

HOW-TO SERIES 4

A GUIDE TO

RESEARCHING

A HERITAGE BUILDING

**A GUIDE TO
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A HERITAGE BUILDING**

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Introduction

For many of us, historic buildings are a source of delight. The antique architectural styles, with their ornate details and fine craftsmanship are powerful connections to our past. It is natural that we honour these important structures with care and attention. We might add a new coat of paint. We might carefully restore some of a building's notable details. We might also seek to understand a building's history. This last act -- *research* -- can be very rewarding, as historic buildings offer us one of the best opportunities to appreciate our past.

Gathering information about a building -- its original appearance, its early owners, their occupations -- is a vital step in any attempt to interpret the social, economic and aesthetic attitudes of earlier generations. Pertinent historical information is occasionally at hand, perhaps in an attic trunk. Frequently, however, this kind of information is either held in memories or submerged in old documents. Getting at these materials can be an intimidating prospect. It requires at least a basic knowledge of the kinds of materials that might be useful in building research. It also requires a sense of where these materials might be found. It is sometimes hard even to know where to start.

This guide has been produced to introduce you to this subject and provide some guidance as you undertake your own building research project. Common sources, code words, repositories of historic documents, even research processes are all discussed here. With this booklet in hand, any individual or group interested in building research can more confidently undertake a fascinating journey into our architectural past.

Research & Information

Research of any kind is a means to get closer to the truth, to better understand an issue or a subject. Any research project, including those that deal with buildings, and the resulting information collected is generated by a question. Some questions are easy to answer, with information directly at hand. Other questions can open a Pandora's box, sending a researcher across the countryside in search of information. This guide provides a researcher with the tools to navigate both extremes. Indeed, it will enable you to begin to investigate nearly any question posed about a heritage building in Manitoba.

Posing questions about a building is actually a profitable way to clarify a project's intent. The following questions are commonly asked about a building:

*When was the building constructed?
Why was it built at that time?
Who was the original owner?
What did the owner do for a living?
Who were later owners?
Who designed the building?
Why was this designer selected?
Who actually constructed the building?
Why were these people chosen?
How much money were the designer and tradespeople paid?
Did the designer and tradespeople work on other buildings?
Does the building look like any others in the community?
Have there been changes made to the building?
Why were the changes made?
Has the building always fulfilled its present function?
What materials were used in the construction of the building?
How much did these materials cost?
Is the building of standard or unusual construction?
What did the neighbourhood look like originally?*

Is the building like others in the neighbourhood?

It is also possible to ask a more complicated question that combines several of these questions. To ensure that such a question is answered fully, it is important that information is collected and organized methodically. The Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship uses a straightforward organizational framework to help group pertinent facts and ensure that no information is omitted. There are three basic categories that might help organize your building research:

1. **History** provides background information on a building, including original owners, occupations, construction dates, personalities involved and events of significance associated with the building.
2. **Architecture** provides information on the architect, contractor and tradespeople involved, as well as information about architectural style, design, interior finishes and condition, construction and integrity.
3. **Context** puts the building into a physical and historical framework; it will a) describe the building's immediate physical environment and b) compare the building with others of its age, type, design, style and condition.

This organizational framework is only a suggestion. You may want, or need, to change it, to focus on other areas of concern. And there might be other questions you may need to answer. It is the combination of questions, selected from this list, and generated by your own particular project, that will create your own unique research process.

You should be forewarned that research can be arduous. The process is rarely a straight line. You will not likely go smoothly from Source A to B to C to D, collecting a fact at each stop. More likely, you will go from A to B, back to A, over to C, back to A again, then to D and back to B. The research process is often compared to detective work, and the analogy is apt. Like a detective you will hunt for clues, follow leads (good and bad), backtrack and work on instinct. And, like a good detective, after great devotion to the task, you should eventually get an answer to your question.

