

BASIC RAD:

An Introduction to the preparation of *fonds*- and *series*-level descriptions
using the Rules for Archival Description

Jeff O'Brien
SCA Outreach Archivist
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1. INTRODUCTION: What are Arrangement and Description?

Processing of archival material involves first *arranging* then *describing* it. Arrangement involves analysing the records to see who or what created them, how and why they were created, what functions and activities they document, when they were created and what their physical nature is. While the records themselves provide the most concrete source for this information published histories and the recollections of the records creators themselves will also provide valuable insight to this procedure.

Description is the process of explaining that arrangement so that people - researchers, administrators, whomever - who want to use the records know where to look to find the answers to their questions. Arrangement, therefore, is the process of studying the records to discover how they relate to the entities that created them. Description is the way of sharing that knowledge with everyone else.

The language of description is RAD - the *Rules for Archival Description*. RAD is designed to capture and present information necessary for comprehensive and intelligible descriptions of all classes of record material in all possible circumstances. In so doing it makes the records useful. A basement full of undescribed records is not an archives, it is a fire hazard. Information that cannot be found is not information, it is landfill. This is why it is important to provide intellectual access to record material in a way that makes the process of uncovering the information it contains efficient and effective.

Many people find the sheer size and complexity of the RAD manual daunting at first. However, *most archival material can be quite adequately described using only a very few of the rules presented by RAD*. That the official RAD manual must explain all of them and show how they are used in all situations is what makes it so big. The template for recording the physical description of a group of photographs may look like this:

Extent including specific material designation : Other physical details ; Dimensions + accompanying material (physical details). -- Physical description of subsequent class of material.

but 19 times out of 20 it will be recorded like this:

Extent: 35 photographs.

The purpose of this document is to explain what RAD (the Rules for Archival Description) is, what it is supposed to do and how to use it. The Guide also contains a "short version" of RAD, identifying and explaining the minimum elements necessary for an acceptable RAD-compliant records description. It is in no way meant to supplant the RAD manual but may be used in concert with the manual as a relatively painless way to ease oneself over the threshold from RAD-novice to RAD-user. Anyone wishing to use RAD must own a copy of the RAD Manual, which costs \$30.00 (price includes all taxes and shipping charges) and is available for purchase from: the Canadian Council of Archives, 1009-344 Wellington St., Ottawa, Ont., K1A 0N3.

2. RAD Explained

2.1. What is RAD?

RAD is a system for creating archival descriptions in the form of “finding aids” which identify and describe archival records and provide access to the information they contain. It is based on the principle that each archival document exists as part of a group and is linked to all other records in that group in specific ways that come about as a consequence of the way each was created, used and maintained. The archival term for such a group of records is a “fonds”, meaning all of the records created, used and accumulated by a single organization, individual or juridical person during the transaction of daily business. RAD is used to describe groups of records with the same provenance (source) or arising from the same function or activity. It does this by:

1. identifying the provenance of the records, when they were created, how much of them there are and what their physical characteristics are;
2. providing information about the entity that created the records; and
3. providing information about the content of the records.

Using “multi-level description” RAD helps the archivist determine what information to capture and how to present it, including authorized punctuation formats. The advantage of using RAD is that it helps institutions to eliminate idiosyncrasies in their finding aids, makes it easier for users to find the information they are looking for, makes it easier to transmit archival information electronically and generally results in higher quality finding aids. Finally, the Canadian Council of Archives (CCA) requires that all finding aids created from work financed by CCA grants be RAD-compliant.

2.2. What is a Finding Aid?

A finding aid is a tool used to find things. Telephone directories and highway maps are finding aids; the File Manager on a PC is a finding aid, as is the index at the back of a book. An archival finding aid is essentially a physical and intellectual “map” of the archives that tells users what sort of information is available and how to find it. There are two basic types of finding aids: intellectual and physical.

In their most complex and useful forms, intellectual finding aids describe archival material in terms of the inter-relationships between a group of records and the administrative entities that created them, including data about physical characteristics of the records such as media and extent. The most complex - and most powerful - of these are multi-level inventories, created using RAD (more about this later). The least complicated finding aids of this type are file- or item-lists which list available files or items by whatever system seems appropriate (eg., files listed alphabetically by title, or books by author). A user consults this type of finding aid to find out what a particular group of records includes and to fine-tune any search. In many institutions the finding aids consist largely of file lists, sometimes with a short historical sketch or biography attached. While a useful tool for accessing archival material, file lists do nothing to explain the context of the records and in archives - as in life - context is everything.

Physical finding aids are administrative tools used by archivists to find the actual files, boxes, documents,

artifacts, etc., that a user has requested. They are quite simple; they identify a thing and note its location. Physical finding aids include shelf lists, (what is on a shelf, or what shelf a thing is on) and box lists (what is in a box, or what box a thing is in).

Some finding aids will contain elements of both. Accession Registers (an administrative tool archivists use to keep track of new accessions that have yet to be arranged and described) will note not only the contents of the accession (in more-or-less general terms) but also its extent and location in the archives and will occasionally include a full file list.

Finding aids can be maintained as database entries on a computer or as hard copy versions printed on paper, or both. Electronic finding aids - including the electronic copy of a word-processor file - are searchable, making them extremely convenient. However, most databases do not support RAD data fields as seamlessly as might be desired and it is often easier to work with printed documents than with electronic ones. While this is of course a matter of institutional policy, the best solution may be to have both electronic and hard copy versions of the finding aid available to the user, if this is possible. Those familiar with HTML¹ will immediately see the ease with which it lends itself to RAD's multi-level format, providing yet another way to create archival finding aids.

2.3. What is multi-level description?

Multi-level description is a way of describing a group of records according to the structure of the administrative body that created them (their external structure) and the way in which the records are arranged (their internal structure). Describing records using a multi-level format begins with a description of the records at the broadest and most general level and then proceeds downward through its component parts, describing the records in increasingly specific terms at each level. Information about the records and their creators is captured in various data elements.

RAD uses six levels of description: the *fonds* (the broadest level of description), *sous-fonds*, *series*, *sub-series*, *file* and *item*. They are arranged hierarchically; that is, each level is a part of the level above it and the record descriptions at each level include a reference to the levels above or below. *Sous-fonds* and *sub-series* are not explicitly detailed by RAD because they are described in exactly the same manner as *fonds* and *series*. It is also possible to have *sous-sous-fonds* and *sub-sub-series*.

Before continuing further it will be necessary to define these terms.

2.4. The Six Levels of Description

2.4.1. The fonds

Descriptions of archival material begin with the broadest intellectual unit; the *fonds*, which basically is the sum total of all the records created by a single entity. In large, complex administrative bodies it can be difficult to figure out what does and does not constitute a *fonds*. Common sense will help: the City of Saskatoon is obviously the creator of a *fonds*. But is the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan? Do the

¹ Hyper-Text Markup Language, the code used to write Internet Web pages.

