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At the Meetings

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HSTC ⁴ BULLETIN

August 1977

Quarterly Newsletter for the
History of Science and Tech-
nology of Canada

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Editors/Redacteurs: Richard A. Jarrell (York University): Norman
R. Ball (Public Archives)

Mailing Address: Dept. Natural Science, Atkinson College, York
University, Downsview, Ontario M3J 2R7

EDITORIAL: AFTER ONE YEAR

With this issue, the HSTC Bulletin marks the end of its first year. The editors are extremely pleased that each issue managed to get out on time and that we are solvent. As we prepare for our second year of publication, we would like to thank all those who have helped us by providing material, financial assistance, and encouragement. We have had more material for each issue than we could print and look forward to much more as the Bulletin reaches new readers. While our circulation is still below 100, it has grown steadily and our readership includes non-subscribers. The interest in Canadian science and technology is wider than we initially assumed and this is a heartening sign.

We will continue our efforts and hope to expand our scope, but this will depend upon you, our readers. If finances allow, we also hope to print the Bulletin in a more handsome format, but for this, too, we must rely upon support.

AT THE MEETINGS

Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society for History and Philosophy of Science.

The annual meeting of CSHPS/SCHPS was held at the University of New Brunswick on 28-30 May 1977. The history of Canadian science and technology was prominent in the programme, with two paper sessions and a workshop. Following are the abstracts of the Canadian-oriented papers:

- * Arthur E. Covington (Herzberg Institute of Astrophysics, National Research Council of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario)

SOME ASPECTS OF RADIO SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN CANADA
(Work in Progress)

In the development and settlement of a new country, the use of established engineering practices and of the practical arts from Europe and the U.S.A. is essential; only later is it possible for some of the frontiers of international science to be studied and developed locally. The detailed recognition and evolution of these developments within the Canadian scene and their association with the international community is important. This paper will outline some of the early radar and radio astronomy programmes within the former Radio Branch and the Radio and Electrical Engineering Division of the NRC and will present these against a more general account of the earlier development. This work-in-progress paper will be illustrated with slides.

- * Raymond Duchesne (Institut d'histoire et de sociopolitique des sciences, Université de Montréal, Case postale 6128, Montréal 101,, P.Q.)

PRODUCTION AND REPRODUCTION OF SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINES:
NATURAL HISTORY IN FRENCH CANADA DURING THE 19th CENTURY

The question of the transfer of scientific disciplines from a given historical milieu to another has been rejuvenated by authors such as J. Ben-David, G. Basalla and D. Fleming, who debated it mostly in terms of scientific colonialism, implying a radical distinction between the production of scientific disciplines, and the process of their reproduction.

The development of natural history in French Canada during the second half of the 19th century shows us the progressive formation of some original scientific characteristics. Therefore, natural history in French Canada cannot be seen uniquely as the reproduction of what natural history was in the rest of Canada, in France or in England at that time. It must be seen also as the production of a new type of scientific knowledge under a new set of institutional conditions.

- * W. E. K. Middleton (Apt. 2406, 2020 Haro Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6G 1J3).

PHYSICS AT THE NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL, 1929-1939

This paper provides an account of the establishment of the Division of Physics at the National Research Council in Ottawa and briefly summarizes its work during the first ten years. The lecture is illustrated with slides.

- * Bruce Sinclair (Institute for the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A1)

SOME ISSUES IN THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF CANADIAN ENGINEERING

This paper argues that technology is an aspect of culture and that Canadian technology reflects the national condition. Caught between the powerful and often opposing influences of Britain and the United States, Canadian technology mirrors not only a mixture of those forces but the ambivalence Canadians often felt in selecting one model over another. The profession of civil engineering illustrates the argument. Canadian engineers were attracted to British professional ideals but faced the problem of creating an engineering society suited to their own needs. Central to their concerns was the fact that imported engineers frequently took Canadian jobs and, in a fashion parallel to Macdonald's "National Policy," they sought a remedy in restrictive legislation. The aim of a single unified Canadian engineering society, like the idea of a single unified Canadian railroad, sprang from the historical problem of defining a country simultaneously British and North American.

- * Donald J. C. Phillipson (Hall's Road, R.R. 1, Carlsbad Springs, Ontario, KOA 1K0)

A SURVEY OF UNEXPLOITED ORIGINAL MATERIALS IN THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE IN CANADA SINCE 1900

This paper reviews some causes of Canadians' traditional neglect in studying the history of Canadian science and technology and examines some of the social and academic consequences of this neglect. The paper then suggests that this situation may be changing and it presents a series of specific proposals for promoting the history of Canadian science and technology. It concludes by examining numerous unexplored topics in the field and reviewing the sources available on them. The paper is an outgrowth of the author's experience on the NRC oral history/archives project.

In addition, Mr. Bertrum Macdonald (Western Ontario) described the bibliographic project mentioned in HSTC #3.

- *N.B. The Bulletin does not provide for the circulation of papers. Should a reader wish to have a copy of one of the above, he or she should contact the author personally.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. A. W. Tickner, Senior Archival Officer of the National Research Council, has announced a meeting to discuss archives for the Canadian science and technology, to be held in Room 3001, NRC Building, 100 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, at 10:00 a.m., Friday, 16 September 1977. Coffee from 9:45 a.m.

Brief statements will be given by N.R. Ball (PAC), Sandra Guillaume