Contents

There are three main components of this guide: the *Synopsis*, the *Sources* and an *Appendix*. The ***Synopsis*** provides very brief summaries of the various sources you will encounter in the booklet. From the *Synopsis* you will be able to quickly determine the kinds of information you can expect to find in each source. The ***Sources*** section is the heart of this guide*. This is where you will spend most of your time. It is here that we have identified (and analyzed in considerable detail) the 25 sources that are particularly useful in building research projects. The guide concludes with a section of appendices. The first of these, *Repositories*, lists the various places that preserve collections of historic material. The second appendix, *Case Studies*, will give you an indication, through four imaginary projects, of how research processes might unfold in various situations. The last appendix, *Charts*, presents in graphic form some of the practical issues that will arise throughout the process.

*There are many ways that this part of the booklet could have been organized. Many of the sources can actually be described as government records (*Parish Files, Homestead Files, Land Titles Records, Assessment Records, Building Permits, Parish Plans, Township Plans, Land Title Plans and Village, Town & City Plans*). However, we have chosen to group materials of similar character, where the quality of information will be similar.

The main part of the guide, *Sources*, is divided into six sections:

- The Building**
- Knowledgeable People**
- Chronicles**
- Documents**
- Maps & Plans**
- Visual Records**

Those individuals interested in an informal sense of a building's past may only need to consult the first two sections, **The Building** and **Knowledgeable People**. From these sources you might get an approximate construction date, names and occupations of past occupants, even specific information about the building (alterations, construction procedures). What you won't get is corroborating evidence to confirm or refute any of these pieces of information. For that level of detail, it will usually be necessary also to turn to the other four sections: **Chronicles**, **Documents**, **Maps & Plans** and **Visual Records**. These are the sources that will draw you into libraries and archives and into an encounter with some of the actual recorded history of our province.

There are seven sources that have been grouped under **Chronicles**:

- Personal Papers
- Directories
- Newspapers
- Magazines, Catalogues & Bulletins
- Institutional Chronicles
- Local Histories
- Specialized Histories

When you start looking at these kinds of materials, you will quickly realize that some of your work has already been done. That's because most chronicles have already been the subject of research, and even of analysis and synthesis. The authors of newspaper articles or local histories, for example, have already undertaken a considerable amount of work to dig out, compile and then present information. The data has already have been rendered "user-friendly". As a building researcher, it will be your job to read through these materials and try and find information that relates to your particular project. Of course, because chronicles are the products of individuals, you should be aware that personal points of view may enter into some of these materials. This is not to say that facts or issues will have been deliberately manufactured or ignored, only that you might want to do some further digging to be sure that you have the whole picture.

There are seven sources that can be considered **Documents**:

- Parish Files
- Homestead Files
- "Old System" Land Title Records
- "New System" Land Title Records
- Assessment Records
- Building Permits
- Institutional Documents

Documents, in the main, are those materials that were used by institutions or authorities as official records of land ownership and taxation. Unlike chronicles, they were not really intended for public review, and therefore have not been the subject of analysis or interpretation. They are for the most part "raw data": numbers, forms, charts. You will likely have to do quite a bit more work to get at the specific pieces of information that might be required in a building research project. There is one significant advantage to documents, however: Because they can be considered legal or quasi-legal in nature, the information they contain is usually highly

accurate.

Six sources have been grouped as **Maps & Plans**:

- Parish Plans
- Township Plans
- Land Titles Plans
- Village, Town and City Plans
- Fire Insurance Plans
- Cummins Maps

These materials will be valuable for those projects that require putting a building into a geographic or physical context. It is also fascinating to examine historic maps to discover how the land and a particular site were transformed over time, or to see what structures might once have occupied those places.

There are three types of **Visual Records** identified in this guide:

- Photographs
- Architects' Drawings
- Artists' Renderings

These three sources cover a wide territory for a building researcher. Photographs offer an opportunity to compare the changes that may have been made to a building over time. Architects' drawings can show a designer's original intent and a building's internal construction materials. And those rare buildings that appear in artists' renderings might give up information on original colours, materials and context.