Department of Highways records constitute a fonds, or should we look to the provincial government itself before applying this designation?

The following criteria may be useful. For an administrative entity to be the creator of a fonds it must have a legal identity, an official mandate, a defined hierarchical position, be capable of conducting most of its business without reference to a higher authority and have a defined and recorded organizational structure.²

2.4.2 The sous-fonds

Simply put, a sous-fonds is all the records of an administrative sub-unit of the organization that created the fonds. Thus, if the City of North Battleford records are a fonds, then the Department of Parks and Recreation records are a sous-fonds.

2.4.3. The series

A series is a group of records within a fonds (or sous-fonds) which are created or accumulated from the same function, activity or subject, because they have a particular form or because of some other relationship related to the circumstances of their creation or use. "Personal Correspondence" or "Financial Records" might be the titles of record series. The series links the fonds (and the administrative structure that created it) to the actual records that were created.

2.4.4. The sub-series

A sub-series consists of records within a series that are readily identifiable as a subordinate or dependent entity on the basis of classification or filing, physical form or content.

2.4.5. The file

The file consists of documents kept together in a way that reflects particular activities, subjects, etc., and that bear the same title. A file may consist of any number of individual folders. Folders are merely physical document storage units while files are groupings used to impose intellectual order on records. Files may also have sub-files (which should not be confused with items).

2.4.6. The item

The item is the lowest level of description and the smallest intellectual entity within a fonds useful for descriptive purposes. Like files, items are intellectual - not physical - units and can include many separate things. A letter in a correspondence file is an item, as is a ledger book, a photograph or an architectural drawing. Remember, however, that a letter may have several (or several hundred) individual pages. A set of committee minutes might include reports, correspondence and an agenda as well as the minutes themselves. Similarly, a sound or video recording may be so large that it is recorded on several cassettes or film reels, yet it is still the same item. Finally, items can be found in files or can exist independently of them.

² Terry Cook, "The Concept of the Archival Fonds", in Terry Eastwood, ed., *The Archival Fonds: From Theory to Practice*. (Bureau of Canadian Archivists, 1992), p. 43.

2.4.7. Putting it all together

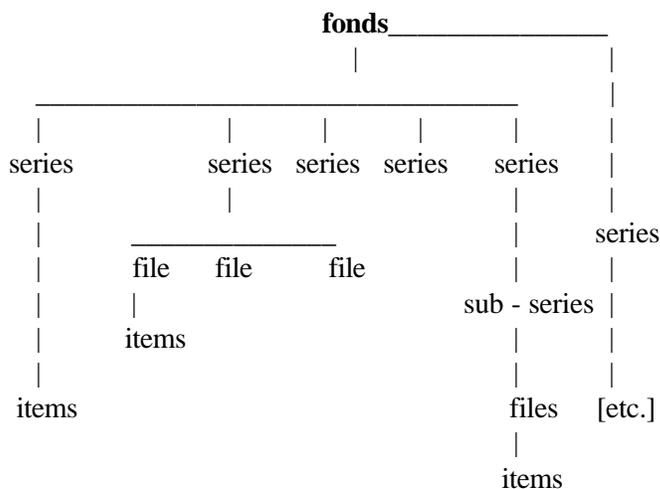
In its simplest form a fonds is composed of series that include files which are made up of items. Sous-fonds will have series of their own and series may be composed of sub-series. Some record material (maps and photographs, for example) can go straight from item to series without an intervening file level. The four basic rules of multi-level description are:

- 1) go from the general to the specific;
- 2) include only information that pertains to the level being described;
- 3) do not repeat information; and
- 4) provide a link between levels.

Ideally this description will reflect the pre-existing arrangement of the records. Records are created and maintained in the first place according to a certain arrangement which reflects their function, purpose and use. The archivist must analyse the records, identify that arrangement and then use RAD to describe it. It is not the archivist's job to impose a structure on records unless their original order has been disturbed or never existed in the first place. In the former case the archivist must try to reconstitute original order and in the latter case must create one. The prime principle here is *respect for original order* which means keeping things the way you found them.

At each level of description the archivist will record information specific to that level only. This is to avoid repeating information. At the fonds level the archivist will include information about the entire organization and all of its records in a general way. When writing up each individual series description the archivist will only include information specific to the records of that series and those parts of the organization that created them. Descriptive elements will be repeated at each level, but the information presented will not be repeated. For example, if access to the entire series "Financial Records" is restricted, there is no need to include a restriction note in the description of the sub-series, "Accounts Receivable".

These levels of description create a documentary structure that mimics the structure and functions of the entity that created it. It may look something like this:



3. RAD ELEMENTS

3.1. What is an Element?

RAD descriptions are composed of various elements, each containing very specific sorts of information about the records and the entity that created them, listed in a specific order. While RAD allows some flexibility in the order of presentation of elements, we suggest that for the sake of clarity, consistency and ease of use they be ordered exactly as shown in this Guide and in the RAD manual.

RAD itself does not require that data be presented in a certain way. However, we suggest that there are two basic styles of presentation for hard-copy finding aids: a formal presentation with each element labelled and presented as a list (similar to the way an entry on a database is listed) or an informal presentation in which all elements are separated by a “. -- ” (or “full stop, space-dash-space”, in RAD terminology). Labelling each element will remove any possibility of confusion among users who are not familiar with archival finding aids. Examples of both formats can be found throughout this Guide.

Regardless of the form that is used, for the sake of clarity we suggest that the various *Note* elements should always be labelled and the *Administrative History/Biographical Sketch*, *Custodial History*, and *Scope and Content*, while not necessarily labelled should be listed as separate paragraphs.

3.2. Basic RAD

At the fonds level, in its simplest and most common form, a RAD description consists of five elements: *Title*, *Dates*, *Extent*, *Administrative History/Biographical Sketch*, and *Scope and Content*. Six other elements should also be considered for a basic RAD description: *Custodial history*, *Source of supplied title*, *Physical description note*, *Arrangement note*, *Restrictions*, and *Accruals*. While these are not optional, they will not always be necessary. The five basic elements have been marked with an asterisk (*) in the following list. To assist the reader a reference to the appropriate section of RAD Chapter 1 (“General Rules for Description”) has been added in brackets.³ Sous-fonds, series and sub-series descriptions will be very similar to fonds-level description, however file and particularly item-level descriptions include some elements (eg., Publisher’s Series, Edition) that are not usually found anywhere else. In this Guide we are concerned principally with descriptions at series-level and above. At these levels of description record information relating to the following elements.

