantage of interlibrary-loan code revision in the 1950s was uniformity in staff workflow, and, for patrons, greater access to resources. Because interlibrary loan was a privilege reserved for faculty, graduate students, and a few senior undergraduates, exchanges were relatively modest: transfers reached 10 322 items borrowed and 16 212 items loaned in 1960.¹⁶ Microform eased storage considerations, permitted purchase of specialized resources at reasonable cost, and reduced binding and preservation costs (Gundy 1948). To this end, the CLA and Rockefeller Foundation launched a project to film 19th-century Canadian newspapers in 1947. Eventually more than 200 papers were filmed, a substantial aid to Canadian studies (Talman 1968). Microfilm was a cost-effective medium, although administrators realized that it required expensive readers, assistance to users, and educational efforts because acceptance was known

¹³. *Survey of Libraries, 1954–56*, Table “Academic Libraries,” and *Survey of Libraries. Part II: Academic Libraries 1962–63*, Table 2.

¹⁴. *Survey of Libraries. Part II: Academic Libraries 1962–63*, Tables 2 and 3.

¹⁵. Organ was Memorial's head librarian from 1932 to 1958.

¹⁶. *Survey of Libraries. Part II, 1959–60*, Table 7.

to be gradual (Harkins 1953). Overall, microform and non-print holdings did not accumulate rapidly. Canadian academic libraries in 1959–60 reported 7 929 filmed titles and 904 microcard sets. The same report noted that libraries held 6 987 films, 33 714 slides, and 15 506 sound recordings.¹⁷

Planning for specialized collections demanded more attention and new solutions after 1945. *The Humanities in Canada* briefly mentioned the country's few significant holdings, such as Manitoba's Icelandic collection (Johnson 1986), British Columbia's Howay-Reid Collection (Owens 1959), Queen's Edith and Lorne Pierce Collection (Gundy 1959), and New Brunswick's Rufus Hathaway Collection (Lawrence 1947). These pre-1945 collections had been acquired mostly by donation through contacts with faculty, alumni, authors, and collectors. This customary process continued during the 1950s: notable additions were the Kipling Collection (Dalhousie), Buchan Collection (Queen's), Simcoe Papers (Toronto), and Rutherford Collection (Alberta). James McGregor Stewart willed his extensive collection to Dalhousie in 1954. Queen's acquired the personal library of John Buchan as a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Robert S. McLaughlin of Oshawa in 1955 (Wilmot 1958 and 1961). The McLaughlins had previously gifted the Simcoe Papers to the University of Toronto library in 1946 (*Toronto Globe & Mail* 1946a and 1946b). Mostly because of access restrictions, however, W. S. Wallace, Toronto's chief librarian from 1923 to 1954, arranged to transfer these papers on indefinite loan in 1951 to the nearby Ontario Department of Archives (Blackburn 1989, 157). The University of Alberta separately housed former premier A. C. Rutherford's personal library of historical publications relating to western Canada in the new Rutherford Library (Distad 2009, 76–77).

Gradually, by means of benefactions and incremental library purchases, the value of special collections to university researchers and programs gained greater appreciation. The concept of a "special collection" was being recognized as an important regional or national source of published works significant to a discipline. Although the subject might be limited (e.g., an individual), the resources could provide the basis for dissertations and independent research. Rare book holdings also contributed to research intensity. "Rare" connoted many things: age, uniqueness, value, fragility, protective storage, and climatic controls. The University of Toronto took fledgling steps to establish a separate room for this work in November 1957, after Marion E. Brown¹⁸ undertook to organize books and manuscripts assembled over more than half a century (*Toronto Globe & Mail* 1957, Brown 1957). The University of British Columbia established a special collections division headed by Basil Stuart-Stubbs in 1960. It housed rare books and manuscripts for advanced study in the humanities and social sciences ("Research and Special Collections" 1960).

¹⁷. *Survey of Libraries. Part II, 1959–60*, Tables 4 and 6.