How to Use this Guide

We suggest that you start with the *Synopsis* section. Read through those six pages to get a sense of what sources seem most immediately useful for your project. Each entry in the *Synopsis* summarizes the main pieces of information that you can expect to get from a source. It might be useful next to turn to the *Case Studies* section. Reading through these brief discussions of typical research projects may help you get a better sense of what sources might work for you and which ones won't. Next, turn to those source sections of the guide that seem to best suit your project. It is important to note that you will not likely need to refer to all of the sources we have identified. Flipping to the *Charts* in the Appendix will begin to suggest which avenues, and sources, you might most profitably pursue, and which places are likely to contain the source.

The *Sources* section of the booklet has been designed to be in a succinct and accessible format. Each source is featured on a two-page spread. On the left-hand side you will find a discussion and analysis of the source. A commentary introduces each source, providing a brief background about its original purpose. As you might expect, none of these sources was ever designed to be used as a research tool. Thus, the commentary will moderate any unrealistic expectations, noting what you can expect to find, as well as what you will not find. Those key pieces of information that the source will give up are highlighted in bold print.

The commentary section is followed by an analysis of the source which discusses in detail those parts that are related to building research. Please note that many of these sources can be used for other types of research -- social, family, economic histories -- that cannot be covered in this booklet, which is devoted to **building** research. Finally, the source itself is illustrated on the right-hand page, and critical pieces of information are keyed into each point of the analysis

section with numbers and arrows.

You will probably find yourself flipping to a number of sources, back to the *Synopsis* and then to the *Appendix*. This process might even prepare you for an actual research project, where it is inevitable that you will have to flip back and forth between sources to get all the information you need. As noted above, this is not a linear process. It is therefore not possible to predict typical research routes. There are too many variables that affect the process. Certain building types (public and commercial) typically have more information available. Buildings in urban centres often have more records than buildings in rural areas. And buildings constructed at a pioneer stage will generally have less available material than those built when more records were required.

Collecting & Recording Information

Besides searching, research also involves recording. As you work your way through a source, you will likely need to write down certain pieces of information, or to photocopy certain pages. While the actual physical recording, organization and maintenance of research material is up to you, the methods should be simple and rational. Many researchers use 3x5 cards for recording the data they have collected from various sources. These cards can be easily transported and are typically stored in small plastic recipe boxes. Other researchers prefer to record information on 8 ½ x 11 school exercise books or on sheets of ruled paper that can be stored in three-ring binders. And it is becoming increasingly common to store material on lap-top computers.

Large materials, like copies of maps, will have to be stored in a different way -- perhaps in poster tubes -- but their existence and storage location should be noted in your primary recording medium. All of this material should be securely stored. And if your project is a community effort, you should consider preserving your materials in an accessible location, like a museum, archive, town office or local library.

In order that you can quickly retrace your steps, you need to **cite** your sources. Citations involve making notes on your research notes and materials. A citation will include the name of the repository, the name of the source (*The Scratching River Post* newspaper for example) and any other identifying code numbers that will help narrow the search (typically these are volume numbers). You should also include page numbers wherever possible. If the repository uses reference code numbers, you should note these as well.

Whatever your preferred recording medium, a common concern must be the adoption of a rational system of organization: that is, a filing system. A filing system allows you to easily store and retrieve information. Using the organizational framework suggested above (with the categories History, Architecture and Context), it might be useful to store the information collected on each category in separate boxes or binders. The information in each of these categories should be filed systematically; an alphabetical system is most common.

It is beyond the scope of this publication to suggest how all the valuable research you have carried out might be presented. Certainly, it is impossible to prescribe writing techniques, even formats. As has already been noted, research itself can be a daunting undertaking, the permutations and combinations of which cannot be anticipated here. Those twists and turns are part of the struggle and pleasure of the process. Translating all that information into a history, a walking tour or any of a number of other myriad projects that might spring to mind can only be left to your imagination.