Title* (Rule 1.1)

There are two kinds of titles: formal, and supplied. If the material that is being described already has a formal title, use that, copying it word-for-word. Formal titles seldom exist at the fonds and series level. To be a formal title it must be on or in every single item in the unit. Thus formal titles are usually only found at the item level and are most common with non-textual records. If there is no formal title, supply one based on the contents of the fonds,

³ RAD uses a mnemonic system for numbering its rules: all of the rules relating to title will be in the “.1” section of each chapter. The general rules are in 1.1, rules for giving titles to textual record units are in 3.1, etc.

sous-fonds or series. The supplied title is composed of a name element (usually the creating individual, family or organization) and a word or phrase that gives the nature of the archival unit. For fonds, use the name of the creating entity plus the word “fonds”, as in “City of North Battleford fonds”, “Joe Smith fonds” or “Jones Family fonds”, and similarly for sous-fonds. As series and sub-series level, identify the contents of the unit and type of records, eg., “Bishop’s Correspondence” or “Executive Committee Minutes.” If there is a supplied title the description should include a “Source of supplied title” note (see below).

RAD also mentions parallel titles and statements of responsibility. These are not applicable to series- and fonds- level descriptions: only formal titles have parallel titles, and statements of responsibility are only found at the item-level.

Optionally, the title may include the “General Material Designation”, or GMD (Rule 1.1C). The GMD tells what class of record material is most common to the unit being described. Although it is only an optional rule, the GMD is particularly useful for describing special media and is becoming quite commonly used. Rule 1.1C1 gives the list of authorized GMD’s, which are put in square brackets - []- immediately after the title, eg.: “Title: John Smith fonds [textual]” If the option to give the GMD is chosen it should be used at each level of description unless it is identical to that given in a higher level description.

Dates:* (Rule 1.4)

Dates are the oldest and youngest dates of material in the unit being described and can be presented in several ways depending on the material. If the volume of material is evenly spread between the oldest and youngest dates, the format is:

Dates: 1905-1987.

This is the most common method of presenting dates and is acceptable in most instances. However, if a majority of the records come from a certain period make a note of the “predominant” dates, as in:

Dates: 1905-1987 ; predominant 1932-1987.

If there are only one or two records outside the predominant date range, list them individually:

Dates: 1905, 1932-1987.

If there is a long gap between two distinct sets of date ranges list them like this:

Dates: 1905-1932 ; 1944-1987

Sometimes exact dates will not be known. Although it is common practice to indicate this by writing “n.d.” (“no date”) in cases like this it is preferable to estimate probable or uncertain dates. RAD gives a variety of conventions for recording probable and uncertain dates which are worth examining (Rule 1.4B5). The conventions which will be most commonly used for

estimating dates are:

Probable date:	[1867?]	Decade certain:	[197-]
Approximate date:	[ca. 1975]	Probable decade:	[197-?]

The Date element of a RAD description *could* look something like this:

Dates: 1895, 1910-1921, 1947 - [197-?] ; predominant 1951-1965.

19 times out of 20, however, it will look like this:

Dates: 1895-1975

Extent* (Rule 1.5)

The Extent element is part of the physical description area, which also includes “other physical details”, “dimensions” and (at the item level) “accompanying material”. Extent is the most important of the three elements and the only one that will usually be used when describing textual records. It is measured in metres or centimetres for textual records and either as exact or estimated numbers for photographs, maps, etc. The Extent element should say how many units there are and of what, eg.:

Extent: 50 m of textual records.

Extent: ca. 200 photographs.

When listing more than one type of record in the same element, either separate each one with a “. --” or start a new paragraph for each.

Extent: 4 maps. -- 2 microfilm reels. -- 10 photographs.

Extent: 4 maps.
2 microfilm reels.
10 photographs.

Depending on the records being described the extent element and physical description area can become quite complex. However, since textual material is the most common record type in most archival institutions and is also the simplest to describe, this will not usually be a problem. In any case, the degree of detail which is included in any description will always be an institutional decision.

Remember to give the extent of each class of records (photos, maps, textual, moving images, etc.) that is in the unit being described. If there are three or less (as in the above example) we suggest that you list them all in the manner shown. If there are more than three, list the most common one, add: “and other material” and use the Physical Description Note (Rule 1.8B9,

located farther down in the description) to give complete details on the extent of records:

Extent: 50 m of textual records and other material

[....]

Physical Description: Series includes 50 m of textual records, 50 photographs, 3 maps, 5 posters and 30 reels of microfilm.

RAD grants institutions the right to decide the maximum number of specific classes of material that will be described in this area without using the “and other material” notation (Rule 1.5A5).

Administrative History* (Rule 1.7B1)

This element will always be found in fonds and sous-fonds level descriptions. It is used to describe the structure and history of the organization that created the records. It will only be found at the series and sub-series level if the records were created by a different organizational unit from that described at the fonds level. Care should be exercised not to confuse series with sous-fonds (which are defined as records created by an identifiable sub-unit of the organization).

At each of these levels, provide information about the corporate body responsible for creating only those records being described. The reason for including an administrative history is to provide the user with an understanding of the context in which records were created. A good Administrative History should be concise, but may also include much of the information that the more casual researcher is seeking.

The following sub-elements should be included. They can be lumped together as a narrative (in which case the order may be changed to facilitate the smooth flow of the text) or separated into distinct sub-elements that should be introduced by a standard introductory word or phrase. Most archivists use a narrative format for the Administrative History. Either way, include information that relates to these sub-elements.

1. Dates

When the organization was created and when (if) it ceased operations.

2. Mandate/sphere of functional responsibility

What it was responsible for, any legislation or other legal or policy documents from which it derived that authority, its activities and any significant changes in its authority or functions.

3. Predecessor and successor bodies

What organizations preceded it in carrying out its mandate/function and activities and what organizations succeeded it. If there were any amalgamations, name the entities involved and summarize the amalgamation.

4. Administrative relationships

Show the relationship between the body and any higher bodies that have authority over it and any bodies that it controls. Describe any changes in the relationships.

5. Administrative structure

Describe the structure and organization of the body, including significant branches and divisions.

6. Names of the corporate body

Record any changes in the official name of the body and also any popular names by which it was known (eg., 'The "Saskatchewan Government Insurance Office" was commonly referred to as "SGIO" before it was shortened to "SGI"').

7. Names of chief officers

If this seems important, record the names of those persons acting as chief officers of the administrative unit being described.

8. Other information

Anything that doesn't fit within the above areas but seems important.

Biographical Sketch* (Rule 1.7B2)

This is an administrative history for people and families. It will always be found in fonds and sous-fonds level descriptions. It will only be found at the series and sub-series level if the persons who created the records are different from those described at the fonds level. It is used to describe the history and activities of the individual or family that created the records. As with the Administrative History, care must be taken not to confuse series with sous-fonds.

At each level in which it is being used, provide information relating only to the persons responsible for the records being described. The reason for including a Biographical Sketch is to provide the user with an understanding of the context in which records were created. A good Biographical Sketch is concise, yet may also include much of the information that the more casual researcher is seeking.