¹⁸. Brown later served as president of the Bibliographical Society of Canada, 1964–66.

Collection development and long-term funding practices were relatively undeveloped in postwar libraries. The employment of selectors, subject specialists, or bibliographers to address the needs of a library's clientele was a future prospect. Coordinated purchases were difficult because departmental faculty or library committees typically did the selecting. Dorothy Ryder, the Calgary branch librarian of the University of Alberta from 1951 to 1964, declined to make selections in 1958 because she knew that certain professors "felt strongly against the librarian choosing the books" (Brydges 2009, 7). Holdings were seldom subject to thorough reviews. There were occasional criticisms: the inadequacy of the Canadian literature section at Dalhousie came under fire in the mid-1950s, for example (*Dalhousie Gazette* 1955a). Informed academics, namely A. E. Malloch (1946),¹⁹ sometimes disparaged the state of collections but pointed to inadequate budgets as the principal fault. At Alberta, student fees actually formed a substantial source of book revenue (Peel 1979, 15) for many years. Federal assistance for universities boosted the management of acquisitions on an *ad hoc* basis. The University of Toronto received an additional \$50 000 for books (and \$30 000 for salaries) in 1951–52. Federal aid increased Toronto's book fund by 35 percent (Blackburn 1989, 163–64). A similar infusion of funds allowed the University of British Columbia library to increase its appropriation for books and periodicals by 91 percent during 1951–52 (University of British Columbia 1952).

The state of collections clearly improved across the nation after wartime. Book stock more than doubled between 1939 and 1961 (see Appendix). Of course, the creation of new university libraries and duplicate undergraduate holdings inflated reported totals, and not always could library stock keep pace with student enrolment or library staffing in certain periods, such as the late 1950s.²⁰ In some unreported areas, such as extramural and extension programs, main libraries were secondary sources in providing books: they often sent out requested materials "with little official knowledge of the work of the extension departments" that maintained separate collections for this purpose (Snider 1948, 42). Emerging trends such as the diversification of non-print formats, interlibrary loan, special collections, and rare books extended the ability of libraries to support teaching and research. Better planning, combined with more efficient methods of processing the mounting volume of acquisitions, were key factors in meeting collection targets at some new libraries, such as Waterloo (Beckman 1961). An intermittently growing maturity in collection building and access to resources was a meaningful part of the postwar "foundation" identified by the 1962 report by Edwin Williams.

¹⁹. Archibald Malloch taught English literature at McGill for many years.

²⁰. *Survey of Libraries. Part II: Academic Libraries 1960–61*, Chart I.

Library Organization

New directions in library administration and management were no less important than buildings and collections. The immediate demands posed by returning veterans and enlarged enrolments were managed satisfactorily by 1948:

Statistical data on the academic libraries indicate that the libraries have kept pace with the inflated enrolment in the colleges and universities during the post-war years. Full-time enrolment in the institutions of higher education had increased 66 p.c. in 1947 over that of 1945. Expenditures on book stock by the libraries of these institutions had increased 65 p.c. in the same period. A similar increase occurred in the personnel of the libraries. (*Survey of Libraries 1946–48*, 18)

After the energetic surge of wartime veterans, ideas about services and reorganization of workflows proceeded with less urgency. In 1946, the American Library Association (ALA) completed a study on library conditions in higher education and issued recommendations for future development (*College and University Libraries 1946*), but no similar effort was conducted by the CLA. The spirit of independence and localism conditioned much of the library outlook on campuses across Canada in 1945.