SYNOPSIS

Synopsis

These pages are a summary of the detailed discussions you will find over the next 64 pages. This synopsis will help you to determine quickly what building-related information you are likely to find in each source. It will therefore help you determine which sources will be of most use for your own project.

The Building

- The building will allow you to determine the architectural style.
- The building suggests where there have been additions and renovations.
- In a few circumstances the building might have a date stone.
- See pages 18–19

Knowledgeable People

- Discussions with present owners, past owners, occupants, neighbours (and if applicable, employees) can suggest construction dates, social history, previous built environment.
- Any information collected from such interviews should be corroborated with research in other sources.
- See pages 24–25

Personal Papers

- People's written recollections and correspondences can provide a sense of social activity associated with the building, and occasionally, even provide information about the building (construction procedures, construction dates, people involved).
- Besides the owners of the building, you might want to locate personal papers of architects and builders responsible for the design and construction.
- These materials might be in family hands or local or provincial archives.
- See pages 26–27

Directories

- These commercial reference guides (the most useful are called *Henderson Directories*) contain the names and addresses of the early population of many Manitoba communities and provide researchers with early resident's occupations. A comparison of a series of directories can suggest construction dates
- See pages 30–31

Newspapers

- These fascinating sources will often contain information on major building projects, and occasionally will feature residential building information (like construction dates, owners, occupations and designers and builders)

- “Calls for Tender”, those notices asking for bids on the proposed construction of a building (usually a major public building, but sometimes a large house), can provide the name of the architect and the anticipated cost of construction
- See pages 32–33

Magazines, Catalogues & Bulletins

- * Magazines, like *Construction*, *Nor'-West Farmer* and *Western Contractor & Builder* will provide information on only the **largest building projects**, but can also be one of the few sources for information on **architects**
- * Catalogues and bulletins devoted to building issues, produced as commercial endeavours or as a public service (*Eatons* catalogues and Manitoba Government *Update Bulletins*, as examples), are one of the only sources for **information on designs that were most commonly used for most house construction** in Manitoba
- * See pages 34–35

Institutional Chronicles

- * These collections of information produced by large public institutions (corporations like **railway companies, banks and grain elevator companies**; and **government agencies and departments**) -- usually in the form of annual reports -- can provide good information on the construction of their own buildings (**construction dates, materials, style considerations, designers, contractors**)
- * See pages 36–37

Local Histories

- * Local histories (publications devoted to collecting information about the development of a certain locale, usually a rural municipality or town) will often provide excellent **information on public buildings (schools, churches, commercial establishments, and occasionally residential and farm buildings)**.
- * The Legislative Library has a complete collection of local histories. Local libraries will have more limited collections.
- * See pages 28–29

Specialized Histories

- * The impressive collection of histories on Manitoba will allow a building researcher to put their subject into a **social, economic and even architectural context**
- * Some government agencies (Parks Canada, Historic Resources

Branch and the City of Winnipeg's Historic Projects) actually undertake research on historic buildings and may be a source for information

* See pages 38–39

Parish Files

- * These early legal materials were produced in order to define property ownership of River Lots (see *Parish Plans* for information on River Lots)
- * Parish Files will provide the **name(s) of the original land owner(s)** and can provide information on the **social and economic circumstances of the individual**
- * These records also can occasionally provide information on **early buildings** on the property (**dimensions, materials**)
- * See pages 42–43

Homestead Files

- * These are the collection of documents submitted and prepared as the greater part of the province was settled in the 1870s and 1880s (see *Township Plans* for information on that survey)
- * The records are very useful and will provide the **name(s) of owners, family members, occupations, country of origin** and, most importantly, **building activity on the homestead (dimensions, materials)**
- * See pages 44–45