The following sub-elements should be included, either lumped together as a narrative (in which case the order may be changed to facilitate the smooth flow of the text) or separated into distinct sub-elements that should be introduced by a standard introductory word or phrase. Most archivists use a narrative format for the Biographical Sketch. Either way, include information that relates to these sub-elements:

1. Names

Full names, married names, aliases, nicknames; place and date of birth and death; marital data; and the names of children. Include information about the family origin.

2. Place of residence

Where the family/individual lived and for how long.

3. Education

Give information about the formal education of the person(s) involved.

4. Occupation, life and activities

Information about:

1. the principal occupation(s) and career or life work of persons
2. the activities of families
3. any other activities important to an understanding of the life of the person or family
4. important relationships with other persons, families or organizations
5. offices held
6. significant accomplishments including honours, decorations and noteworthy public recognition.

5. Other Information

Anything else that seems significant but doesn't fit into the above areas.

Custodial History (Rule 1.7C)

This element describes the history of the custody of the records *after* they left the custody of the creator. This element is included so that users can judge the records' authenticity and reliability. For example, non-current records that were maintained in a federal government records centre for 20 years and then transferred to the National Archives are much more likely to retain the characteristics of their creation and use - that is, be more authentic and reliable - than those that sat in someone's attic for 20 years and were then transferred to the National Archives. In this element include information relating to who had custody of the records and

when they were transferred, as far as this can be discovered.

Be careful not to confuse this part with information given in the Administrative History/Biographical Sketch. Changes in custody resulting from administrative re-organizations, mergers, etc., are part of the Administrative History, not the Custodial History.

Scope and Content* (Rule 1.7D)

The “scope” and “content” are two separate things, despite being found in the same element. At the fonds (and sous-fonds) level, the “scope” gives a thumbnail sketch of the function or activities which generated the records, the period of time and the geographical area to which they pertain. For the “content” indicate the arrangement or organization of the unit being described and include a list of the units in the next lower level of description (ie., at the fonds level list the series, at the series level list the sub-series.) RAD does not mandate any particular style of presentation; however, we suggest that if sub-units are identified they should be laid out either as a numbered list or identified by name, whichever is most appropriate. Summarize the principal documentary form if possible (eg., minutes, reports, correspondence, etc.).

At the series (and sub-series) level, the scope should include information about the specific activities generating the records, the time period and geographical area involved and any administrative or documentary procedures which explain how the series came into being. The content should include information about the internal structure of the series including arrangement, classification scheme and documentary forms of the records.

The scope and content must state the current level of description, eg.: “Fonds consists of...,” “Series comprises...,” etc.

The RAD Manual includes a number of examples of different kinds of Scope and Content notes and further examples of RAD descriptions can be found at the end of this Guide.

Source of supplied title (Rule 1.8B2)

This element is required if a supplied title is being used (which will almost always be the case at the fonds, sous-fonds, and series level). Indicate the source of the title, usually the contents of the records themselves (eg., “Title based on contents of the series”, or “Title based on provenance of the fonds”).

Physical description note (Rule 1.8B9)

The Physical Description note is used to provide extra detail on the extent, physical characteristics and conservation requirements of records. Use this note to give details on extent of the records if the “and other material” notation has been used in the “Extent” element (see above).

Arrangement note (Rule 1.8B13)

Commonly used to note reorganisations of the material by the creator, changes in the classification scheme the creator used to file the records, arrangement by the archivist (if there was no discernible original order) or reconstitution of arrangement by the archivist (if original order had been disturbed), and any other aspect of arrangement considered important to an understanding of the records but that cannot be put in the Scope and Content.

Restrictions note (Rule 1.8B16)

This element notes any restrictions that exist on access, reproduction and publication. If there are none, don't mention it.

Accruals note (Rule 1.8B19)

Note in this element if the record unit is "open", that is, if more material belonging to it is expected to be transferred to the archives in the future. If no accruals are expected, leave it out.

Linking Element

The rules for multi-level description require that descriptions be linked to those of the level above them. RAD does not say how this should be done, but some standardized method must be used to indicate where any given description is in the hierarchy and what its relationship is to other parts of the hierarchy. Downward linking is not necessary: the Scope and Content should include that information. However, an element must be included that indicates what series, sub-series, sous-fonds, or fonds the unit being described belongs to. We suggest that this element be placed above the Title element. Only show one level of linkage (for an example see Section 3.4).

The preceding elements are necessary for a basic RAD description. The Manual lists a large number of notes relating to various aspects of the description including "Availability of other formats", "Markings and stamps", "Immediate source of acquisition" and others, many of which are specific to certain classes of records (textual, graphic, cartographic, etc.), or to circumstances which might not be relevant to someone wishing to write a basic fonds- or series-level description. Anyone working with RAD should at least be aware of their existence so as to be able to make an informed decision about whether to include them or not.

3.3 A fonds-level description:

The following is a fictitious fonds-level description of a group of records to be found in the equally fictitious

Tugaske Community College Archives, presented both as a list with labelled elements and using the “. --“ notation. Note that in both cases the Administrative History is presented as a narrative.

Title: Tugaske Community College Girls Curling Club fonds.

Dates: 1947-1968.

Extent: 50 cm of textual records. -- 35 photographs. -- 2 posters.

Administrative History: The Tugaske Community College Girls Curling Club was started on September 15, 1947 and officially closed in June, 1968⁴. It was incorporated as an official school club at a meeting of the TCC Board of Governors on Sept 13, 1947, for the purpose of providing College girls with the opportunity to participate in curling at a competitive level.⁵ The Boys' and Girls' clubs co-existed until September, 1968, when they merged to form the present-day TCC Mixed Curling League.⁶ General oversight of the Club was provided by the staff advisor, who also acted as coach. The Club was a member of the South Saskatchewan Ladies Curling League⁷ and was administered by an executive committee including a president, secretary/treasurer, and three members-at-large. A social committee and a tournaments committee also existed that reported to the executive.⁸ In 1957-1958 the club briefly changed its name to the Young Women's Curling Association (YWCA) before returning to the original name. It was also known colloquially as the "Tugaske Girls Curling Club", or just the "Girls Curling Club".⁹ Mrs. Edda Smith, Girls' Phys-Ed teacher, was staff advisor and coach throughout the club's history.¹⁰

Custodial History: After the club formally ceased to exist in 1968 its records were transferred to the Tugaske Community College Physical Education Department, which donated them to the Archives in 1992.

Scope and Content: Fonds consists of correspondence, minutes, financial records, membership lists, competition statistics, newspaper clippings, photographs and advertising material (posters) pertaining to the organization of local curling tournaments and social

⁴ Dates of founding/dissolution

⁵ Mandate/sphere of functional responsibility

⁶ Predecessor and successor bodies

⁷ Administrative Relationships

⁸ Administrative structure

⁹ Names of the Corporate Bodies.

