

Sound Archives/Oral History Report

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THE SOUND ARCHIVES of the Public Archives of Canada in co-operation with the Canadian Oral History Association is preparing a national inventory of oral history collections. The inventory will document for the first time the extensive oral history holdings now existing in Canada and will serve as an indispensable guide for both the researcher of social history and the prospective practitioner of oral history.

Initial research on the inventory has indicated that much oral history material still remains in the possession of its original creator and has not reached the safe and accessible confines of a library or archive. To encourage the acquisition of oral history the Sound Archives has therefore instituted a policy of offering serious researchers access to tape supplies and technical assistance in return for deposition of the completed interviews in the Public Archives. The donor will then receive copies of the original tapes and, in the case of collections of particularly high archival value, a small remuneration may be possible.

In other news, the Canadian Oral History Association held its annual conference this year with the Learned Societies in Montreal from 2-4 June 1980. Paul Thompson, well-known to many for his excellent book *The Edwardians: The Remaking of English Society*, delivered a challenging keynote address on the theme of "Oral History and the Reinterpretation of History." Of particular interest to labour historians was a panel featuring Gil Levine, Research Director of CUPE, and Jim Turk of the Sociology Department at the University of Toronto. Levine discussed the perks and pitfalls of his undertaking an oral history of CUPE, whereas Turk outlined the unique opportunities presented by oral history in his study of United Electrical Workers during the Cold War period. Both presentations were well received and generated a stimulating question period. Undoubtedly such panels encourage other labour historians to use oral evidence in their research and it is hoped that a similar panel will take place at the 1981 Learned Societies in Halifax. If anyone is interested in submitting a paper pertaining to labour or business history which has utilized oral history documentation please contact either Richard Lohead, Sound Archives, Public Archives of Canada, 395 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0N3 or Dr. Robert Morgan, Beaton Institute, College of Cape Breton, Sydney, Nova Scotia. We welcome all inquiries on this or any other matters relating to oral history.