“Old System” Land Titles Records

- * These formal documents are the legal definitions of land ownership and can be rather difficult to interpret
- * Land Title certificates will contain the **name(s) of the owner(s)** of the property, as well as the **financial activities** associated with the property, but will not contain information on buildings
- * It is usually necessary to conduct a title search to determine the chain of ownership (for heritage buildings, such searches can involve dozens of documents and, because the search will be undertaken by Land Titles staff, be rather **costly**)
- * See pages 46–47

“New System” Land Titles Records

- * Land in Manitoba is registered in two systems (the **Deed system** and the **Torrens system**); those properties still in the old Deed system offer the opportunity for a researcher to refer to an **abstract** (basically abbreviated collections of all transactions associated with one particular property) and to **quickly determine ownership**, without having to undertake a formal (and costly) Land Titles search (see above)
- * See pages 48–49

Assessment & Tax Records

- * A variety of records and documents were prepared by government authorities as part of the assessment and taxation systems; the most useful records for a building researcher will be **assessment registers** and, where they were used, **assessor's field books**
- * Each assessment authority may have recorded information in different ways and there may be different policies for retrieval (the City of Winnipeg, for example, will not allow individual access to records, requiring its staff to undertake research requests)
- * **Assessment registers** can contain a variety of information, like the **name of the occupant** and **owner**, their **occupations**, their **religion**, **vital statistics about the family**, information about **livestock**, **detailed information about the land** (size, lot-block-plan number) and, finally, **specific information about buildings** on the property
- * **Assessor's field books** are more difficult to locate, but if they can be found, they will contain information about specific buildings (**plan, dimensions, construction materials**)
- * See pages 50–51

Building Permits

- * Around the turn of the century civic authorities began to require that builders submit construction plans for approval in order to ensure a level of community safety
- * While they are one of the most valuable sources, building permits are **unfortunately one of the most difficult to locate**; either they were destroyed or they are stored in inaccessible places
- * If you are lucky enough to find a building permit it will yield the **name of the builder**, the **architect**, very specific information about the **building's size** and **materials**
- * See pages 52–53

Institutional Documents

- * Unlike their annual reports or commemorative materials (see *Institutional Chronicles*, above), these are the actual **day-to-day materials** used by corporations (like railway companies, banks and grain elevator companies) or by governments
- * Typically, the building researcher will find information like **building plans**, **contracts**, and **meeting minute books** that refer to buildings
- * These documents might be found in a public archive or library, or in the institutional archive
- * See pages 54–55

Parish Plans

- * These plans were produced to provide a visual interpretation of property divisions in those areas of the province that were surveyed according to the **River Lot system** before 1870 (Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie and communities along the Red and Assiniboine rivers)
- * These plans describe land (**property divisions, topography**) and **early building locations**; certain plans will also feature **original owners' names**
- * See pages 58–59

Township Plans

- * These were the visual records of the topography and land divisions that were the result of the 1870s survey into townships of the majority of the province
- * These plans yield information on **property divisions** and **topography**, as well as the **names of original owners** and occasionally feature the **first buildings** on the land
- * See pages 60–61

Land Titles Plans

- * In urban areas, where land was subdivided into smaller lots, it was necessary for the original owners to undertake officially sanctioned surveys, and to have those surveys registered with a Land Titles office
- * These plans will be useful when referring to the rather complex written legal descriptions of property that were required by Land Titles
- * See pages 62–63

Village, Town & City Plans

- * Usually compiled from a collection of registered Land Titles plans (see above) that comprise the community, these maps might be commissioned by civic authorities or as commercial endeavours
- * These plans will put a particular piece of property into the context of the whole community
- * Occasionally they will feature the **locations of major public buildings**, but for the most part they are simply **records of property and topography**
- * See pages 64–65

Fire Insurance Plans

- * Created for fire insurance companies, these plans of most of Manitoba's communities are extremely valuable resources for

the information they contain on buildings: **exact locations**, **building size**, **materials**, **building plan**

- * A complete set of these plans date from 1917–19, but plans from other dates might also be available
- * See pages 66–67