¹⁰ Name(s) of the chief officers

events, travel to out-town-tournaments, fund-raising activities (bingos, bottle drives and bake sales, etc.) principally in the Tugaske-Tuxford-Moose Jaw area but also as far away as Eastend, Sask. Fonds is composed of the following series: Staff Advisor Records; Executive Committee Minutes; Financial Records; Membership Roll; General Correspondence; and Tournament Records¹¹.

The following is the same fonds described using the “. --” style of presentation. In this format, elements are separated by the required punctuation, or, depending on the element, by starting a new paragraph. Each element can be identified by its content and location.

Tugaske Community College Girls Curling Club fonds. -- 1947-1968. -- 50 cm of textual records. -- 35 photographs. -- 2 posters.

The Tugaske Community College Girls Curling Club was started on September 15, 1947 and officially closed in June, 1968. It was incorporated as an official school club at a meeting of the TCC Board of Governors on Sept 13, 1947, for the purpose of providing College girls with the opportunity to participate in curling at a competitive level. The Boys' and Girls' clubs co-existed until September, 1968, when they merged to form the present-day TCC Mixed Curling League. General oversight of the Club was provided by the staff advisor, who also acted as coach. The Club was also a member of the South Saskatchewan Ladies Curling League. It was administered by an executive committee including a president, secretary/treasurer, and three members-at-large. A social committee and a tournaments committee also existed, which reported to the executive. In 1957-1958 the club briefly changed its name to the Young Women's Curling Association (YWCA) before returning to the original name. It was also known colloquially as the "Tugaske Girls Curling Club", or just the "Girls Curling Club" Mrs. Edda Smith, Girls' Phys-Ed teacher, was staff advisor and coach throughout the Club's history.

After the club formally ceased to exist in 1968 its records were transferred to the Tugaske Community College Physical Education Department, which donated them to the Archives in 1992.

Fonds consists of correspondence, minutes, financial records, membership lists, competition statistics, newspaper clippings, photographs and advertising material (posters) pertaining to the organization of local curling tournaments and social events, travel to out-town-tournaments, fund-raising activities (bingos, bottle drives and bake sales, etc.) principally in the Tugaske-Tuxford-Moose Jaw area but also as far away as Eastend, Sask. Fonds is composed of the following series:

¹¹ One might also include a series called "Photographs"; however, records are usually not divided into series based on media but rather on the activity that created them. This is also true for the oversize posters, which, despite the fact that they are stored in a separate storage area of the archives are still a part of the series whose functions they document.

1. Staff Advisor Records
2. Executive Committee Minutes
3. Financial Records
4. Membership Roll
5. General Correspondence
6. Tournament Records

An archivist undertaking a full description of these records would use the same format to describe each of the series listed in the Scope and Content note, making sure that the information included was specific to that series. Beyond the series level one may describe sub-series, files and items. File and item level descriptions never have administrative histories, making them somewhat shorter. For the most part, we suggest that if file-level description of textual records seems appropriate, a list indicating titles and dates of the files should be sufficient.

3.4. A series level description

Fonds: Tugaske Community College Girls Curling Club fonds

Series: Tournament Records.

Dates: 1948 - 1967 ; predominant 1955-1967.

Extent: 17 cm of textual records. -- 30 photographs. -- 2 posters.

Administrative History: The first meeting of the tournament committee was held on August 31, 1948. Although it hosted its first tournament on October 15 of that year, it was active only sporadically until 1955. The last TCC Girls Curling Club tournament was held December 3, 1967.¹² The tournament committee was responsible for arranging and running club tournaments and helping to make travel and (where necessary) accommodations arrangements for school teams going to out-of-town tournaments.¹³ The committee reported to the executive committee and while not explicitly identified as such was in essence a sub-committee of the executive. There was no tournament committee in 1952-1954, during which time its activities were carried out by the executive.¹⁴ The tournament committee consisted of three members: a tournament co-ordinator and two

¹² Dates of founding/dissolution

¹³ Mandate/sphere of functional responsibility

¹⁴ Administrative Relationships

assistant co-ordinators.¹⁵

Scope and Content: Series consists of tournament committee minutes, correspondence relating to tournament organization and travel, lists of tournament results and related newspaper clippings, financial records relating to tournament costs and revenues, and photographs and posters from the 1956 and 1957 South Saskatchewan Ladies Championship Brier (which were hosted by the club).

(Note that in this case, the function of arranging and organizing tournaments fell to a specific sub-unit of the overall administrative structure and therefore the series description requires an administrative history.)

3.5 Personal papers: a fonds-level description

Personal papers are the records of individuals or families. They are described in the same way as corporate records, save that the Biographical Sketch is used instead of the Administrative History:

Title: The John Smith fonds

Dates: [ca. 1868] - 1928.

Extent: 2 m. of textual records. -- ca. 450 drawings.

Biographical Sketch: Born in 1861, John Joseph Smith¹⁶ emigrated from Suffolk, England with his parents Robert and Marian (nee Jones) in 1871. The family homesteaded near what is now Hamilton, Ontario before moving west to the Red River settlement in 1878. In 1881 Smith left home and began a lifetime of drifting across western and northern Canada¹⁷. He received no formal education after age 14 but showed artistic talent at an early age.¹⁸ He worked at various times as a buffalo hunter, trapper, farm labourer and construction worker, supplementing his income by selling pencil sketches to newspapers in western Canada and as far away as Ontario. In 1914 he settled in The Pas, Manitoba, where he began to draw in earnest. In 1919 his material caught the attention of Wilfred Drew, an art fancier and gallery owner in Winnipeg, Manitoba, who became his agent. Smith's first exhibition was in 1923 but it was not until after his death in 1928 that his work gained widespread public recognition.¹⁹

Custodial History: After Smith's death, custody of the fonds passed to his agent, Wilfred Drew. In 1934 the Drew Gallery was purchased by Abramson and Associates, with custody of the fonds passing to them. In 1952 Smith's nephew, Theodore Jenkins, successfully sued Abramson for the original records. After his death in 1966 custody was transferred to his son and heir, Robert, who donated them to the Archives in 1967.

¹⁵ Administrative structure

¹⁶ Names and vital events

¹⁷ Place of residence

¹⁸ Education

¹⁹ Occupation, life and activities

Scope and Content: Fonds consists primarily of original sketches, watercolours and line drawings depicting scenes from Smith's travels, particularly among native peoples in northern Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Fonds includes a some rougher pencil sketches done while travelling but is principally composed of more sophisticated work dating from the 1914-1928 period. Textual records include correspondence with Wilfred Drew (1919-1928), financial records relating to gallery sales (1923-1927), clippings from newspapers in which his early work was published and personal correspondence with a variety of family members and others.

3.6. Location guides and file lists:

Location guides and file lists are not part of RAD. They are a way to help get the user from the inventory (the RAD description) to specific parts of the fonds in which the information sought is to be found. The inventory provides details of the intellectual organization of a group of records, based on shared provenance and function. A file list can help the user narrow the search. Physically finding the records requires box and shelf lists, which tell the archivist where to find the requested records.