Debate on two fundamental issues, the library's purpose and the role of the librarian, influenced the degree and speed of transformation related to internal organization. At the outset of the postwar period, the fundamentals of libraries and librarianship were described for recruitment purposes by the director of the University of Toronto Library School, 1928–51, Winifred Barnstead:

The essence of library work is the organization and interpretation of the book collection on the one side, the meeting of a human need on the other. The primary objective of a library is to satisfy the informational, recreational and cultural needs of its community. Few professions offer such varieties of work and such opportunities for service. (Barnstead 1945, 401)

Barnstead added that prospective university librarians should have general library qualifications (BA or BSc with the postgraduate BLS), specialized knowledge in the fields of a university's curriculum, and scholarly interests. The director clearly viewed librarianship as a profession, and the term "professionalism" increasingly served as a centrepiece in postwar discourse. As for the university library's purpose, a scholar of classical languages at Université Laval made the most articulate declaration about its humanistic contributions in the mid-1950s: it was an essential resource for supporting research, improving teaching, building student literacy, and promoting the entire nation's cultural progress (Lebel 1956). Librarians generally supported the basis for his argument: the academic library was a mixture of administrative

and instructional work in support of the educational aims and purposes of its institutional parent.

The delineation of work between professionals and clerical staff (Bishop 1973, 4–7) and the need for additional staffing were primary concerns in the postwar era. Marjorie Sherlock (1953, 62–63), Alberta's director from 1945 to 1955, stated that “good library practice calls for a ratio of 60:40 between professional and clerical staff,” while depicting the library's role as a potential “central power house of intellectual energy,” combining research resources and trained staff. The tendency to combine acquisitions, cataloguing, and serials into “technical services” to cope with ever-mounting purchases and government deposits entailed more coordinated processing and mixture of various grades of personnel. By 1965, both the CLA and Ontario Library Association (OLA) had reconstituted their cataloguing sections as technical services. Efforts to improve public services, such as the introduction of the “subject divisional plan” at Dalhousie in 1960 (*Dalhousie Gazette* 1960), required additional revenue for more public-service staff apportioned to the humanities, social studies, and natural sciences. More complex administrative structures increasingly replaced simple lines radiating from a chief librarian. McGill's 1963 reassessment of its decentralized library resources, made with the assistance of two American consultants, illustrates the degree of postwar change. This study recommended at a minimum an associate (deputy) librarian, two senior coordinators for technical and readers services, and a personnel assistant (Logsdon and McCarthy 1963, 13–19). However, the task of organizing effective ways to group responsibilities and positions constructed on hierarchy-departmentalization precluded policies integrating library personnel with teaching faculty, governing library committees, and institutional officers.

As efforts to reorganize and improve services in the academy evolved, the comparative analysis of operations with other libraries and establishment of “best practices” assumed greater significance. A few studies suggested that libraries could fall short of their promise. At Nova Scotia Technical College, a brief 1955 survey indicated that two-thirds of the engineering students did not know how to use the main library (Redmond 1955). In the same year, a survey of 42 research libraries revealed the nascent state of local, regional, or national library cooperation (Spicer 1955). By the early 1960s, it was evident that the complexities of organizing services inclined senior administrators to use consultants to plan future library growth. Consultancy and internal reviews often mimicked those that occurred at other libraries and encouraged uniformity in organizational design. In 1958, Toronto reviewed its main library, four college libraries, and 53 departmental libraries with the help of Stephen McCarthy, Cornell's university librarian. This report

recommended more centralization and coordination of functions, the use of Library of Congress for classification, improved salaries, and more space (McLaughlin 1959, 36–38). Toronto immediately commenced the arduous task of converting to Library of Congress Classification in 1959 (Fraser 1961) and considering a new main library. Later, in 1962, Université Laval requested Edwin Williams and Paul-Émile Filion (1962, 1) to recommend wide-ranging improvements to its library facilities and services, because “elle est présentement inadéquate” (“it is currently inadequate”).

