

**The Researcher's Guide to British Columbia Nineteenth Century Directories: A Bibliography and Index.** JOHN S. LUTZ, ed., GEORGE YOUNG, comp. Victoria: Public History Group, University of Victoria, 1988. 162 p. ISBN 0-92127800-4.

Social historians have long been interested in records that provide background historical information of a systematic and accessible nature. As the introduction to this guide notes, however, there has been reluctance on the part of both professional historians and antiquarians to make use of directories as a source of historical data. This perception persists, in spite of the fact that directories often feature regular publication dates, are widely distributed, and reflect a strong editorial commitment to the presentation of comprehensive and organized primary material. The drawbacks to the use of directories — they are difficult to locate in repositories, provide only periodic coverage and are often not published over an extended period of time, are difficult to use, and are frequently unreliable — seemingly remain uppermost in the minds of historical researchers.

This guide substantially minimizes a number of the deficiencies that make directories such a cumbersome research tool. Two sections of the guide index 140 directories relating to nineteenth-century British Columbia, first by year of publication and then by place name and subject. In the first section, directories are listed chronologically for each year for the period from 1860 to 1900. Each entry provides a wide range of information which allows researchers to make effective use of the directory. Brief descriptions are included of each directory's most salient features, for example, a list of businesses or voting lists. Also featured are names of editors and compilers, place of publication, publishing company, number of pages in the publication, and depositories where the directory can be found.

The second section, forming the bulk of the guide, is a detailed index to the bibliographic entries identified in the first section. Access is obtained via a thorough list of geographic place names and subjects. Cross references are provided to the appropriate directory, year of publication, and page number. It only remains to be noted that, while the range of the guide might be expected to encompass all provincial holdings, the emphasis is on directory holdings at the Universities of British Columbia and Washington, and at the National Archives and National Library in Ottawa.

This guide serves a number of functions, not the least of which is its usefulness as a valuable historical research tool. Related works in the future will not only give greater insights into the structures and shapes of British Columbia's communities, but they will also play an important part in the re-creation of towns and communities which no longer form a part of the province's material heritage.

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**Literary Archives Guide.** National Archives of Canada. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1988. v, 126 p. Text in English and French with French text on inverted pages. ISBN 0-662-55424-8.