The records of the Girls Curling Club might, for example, include a file list. The list for each series could be included after each series description if it was not too long or as a separate finding aid, divided by series name, in the case of larger fonds. The archivist's copy (and possibly the publicly available copy) would indicate what boxes comprise each series (according to whatever location code is used by the institution) and what files are in each box. We can append a file list and location guide to the TCC Girls Curling Club Tournaments records series.

3.7. A sample file list/location guide

[Because it is short, this could be placed immediately after the Scope and Content note of the series description rather than at the end as a separate finding aid]

Location: Box 2

File List:

Committee Minutes - 1948-1951

Committee Minutes - 1955-1960

Committee Minutes - 1961-1967

Ledger Book - 1955-1967

Miscellaneous Correspondence - 1949-1964

Newspaper Clippings - 1948-1966

Tournament Results - 1948-1955
Tournament Results - 1956-1960
Tournament Results - 1961-1967

Tournament photographs

In Oversize Storage (Box 15):

1 poster - South Sask. Ladies Championship Brier - March 12, 1956
1 poster - South Sask. Ladies Championship Brier - March 18, 1957

4. Multiple media fonds

Of multiple media fonds the RAD manual merely says:

To prepare the description of a multiple media fonds and its parts, consult chapter 1 and the relevant chapters dealing with the broad classes of material for the unit being described as instructed.... (RAD, Ch. 2)

It follows this with a list of what chapters and parts thereof should be consulted when doing each area of the description.

“Multiple media” just means that the records on which the archivist is working contain samples of more than one class of material. Every time an archivist finds an envelope of photographs or a rolled-up poster in a box of textual records, s/he is dealing with a multiple media fonds. The term “multiple media” should not be a cause for alarm.

Fonds, series, files and even items may be classed as multiple media (a letter with a photograph attached would be a multiple media item). Like electronic records and microforms, archivists describing multiple media fonds will have to consult more than one chapter of RAD for the appropriate rulings.

The most significant differences between descriptions of different classes of records appear in the Physical Description Area (wherein is found the “Extent” element). The physical description of a map is going to be quite different from that of a photograph or a box of letters.

Things to remember about the Physical Description area:

1. Choose (as institutional policy) the maximum number of record types that can be described in the extent element. If more than that number exist in the fonds, describe the most common one and add “and other material”. Use the Physical Description note to fill out the details. RAD suggests three as a maximum, which will suffice to describe most multiple media fonds without having to use the Physical Description note.

2. Separate descriptions of different classes of records by a “. -- “, or put each one on a new line.

For example, the physical description of a multiple media fonds containing textual material, maps and photos might look like any of the following (in increasing order of complexity):

Extent: 10 m of textual records and other records.

Extent: 10 m. of textual records. -- ca. 500 photographs. -- 15 maps.

Extent: 10 m. of textual records. -- ca. 500 photographs : b&w ; 15 x 10 cm or smaller. -- 15 maps : both sides, col. ; 129 x 150 cm and 100 x 75 cm.

5. Basic RAD Quick Reference Sheet²⁰

1.1 Title*

1.4 Dates*

1.5 Extent*

1.7B1 Administrative History*

Dates of founding/dissolution

Mandate/sphere of functional responsibility

Predecessor and successor bodies

Administrative relationships

Administrative structure

Names of the corporate bodies

Name(s) of the chief officers

Other significant information

1.7B2 Biography*

Names and vital events

Place of residence

Education

Occupation, life and activities

Other significant information

1.7C Custodial history

1.7D Scope and content*

1.8B2 Source of supplied title

1.8B9 Physical description note

1.8B13 Arrangement note

1.8B16 Restrictions note

1.8B19 Accruals note

----- Linking Element

²⁰ Numbers in bold face indicate the relevant section of the RAD manual. Asterisks (*) indicate required elements.

6. Records in Electronic Form

Most archivists, particularly in smaller institutions, will not deal with electronic records on a regular basis.

Presently the RAD manual directs users to the chapter of RAD relevant to the specific class of material involved (textual, graphic, etc.). This is only satisfactory up to a point. To be considered as “records in electronic form”, records must be preserved on a physical carrier such as a tape, disk, hard drive, etc., and have been created with the “intent and capacity of being communicated.”²¹ Except for the storage medium, *electronic records are no different from any other record*, including their general and specific material designations, edition, scale and series information, administrative history, etc.

Because this chapter of RAD is currently (September 1997) under review, it would not be appropriate for the Guide to suggest ways in which to deal with them. Two alternatives are presently available: waiting until RAD is revised to deal with electronic records in a more detailed fashion (this should occur relatively soon) or creatively adapting the rules from other chapters. It is likely that the one area that will need to be most carefully examined is the “Extent” element. The other difference noted by RAD is in the title. If you are using the optional General Material Designation (GMD) in the title, list the relevant GMD, add a “--” and add “electronic” before closing the brackets, for example:

Title: Smith Brothers fonds [textual -- electronic].

We do suggest that when making lists of electronic files, if it is at all possible the following format be used:

File Titles	Date	Size (bytes)	Explanation
contacts.doc	18 July 1997	9,864	non-SCA addresses
filelist.doc	03 July 1997	5,838	list of hard copy files
inv-001.doc	28 July 1997	12,471	July 1997 invoice
inv-002.doc	25 August 1997	7,994	Aug. 1997 invoice
july-rep.doc	7 August 1997	4,959	progress report to SCA
log-aug.doc	21 August 1997	1, 256	task diary, August 1997

This is because the “8-characters-plus-3-character-extension” file titling format used by DOS-based systems often leads to highly idiosyncratic, thoroughly incomprehensible file titles. A short explanation may save much confusion down the road.

Finally, in many cases electronic documents may be printed to paper and saved in that way. This is not appropriate for many types of records but is probably the simplest and most effective means of handling basic textual material (ie., word processor and e-mail products).

²¹ RAD Manual, Rule 9.0A1, p. 9-1.

7. Records in Microform

When describing microforms capture data relevant to the broad class of material being described (eg., textual, cartographic, etc.). Some specialized descriptions specific to the physical nature of microfilm must be noted in the title and extent elements and in the physical description note.

Title (Rule 10.1)

If you are using the GMD option, list the relevant GMD, add a "--" and add "microform" before closing the brackets, eg.:

Title: Canada Department of Indian Affairs fonds [textual records -- microform].

Extent (Rule 10.5)

At the very minimum the archivist must record the number of units of microfilm - reels, aperture cards, etc.- as well as the number of frames if that can be readily ascertained. At its simplest the extent element for microfilm could look like this:

Extent: 10 reels of microfilm

However, the archivist should remember that certain physical details may have to be included to describe the chemical and physical nature of the microfilm as well as its dimensions. This includes height and width for aperture cards, micro-opaques and microfiche that is not 10.5 x 14.8 cm. For reels it will be necessary to know whether it is 16 or 35 millimetre microfilm. Recording this information allows future archivists to make judgements regarding the microfilm's long-term preservation requirements and tells them what kind of equipment will be needed to read it.