Student dissatisfaction with library organization, regulations, and procedures surfaced frequently. On occasion, editorials urged students to guard against bureaucratic procedures threatening freedom in the library. One piece by a Manitoba exchange student contrasted the Dafoe (rules-bound) and MacOdrum (honour-system) libraries (Carleton 1961). Dalhousie’s loan system was critiqued in the mid-1950s due to the lamentable habit, “well-developed in the scholarly” (mostly faculty), of book hoarding (*Dalhousie Gazette* 1955b). At Queen’s, H. P. Gundy addressed card catalogue problems after complaints from the Arts Society that many books could not be found or were not clearly described (*Queen’s Journal* 1950). The perpetual, time-consuming line-ups for book retrievals at the circulation desk in Toronto’s main library annoyed many and on one notable instance inspired a satirical retort by Harry Rasky (1949).²¹ Complaints about limited stack access for most undergraduate students were commonplace. Administrators insisted that space limitations and indifference on the part of first- and second-year students justified stack closures. One editorial (*McGill Daily* 1955) summarized a cogent point about indifference that belied the argument: “It seems unlikely that the stacks would be reduced to chaos by the widening of access. Surely the students who are interested and would profit from such access have a right to it.” Similarly, when Memorial’s three-storey library opened in 1961 after a long-anticipated gestation (Library Building Plans Institute 1953a), students protested supper-hour closures and the requirement to have their library cards signed by the librarian prior to using the library at night (*Muse* 1962). At Manitoba, more than 500 students signed a petition and staged a brief library sit-in to extend closing hours to 11 p.m. (*Manitoban* 1960).

Criticism from users did little to alter the fundamental predisposition to intensify administrative structures. To deal with the quickening pace of change, managers relied on centralized decision-making and hierarchical departmental units to implement priorities, classify personnel, and allocate resources. There was little discussion about organizing positions in ways that would encourage collegiality with faculty, individual autonomy, and formal relationships with students. According to the 1938 “ALA Code of Ethics for Librarians,” which many Canadians accepted (*Feliciter*

21. Rasky became a noted filmmaker and was awarded the Order of Canada in 2002.

1958, 45–49), issues such as the interaction between librarians and faculty/governing authority normally were the responsibility of library directors. Neal Harlow, the University of British Columbia's library director from 1951 to 1961, believed that "the library administrator is a key individual, and his standing among faculty is probably one good indication of the status of the library on the campus" (Harlow 1956b, 25). Throughout the time span of this paper, advisory library committees, composed of appointed faculty members or university administrators, retained significant influence in the oversight of library policies, budgets, operations, and book selection (Downs 1967, 41–48). Serious debate about governance alternatives, such as participatory-management models or library councils, would not occur until the 1970s (Revitt and Luyk 2016, 60–79). By 1960, the adoption of centralized administration of campus-wide library service—main libraries, branches, departmental units, research centres—was replacing the diffuse arrangements of yesteryear.

Librarianship

Many Canadian librarians and educators agreed that librarianship was a profession requiring advanced knowledge, ongoing dedication, and provincial certification (Althouse 1943). Winifred Barnstead's description emphasized a librarian's application of the knowledge of books and principles of library science to types of libraries and his/her clientele. Colleagues supported Barnstead's stance on professionalism while at the same time emphasizing librarianship's humanistic aspects and its relatively new status (Meikleham and Waldon 1944). When the French-American scholar Jacques Barzun (1946) criticized librarians for scholarly inattentiveness and lack of general knowledge, Elizabeth Dafoe responded that there was no shame in the professional work of maintaining the contents of a library, organizing resources, and making them available for patrons. She said it was commendable, but unnecessary, for librarians to pursue academic status by way of teaching responsibilities (Dafoe 1948). The issues of professional competencies and elimination of clerical routines accentuated higher standards of workplace performance and theoretical knowledge. Circulation control was becoming mechanized by use of punched cards in larger libraries such as the University of Toronto (Newton and Blackburn 1949). Cataloguers stressed the need for theoretical education to apply improved principles, championed by Seymour Lubetzky,²² to bibliographic description for creators, titles, and contents (Cockshutt 1954, Ball 1962). Advocates for improved reference service, such as Grace Hamlyn at McGill (1946) and Samuel Rothstein at the University of British Columbia

²². Lubetzky strongly influenced the 1961 international cataloguing statement (the Paris Principles) and the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, adopted in 1967.