Cummins Maps

- * The only remaining complete set of these maps (from 1918 and 1923) are good sources for **locating school buildings**, **churches** and **post offices** at those dates
- * The maps also feature the **names of property owners** at those dates
- * See pages 68–69

Photographs

- * Historic photographs can be interesting and valuable sources for information about the **original appearance of buildings**, as well as the **social and economic circumstances** of owners and occupants
- * Certain photographs -- of a building under construction, or of a whole neighbourhood -- will be useful for putting your building into a larger context
- * Historic photographs may exist for most public buildings, but often not for houses and farm buildings
- * See pages 74–75

Architects' Drawings

- * These **visual records of a designer's intentions** are very valuable for a building researcher; they will show clear representations of each face of the building (**elevations**), the **floor plan(s)** and sections through the building (these often show **construction details and materials**)
- * Except for the largest and most expensive projects, these materials will not usually have been retained
- * See pages 76–77

Artists' Renderings

- * These interpretations of a building, or of a scene that contain a building will be useful for showing colours and for some sense of the original environment
- * Very few of these kinds of images exist, and naturally, most of them will only feature the most striking or historic of designs
- * See pages 78–79

SOURCES

THE BUILDING

The Building

Whether your research is focused exclusively on a building's architecture (its design, style or construction), or whether it is a component of a family or social history, the building itself should be the first source of investigation. It is in the building, of course, that you will discover basic information that will enable you to answer some of the questions raised in the Introduction. Have there been changes made to the building? Has the building always fulfilled its present function? What architectural style or

building tradition was used? What materials were used in the construction of the building? Is the building of standard or unusual construction? But the building also can be used as a reference point against which other information can be checked. The images opposite, discussed below, suggest the range of information that a building can yield.

1. Artifacts and Materials The presence of certain construction materials or of elements or components can suggest a construction date. A stone foundation, for example, suggests a pre-1890 date. A building of concrete block was likely constructed between 1890 and 1905. Square nails were typically used before 1890. And certain designs for window and door trim (upper right) were popular at very specific periods. A researcher must be very knowledgeable in many of these matters, however, to begin to ascribe dates based on architectural details. Moreover, there are easier ways to discover a building's construction date (see *Directories*, pages 28 & 29, *Newspapers*, pages 30 & 31 and *Assessment Records*, pages 50 & 51). A few buildings, especially large public buildings, have date stones embedded in their walls (at a corner or along the main face).

2. Architectural Styles and Building Traditions The stylistic character of a building can be the subject of considerable attention in a research project. Understanding the architectural style or building tradition may help a researcher better appreciate a designer's skill (historic buildings were often the result of imaginative interpretations and combinations of various styles). Knowing the style will be important if the building is to be compared with others for evaluation or analysis purposes. Finally, if a building is in a state of disrepair or there have been alterations, the repair or recreation of details and elements will benefit from researching and applying the conventions used in that building's style. To aid those interested in this subject, the Historic Resources Branch has produced a booklet (HOW-TO 5: IDENTIFYING ARCHITECTURAL STYLES IN MANITOBA, available in local libraries) that provides

information on the most common and popular architectural styles and building traditions in Manitoba. You might also consider investigating those local buildings with a design or style similar to yours to see whether they can give you clues about original room dispositions, finishes or details.

3. "As-found" Record For those researchers interested in a formal structural history of a building, it will be necessary to produce an "as-found" record that includes drawings, photographs and written notes. "As-found" drawings record, in a building's present state, the exact dimensions and placement of rooms, walls and details. When undertaking this kind of record, also note the building's location, siting and orientation. Photographs should convey both an overall and a detailed impression of the building's general physical condition, noting construction materials and construction procedures, structural condition, the existence and condition of interior finishes and wood types, the existence of alterations or renovations and special design features. For those research projects in which the building's original state is of import (usually rigorous restoration projects that require exact duplication of materials and design), this collection of material will provide the background against which other pieces of information can be compared. Such materials may help confirm the identity of a building when reviewing other visual or descriptive materials.