At the sub-series level and above, the entire Physical Description area follows this template:

Extent of descriptive unit including specific material designation²² : Other physical details, subsequent other physical details ; Dimensions.

²² If there is a GMD there will be no specific material designation.

As was noted earlier, each individual record type follows the same pattern with a “. --” between the two descriptions. An example of that could look like this:

Extent: 42 microfilm reels : negative, silver halide ; 16 mm. -- 10 aperture cards ; 9 X 19 cm.

In this case, the number of descriptive units is “42”, the specific material designation is “microfilm reels”, the first “Other physical detail” is that they are negatives and the subsequent physical detail is that they are made of silver halide film. The dimensions (in this case the width of the film) is 16 mm. Following this is the description of the next type of records, 10 aperture cards which are 9 X 19 cm in dimension. The archivist describing these records did not include “Other physical details” for the aperture cards.

Physical Description note (Rule 10.8B2)

This note should include information on the reduction ratio, type of microfilm reader, film format and other physical details where necessary.

8. More Examples

8.1 Fonds-level descriptions

(The following fonds-level descriptions were taken from the UBC Archives on-line catalogue and the British Columbia Automated Union List (BCAUL). Presentation of the descriptions have occasionally been altered to provide examples of different ways of putting them together. For an example of a larger, more complex fonds- and series-level description, see Section 8.2.)

Charles H. Tupper fonds. - 1870-1926. -- 4 m of textual records.

Born in Amherst, Nova Scotia, Charles H. Tupper became a lawyer. He entered politics in 1882, representing Pictou in the House of Commons. He served as Minister of Marine and Fisheries (1888-1894) and later became Minister of Justice. In 1892 Tupper became an agent for Great Britain in the Bering Sea fishing question, and for his services in this capacity, he was honoured as K.C.M.G. in 1893. He later moved to Vancouver to practice law and was active in the Provincial Party of British Columbia.

The fonds consists of correspondence (1876-1926), subject files (1889-1925) and scrapbooks (1870-1923). The fonds reflects Tupper's interest in politics and public affairs.

Title: Transportation Employees Canadian Union fonds.

Dates: 1929-1981.

Extent: 80 cm of textual records.
2 maps.

Administrative History: The Transportation Employees Canadian Union traces its roots to the Brotherhood of Railway Running Trades Union which was registered in 1959 but changed its name to the T.E.C.U. in 1971. The Union unsuccessfully sought to represent the members of all the running trades of the Canadian Pacific and Canadian National Railways. Its first president, Leslie N. Falle, attempted to separate the union from international control and to bring the existing 17 unions under a single charter. When it failed in that goal, the union ceased operations in the 1970s.

Scope and Content: The fonds consists of copies of constitutions, financial records, minute books, note books, correspondence and maps pertaining to the formation and subsequent activities of the Union. Lists of members, names of executives, dues statements, labour legislation, benefit plans, membership applications, applications to represent groups of workers and to void agreements, manuals, pamphlets, newsletters, agreements, etc., are included among the material.

Vancouver Council of Women fonds. - 1901-1987. -- 4.1 m of textual records. -- 9 photographs.

Administrative History: In 1889 delegates from the United States, Canada, Great Britain, France, Denmark, Finland and India met in Washington, D.C. to establish the International Council of Women to promote women's rights around the world. In Canada, Councils were established on the national, provincial and local levels. The Vancouver Council of Women was founded in 1894. The goals of the Councils of Women have been the promotion of social reforms affecting women and children and the general living standards for society as a whole through the presentation of briefs, recommendations and resolutions to government bodies at all levels.

Scope and Content: The fonds consists of correspondence, minutes, scrapbooks, subject files, reports, briefs, lists, printed material and photographs pertaining to the activities of the Vancouver Council and of the Provincial and National Councils of Women.

(The following is not a fonds, but an artificial collection brought together consciously by an individual or organization to document a certain subject, event, etc. The principle distinction is that fonds accumulate as a result of daily business while collections are consciously amassed.)

Title: Angus MacInnis memorial collection.

Dates: 1963-1970.

Extent: 25.7 m of textual records. -- 141 photographs. -- 9 maps.

Biographical Sketch: Angus MacInnis was employed as a conductor and motorman for the B.C. Electric Railway shortly after his arrival in Vancouver in 1908. An interest in the trade union movement led him to become business agent for the Amalgamated Association of Street, Electrical Railway and Motor Coach Employees of America, Division 101. Politically active on both the local and national scene, he was elected M.P. for Vancouver South for the Independent Labour Party in 1930 and he served the same constituency as a member of the C.C.F. (1935-1957). MacInnis was Deputy National Leader of the C.C.F. from 1942 to 1957.

Scope and Content: The collection consists of records of the provincial office of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and general research material pertaining to socialism and the labour movement. It consists of minutes, scrapbooks, office correspondence and files relating to party organization and records of committees, C.C.F. clubs, constituencies, federal ridings and election. The collection also includes records generated by Arthur Turner as C.C.F. Whip and Arnold Webster as a provincial party leader. Subject files pertaining to early socialists and clippings about international affairs were created by Dorothy Steeves. Subsequent accessions added to the collection have included the fonds of Angus MacInnis, Francis McKenzie and former provincial leader Ernest Winch.

P.S. Bonney fonds. - 1913-1974 ; predominant 1931-1974. -- 26 cm of textual records. -- 40 photographs. -- 50 maps.

P.S. Bonney was a forestry engineer who was involved in the Alcan, B.C. Project.

The fonds consists of a B.C. Forest Branch report (1913) and photographs and maps relating to the development of Kitimat as part of the Alcan, B.C. Project.

Title: German Consulate fonds.

Dates: 1909-1939.

Extent: 1.6 m of textual records.

Bio/Admin Hist: The office of the German Consulate General was established in Montreal, Quebec in 1909. In 1937 the office was moved to Ottawa, but a German consulate remained in Montreal to handle commercial matters.

Scope/Content: The fonds consists of the correspondence, reports, and memoranda (1935-1939) of the Consul General. Also included are Montreal office papers dating from 1919 and a few original documents from the Vancouver Consulate (1909-1911).

Title: Free Methodist church, Alberta conference fonds.
Dates: 1875 - 1970 ; predominant 1905-1961.
Extent: 37.5 cm of textual records.
5 audio cassettes.

Bio/Admin hist: In 1905, following a plea made at the Western Ontario Conference in Sarnia, Reverend O.L. King was appointed elder of the first Free Methodist Society in Alberta, organized in Hurry (now Bruce), Alberta. He ministered to several Free Methodist families, principally from Ontario and Michigan, USA, who had homesteaded in Alberta. In 1906 a Western Canadian Conference was organized in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. Since that time the church has continued to grow and has several congregations throughout Alberta.