(1961),²³ recommended the desirability of additional specialized subject backgrounds and bibliographical knowledge.

Canadian library education followed many practices originating south of the border, but its American derivation and accreditation according to ALA standards were becoming less contentious by the end of the 1950s. A CLA study (Chatwin 1955) reported that “ALA accreditation has worked satisfactorily” and was likely to continue, and suggested the inclusion of Canadian representatives during library school program reviews. In the province of Quebec, where the Association canadienne des bibliothécaires de langue française, established in 1948, sought to strengthen French-speaking librarianship, one influential leader declared that libraries “must keep using American librarianship as a foundation but adapt it to meet special needs” (Desrochers 1961, 6). As “degree inflation” became more common, two Canadian library schools introduced master’s programs: Toronto in 1951 (thesis optional) and McGill in 1956 (thesis required). Both library schools were accredited by the ALA Board of Education for Librarianship under its revised 1951 standards. Auguste-M. Morisset, the university librarian at Ottawa, 1934–58, also sought to inject American ideas and practices into the master’s curriculum of the École de bibliothéconomie d’Ottawa that he founded in 1938 (Morisset 1958). At the Université de Montréal, the École de bibliothécaires, a training program established in 1937, was replaced by a university-level library school in 1961 that began the process of seeking ALA accreditation (Tanghe 1962).

The outcome of professional education was the formation of a generalist, a librarian who could adapt to diverse types of libraries. Bertha Bassam (1956, 142) reported that the library school “core curriculum may be briefly described as dealing with the building of a library collection; its organization; its use; its service to the community; and the administration of the library.” The goal was a liberal education that would permit beginners to work in a library, large or small, in any type of professional role. Library schools seldom engaged with challenges from documentalists (information scientists), who were exploring computerized literature searching and applying new techniques in information storage and retrieval to cope with the proliferation of printed works (Stuart-Stubbs 1996, 289–96). Practitioners were more active in responding to information-science theory and scientific expertise. The McGill University conference in 1958 is notable in this regard (*Proceedings of the Documentation Seminar* 1958). Knowledgeable librarians realized that more complete bibliographic control and subject analyses in libraries, even at the existing embryonic stage, could be helpful (Harlow 1953 and 1956a, Dafoe 1955, Blackburn 1955) in the ever-expanding field of information work.

23. Rothstein was Assistant and Associate University Librarian at British Columbia, 1954–61. Hamlyn became Chief Medical Librarian at McGill, 1956–63.

Advanced educational standards and intellectual linkages with academic disciplines bolstered arguments for professional status (Bassam 1956). Higher standards also promoted a modernized workplace and attracted qualified young graduates, especially women, to careers in post-secondary librarianship. But too often, according to a survey by the Women's Bureau of the *Labour Gazette* (1957), wages for female librarians were not commensurate with qualifications, and men were landing the top positions while cataloguing and reference positions were predominately held by women. In fact, in 1956 there were only 12 female chief librarians in institutions reporting in the Appendix—just over 25 percent.²⁴ A 1957 survey of almost 475 University of Toronto library school graduates confirmed that “wherever women predominate, pay is low” (Bassam 1958, 232). Yet gender imbalance remained a muted issue before 1960. Despite a modest increase in male graduates shortly after World War II,²⁵ the recruitment of men seldom became a point of attention (Rothstein 1949). More likely, as voiced by a young BLS graduate working at Victoria University, Toronto, Barbara Sherwood (1965), there were complaints about clerical routines and the need for librarians’ work to be more “stimulating” and “rewarding.” To address inequity in management positions, Mary Henderson (1968, 191), chief librarian at the Regina campus of the University of Saskatchewan from 1960 to 1966, suggested an artful remedy to improve teamwork: “We will have to concentrate on scattering the men through the system.”²⁶ Margaret Beckman (1973, 133), who reached the top ranks in academic management during the 1960s, offered franker advice to women: “Be prepared to work twice as hard as any man doing the same job.” Librarian activism on workplace issues associated with second-wave feminism would not emerge until after the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada released its findings in 1970.

Professionalism implied a formal course that presented its own challenges, such as the establishment of regulating bodies, development of codes of conduct, and passage of legislation. Margaret Gill, director of the National Research Council Library, 1928–57, asked, “Doctors and architects have their ‘Royal College’ and ‘Royal Institute.’ Would a nucleus of similar intent for librarians be a help or a hindrance to librarianship in Canada?” (Gill 1945, 19). A decade later, the divide was apparent between most librarians preferring a personal commitment to professional performance through self-improvement and a minority believing in organizing as an exclusive group with a code of ethics, standards, credentials, and commensurate salaries (Wilkinson 1955). The impetus to explore the formation of professional-librarian sections within provincial associations began tentatively in the mid-1950s

24. *Survey of Libraries*, 1954–56, 89–96.

25. *Survey of Libraries. Part III: Library Education 1960–1965*, Chart I.

26. Henderson directed the School of Library Science at the University of Alberta from 1971 to 1976.

in British Columbia and Ontario. These groups were active before 1960, although major organizational efforts belong to a later period (Linnell 2006). The thrust for recognized standing encouraged the use of terminology—professional librarian, university librarian, and academic librarian—to differentiate work. Dalhousie's library director from 1953 to 1960, Douglas Lochhead (1956, 100), described his work as a campus intermediary: "As a university librarian I feel it is my main responsibility to assist the teaching faculty in the stimulation of intellectual curiosity amongst students." Despite his advocacy for the role of university librarians, he believed librarianship had not reached the status of a profession in the eyes of the public because librarians had yet to fully demonstrate their worth (Lochhead 1959). Because the establishment of professional organizations required provincial legislation, the CLA was satisfied to issue a 1961 report, "Information on the Certification of Librarians," and act as a clearinghouse on the contentious issue.

The inclination to emphasize librarians' functional tasks (e.g., circulation) or their relationship to types of resources (e.g., undergraduate reading) yielded various outcomes. Initially, it drew university and college librarians together informally at regional and national conferences; ultimately, it led to the formation of dedicated groups to further their institutional work and sectoral distinctiveness. The CLA formed a Committee on University Libraries in 1959; by 1963 there were enough members to form a separate division, the Canadian Association of University and College Libraries (Jacobs 2014, 12–14). Similarly, dedicated workshops at the OLA conference meetings, beginning in Toronto (1957) and Kingston (1958), led to the formation of the Ontario College and University Libraries Section in 1963. These national and provincial groups embarked on ambitious goals. They aimed to develop standards of service, monitor salaries and working conditions, and promote professional development in library instruction, reference, cataloguing, circulation, classification, and salaries. Pursuit of professional ideals, the role of the library on campus, and commitments to academic communities were secondary activities. Eventually, after 1960 they did turn to broader issues, such as intellectual or academic freedom, and, in concert with the Canadian Association of University Teachers, which promoted faculty influence (Gidney 2012), academic status and governance for librarians.

Postwar academic librarianship retained many humanistic qualities and developed its own identity incrementally on each campus across Canada. In describing the general role of the university library as a place to explore scholarship, Elizabeth Dafoe (1951) insisted it should have a comfortable lounge "where student may meet student, or professor, or librarian and share the results of his reading and contemplation." As the term "professional librarian" gained prominence in

higher education, more proactive and specialized duties emerged that accentuated procedural issues internal to the library. In due course, the identity of librarians in academic institutions diverged from their librarian colleagues in larger public research or special libraries. This was a fundamental transformation from the wartime situation, when the determination to coordinate research in industry, education, and the sciences had advanced the national interest (Gill 1944). University of Alberta librarians were in the forefront of attaining academic status and improved salaries after Marjorie Sherlock convinced administrators to recognize their qualifications in 1946 (Distad 2009, 56–57). Across the nation, by the mid-1950s a majority of 25 libraries reported that their institutions granted librarians a form of faculty status (which also was undergoing fundamental change, Nelson 2006, 7–22), but they typically limited this to chief librarians and their senior assistants (“CLA-ACB Committee” 1956). The distinctiveness of college and university librarians was emerging slowly in each institution and in the wider Canadian library community where public, special, school, and government libraries were more numerous in library associations.