Scope/Content: Consists of minute books of the Alberta conferences, the Calgary circuit, the Northern district quarterly conferences, the Armada Free Methodist Church and the Calgary Women's Missionary Society; recorded interviews, correspondence and a manuscript regarding the history of the Free Methodist church in Alberta; and registers and Sunday school records of the Calgary Free Methodist Church. Includes biographical notes about Free Methodist preachers: Louis Freitag, Roland Haight, William H. Haight, and F.B. Lewis.

William Gano fonds. -- [ca. 1920-1925]. -- 65 photoprints. -- 27 photonegatives.

Biographical Sketch: William Gano, 1869-1951, was born in Illinois, USA, and raised in Washta, Iowa. He homesteaded near his brothers Ed, Frank and John near Wainwright, Alberta. He and his wife, Alice, had two children, Flossie (Robinson) and Harley.

Scope and Content: Fonds consists of photos of the Wainwright area, including the buffalo park, oil wells, buildings, a local movie entitled "Last Frontier", Frank's ranch, IODE, and street scenes.

Title: George Ryga & Associates fonds.
Dates: 1932 - 1990.
Extent: 1.7 m of textual records and other material.

Administrative History: Literary agency for George Ryga. Established in 1976 as Ryga & Associates. Changed

name to George Ryga & Associates in 1990. Continues to act on behalf of G. Ryga's literary estate.

Scope and Content: Fonds consists the following series: personal correspondence (1970-1988); business correspondence (1964-1990); manuscript (1960-1990); published works (1949-1988); audio visual (1932-1990); works by other authors (1956-1988); and miscellaneous (1975-1989).

8.2 A multiple-media fonds- and series-level description

(This is a much longer and more complex description than those listed previously, which were written for a computer database and in many cases form only a synopsis of a larger inventory. It is up to the archivist and the institution to decide how much detail to include in a description.)

Title: Tugaske Oil and Gas Survey Company fonds [textual, graphic, cartographic records].

Dates: 1905-1985 ; predominant 1945-1985.

Extent: 10 m of textual records. -- ca. 500 photographs : b&w and col. ; 40 x 50 cm or smaller. -- 250 maps : col., some mss. ; 100 cm x 90 cm. or smaller.

Administrative History: Established in 1940 as Tugaske Surveys Ltd, it was originally involved in contract surveying for roadways in various southwestern Saskatchewan municipalities. In 1943 it expanded its operations into the field of mineral exploration with the purchase of the assets of Miller and Sons, a small geological exploration company based in Moose Jaw. Following a merger with the oil and gas exploration firm of Smith Brothers in 1972 the company entered the field of petroleum exploration, renaming itself the Tugaske Oil and Gas Survey Company. Except for some minor speculation in mineral rights holdings, it concentrated primarily on providing exploration and survey services under contract to out-of-province drilling firms. Its activities continue to be concentrated in southwestern Saskatchewan and parts of southern Alberta. Organized as a family business, most of its employees were members of the James MacKay family of Tugaske. No formal administrative divisions existed within the company although there was a tendency for staff to specialize according to their backgrounds roughly into two areas: field services (the geologists and surveyors) and administration (mostly sales, staff support, etc.). In 1980 it opened an office in Lethbridge, Alberta, which closed in 1983. Although registered as the Tugaske Oil and Gas Survey Company, it was known colloquially as Tugaske Surveys. James MacKay, Sr., founded the company and was chief executive officer until his death in 1982, when he was succeeded by his eldest son, James Jr.

Custodial History: Records were maintained on-site until 1982 when the first group of records was donated to the Tugaske Community College Archives. Further accessions occurred in 1987 and 1992. Correspondence and aerial photographs originally belonging to Miller and Sons and taken between [ca.1920] - 1930 were lost prior to 1943 and not discovered until 1992 when they were found in the basement of the late Mrs. Edda Smith, a long-time Tugaske resident. How they came to be in her possession is not known.

Scope and Content: Fonds consists of correspondence, survey data and reports, maps, aerial photographs, and other records relating to the firm's survey and exploration activities, as well as correspondence, legal documents and other records relating to the ownership of property and mineral resources, and records - including photographs - relating to day-to-day administration of the company. Fonds consists of the following series:

1. Survey and exploration case files
2. Property and legal records
3. Administrative records

Source of supplied title: Title based on provenance of the records.

Immediate Source of Acquisition: Records donated by Sarah Jones, grand-daughter of Mrs. Edda Smith, June 2, 1992. Relationship of donor to material is unknown.

Arrangement: Records belonging to Miller and Sons and Smith Bros. were integrated into the fonds as part of the mergers of those companies. At some point in their custodial history an attempt was made to disassemble these records. Original order was reconstituted by archivists and the “missing” Miller and Sons records interfiled according to the original arrangement.

Restrictions on access: See series level descriptions.

Accruals: Accruals occur at irregular intervals. Further accruals are expected.

Related records in other fonds: Related records may be found in the James McKay Family fonds.

Finding Aid: File list available

(This is the description of a series from that fonds. Note “linking” element.)

Fonds: Tugaske Oil and Gas Survey Co.

Series: Survey and exploration case files [textual, graphic, cartographic records].

Dates: 1915 - 1985 ; predominant 1945-1985.

Extent: 6 m. of textual records. -- ca. 450 photographs : b&w and col. ; 40 x 50 cm and 20 x 25 cm. -- 250 maps : col., most mss. ; 100 cm x 90 cm. or smaller.

Custodial History: Records created by field officers were maintained in the central office in Tugaske as part of the company’s normal record-keeping regimen. Records created at the Lethbridge office were transferred to Tugaske after it closed in 1982.

Scope and content: Series consists of case files relating to survey and exploration operations including photos, maps, correspondence between the company and its customers, field operative correspondence, survey data and reports, contracts and other financial records specific to each project. Records are filed alphabetically by project title.

(Note that in this case no administrative history was required at the series-level).

9. Afterword

The world of RAD can be a difficult place in which to navigate. However, with practice comes familiarity. As more archival institutions adopt RAD as the descriptive standard, using it easily and effectively becomes increasingly necessary for the working archivist. It is important to remember that many of the rules are designed for specific classes of material or specific levels of description and that RAD can be used to describe collections as well as fonds.

One of the best books available on the subject of archival description is: *The Archival Fonds from Theory to Practice*, (Bureau of Canadian Archivists, 1992), edited by Terry Eastwood. In that book, Heather MacNeill's article "The Context is All: Describing a Fonds and its Parts in Accordance with the Rules for Archival Description," (pages 195-225) gives an excellent overview of the concept of the fonds and of multi-level description in general.

The CCA also plans to release an official RAD primer within the year.