Postwar Modernization

A review of contemporary sources, expressing the opinions and observations of librarians, professionals, faculty, and students, expands our knowledge beyond two terms, “growth” and “progress.” It demonstrates that the postwar history of academic libraries was deeply influenced not just by local conditions and persons but also by broader trends occurring in the nation’s universities and colleges and the library community across North America. Sources for the period mirror general currents in the Canadian post-secondary sector that made library provision of resources, assistance, and information more integral to the work of students and faculty. The injection of federal funds for higher research following the Massey commission offered direct support for collection building and prompted local budgetary increases to keep pace. Buildings were erected using innovative design and modern construction techniques. The creation of new universities and conversion of smaller colleges to public universities, combined with the explosion of published information, stimulated library planning for collections. As well, awareness developed about burgeoning needs in medicine, science, and technology, professional programs, and faculty research intensity that blossomed later (Simon 1964, Bonn 1966). All these trends invigorated thinking about libraries on a national basis during the postwar renewal, a pre-automation era that may be characterized as “midcentury modernization,” a generalization that captures many features and serves as a useful descriptive appellation.

The postwar period may be considered an important transitional phase in Canadian academic library history; it was not merely a “foundation” for what followed. Buildings, collections, organization, and the profession of librarianship came under scrutiny, as the needs of parent institutions and users tested the capacity and adequacy of services. Underlying support on campuses for increased library funding recognized the value of collections and the emerging role of librarians in acquiring and making knowledge available. The expansion of collections and delivery of services contributed to the distinctiveness of “college” or “university” librarians. Special collections, reference, technical processes, and improved accommodations provided more opportunities for librarians to interact with clients. In the changing environment of 1945–60, new priorities emerged. The reconsideration of closed stacks and duplicate undergraduate collections in reading rooms led to the decision to adopt open collections. While the traditional emphasis on resources for undergraduate teaching and preservation of printed works continued, more comprehensive collection building, beneficial coordination with other libraries through interlibrary loan and the National Library, and administrative-managerial arrangements came to the fore. Technology and funding enabled administrators to improve the library’s processes and educational services in concert with a more informed consensus concerning professionalism. Librarianship in higher education gravitated to associations dedicated to the academy, especially the Canadian Association of College and University Libraries, formed in 1963. Although the “storehouse of knowledge” concept remained a powerful library metaphor, the delivery of information was assuming more prominence and suggested future roles.

The national pace of change from 1945 to 1960 was moderate compared with the succeeding period, the dynamic 1960s that loom large in the history of Canadian libraries. The sixties ushered in many educational changes, especially the establishment of provincial systems of higher education. Nonetheless, library development in the 1960s should not be viewed simply as a break with the past but as an outgrowth of many changes already underway. Postwar modernization was far surpassed after the “baby boom” reached campuses: from 1961 to 1972, the student population that academic libraries served increased threefold, library holdings (books and periodicals) increased nearly four times, staffing multiplied almost six times, and operating expenditures increased about elevenfold. This subsequent stage was unique and unsustainable. While cautious steps were taken to establish better libraries after the Second World War, it is evident that contemporaries realized there were limitations to “midcentury modern” efforts. In a national exercise to ascertain the state of Canadian libraries, Atlantic librarians reported (“Atlantic Provinces” 1961, 11) that “the deficiencies common to all university libraries are the need for more well-qualified staff, more space for readers and staff, better balanced book

collections, and more funds to provide these things.” Experienced administrators and librarians agreed that the key to future national development lay in better regional and provincial plans, improved professional practices, computerized applications, and consensus about progressive steps to achieve continuous improvement. From an interpretation of the evidence at hand, it is apparent that these processes already were underway in the 1950s.

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APPENDIX: ACADEMIC LIBRARY HOLDINGS AND CIRCULATION, 1939–62

Institution	Monographs ¹		Periodical Titles ²		Lending ³	
	Volumes 1939	Books, etc. 1961–62	Journals 1939	Journals 1961–62	Loans 1945	Loans 1961–62
University or College						
Memorial	nr	68 768	nr	1 143	nr	x
St. Dunstan's	7 282	18 500	50	167	2 450	10 742
Acadia	76 000	117 400	195	426	14 477	x
Dalhousie*	57 735	186 358	x	1 634	x	x
King's College	24 887	nr	43	nr	2 900	x
St. Francis Xavier	47 000	75 000	90	519	x	x
St. Mary's	7 000	48 000	45	300	x	8 500
Mount Saint Vincent	20 150	53 000	52	300	1 438	23 840
New Brunswick	30 000	113 838	54	1 244	5 477	61 177
Mount Allison	43 009	108 498	263	712	16 894	46 000
St. Joseph's	15 000	14 328	23	50	x	1 167
Bishop's	17 000	35 000	62	152	3 100	20 813
Sherbrooke	nr	48 000	nr	900	nr	12 000
McGill*	394 050	807 597	2 045	11 077	155 154	319 285
Montréal**	99 462	259 590	548	6 100	9 000	97 841
Laval	231 093	294 985	425	3 304	12 550	40 400
Sir George Williams	5 636	45 869	46	556	33 932	86 881
Loyola College	17 850	41 000	x	200	x	10 000
Ottawa*	125 000	257 000	750	2 600	x	27 000
Carleton College	nr	64 540	nr	723	nr	88 847
Royal Military College	13 000	58 235	70	325	x	23 403
Queen's	188 674	354 938	753	2 507	66 245	102 262
Toronto*	368 280	805 398	3 560	11 280	260 000	495 465
Trinity College	38 643	64 917	52	128	9 345	22 772
St. Michael's College	29 169	90 029	78	476	x	x
Knox College	35 036	nr	42	nr	7 850	x
Victoria University	98 000	93 710	183	389	94 212	113 000
York	nr	14 882	nr	343	nr	12 278
McMaster	49 949	137 541	204	1 979	42 609	94 116
Western*	143 978	299 394	742	2 100	53 120	138 753
Waterloo College	8 984	31 918	22	601	2 109	40 942
Waterloo	nr	31 563	nr	1 102	nr	31 400
Assumption College	11 846	108 730	110	1 260	3 000	52 038
Laurentian	nr	30 147	nr	535	nr	8 664
Manitoba*	88 453	276 679	799	3 224	102 933	259 903
United College	37 629	63 000	40	303	33 633	51 000
Saskatchewan	63 459	219 500	293	1 885	37 463	178 104

Alberta***	69 890	309 190	562	4 522	25 000	452 263
British Columbia	120 000	525 161	510	5 600	92 470	594 240
Victoria College	5 818	74 832	16	858	x	142 234
TOTAL	2 588 962	6 247 035	12 727	71 524	1 087 361	3 667 330

NOTES

1. Dominion Bureau of Statistics reported volumes as books, bound journals, pamphlets, and theses in 1961–62. Reported volume count does not include pamphlets in 1939.

2. Many libraries included government serials in periodical totals for 1961–62.

3. Comparable data for 1939 is not available.

* Totals are for main or central library unless noted.

** Montreal 1939 totals for volumes and periodicals includes faculty and departmental libraries with central library.

*** Alberta 1961–62 totals includes Calgary campus.

x – not stated for library.

nr – no report for institution.

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