KNOWLEDGEABLE PEOPLE

Knowledgeable People

*A conversation with the building owner and neighbours will begin to put the structure into an informal historical context. These people, along with past owners, occupants or employees, can provide the **names of past owners, the dates of their occupancy, dates of construction and the dates and nature of alterations or renovations.** A local historian might also be able to describe the physical and historical relationship that the building has with the community as a whole. Such a person may also know other knowledgeable people with*

information. If you have undertaken an ambitious research project all of this material must be double-checked against the facts provided in printed sources. This kind of research, usually called oral history, has become a trusted tool for many historians, and guidelines for undertaking a methodical and productive oral history project are available. The discussion below highlights some main points you might want to consider.

1. Undertake some pre-research before setting up interviews Use the questions established in the Introduction to structure the interview and select those questions you think will require more information:

When was the building constructed?
Why was it built at that time?
Who was the original owner?
What did the owner do for a living?
Who were later owners?
Who designed the building?
Why was this designer selected?
Who actually constructed the building?
Why were these people chosen?
How much money were the designer and tradespeople paid?
Did the designer and tradespeople work on other buildings?
Does the building look like any other in the community?
Have there been changes made to the building?
Why were the changes made?
Has the building always fulfilled its present function?
What materials were used in the construction of the building?
How much did these materials cost?
Is the building of standard or unusual construction?
What did the neighbourhood look like originally?
Is the building like others in the neighbourhood?

2. Refer to other authorities There are a number of useful publications that provide detailed instruction and advice on how to conduct an interview. ORAL HISTORY, BASIC TECHNIQUES (Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, 1974) is a comprehensive and very readable guide to this subject.

3. Follow up You may want to consult with these individuals throughout the research process, to shed light on particular issues as questions arise.

CHRONICLES

Personal Papers

People collect an array of material and record all sorts of experiences that may be of potential use to a building researcher. Some of this material has been collected in personal histories that are published as memoirs. Other materials -- like diaries, letters, household business records -- might be preserved by a family or business with an interest in history, or with a need to maintain historical records. Sometimes these kinds of materials are deemed so potentially useful that they are protected in a local or provincial archive. Written materials held by a family or business, or collected in a local university or archive, can occasionally contain information about a building. More

often the information will be enlightening in terms of providing a social and economic background, or in filling in certain gaps, providing anecdotes or providing a sense of the character of some of the people involved. Often, a more profitable approach to this particular subject is to identify those people associated professionally with the building (architects and builders especially) to ascertain whether any of their personal papers exist, and whether the building under consideration is mentioned. The extracts opposite are typical examples, and contain the following information that might be of use in a building research project:

1. Diary Here, Samuel Taylor, a pioneer settler and stone mason at Red River in the mid-19th century, records his activities in the summer of 1862. Working for Thomas Bunn (a farmer, lawyer and member of Louis Riel's Provisional Government of 1869-70), Taylor chronicles the day-to-day work involved in building a stone house. This information not only establishes dates for the construction of the house, but also provides a glimpse into building practices of the period. The idiosyncracies of an individual's handwriting are evident here, but it is usually easy to become familiar with those quirks and to rather quickly decipher a text. (A publication of the Manitoba Genealogical Society, *Handbook for Reading and Interpreting Old Documents*, by Elizabeth Briggs, is a useful guide to historic words and social practices.)

2. Correspondence Any business undertaking usually involves some kind of written correspondence. In the case of a building research project, it is the correspondence generated or received by the architect and contractor that will be of special interest. In this instance, the architect George Marshall, in an 1889 letter to the provincial Minister of Public Works, suggests some conditions to his continued work on public projects. The researcher seeking information on one of George Marshall's buildings, or on his activities as an architect, will get some insight into the nature of his architectural practice.

3. Commercial Receipt Many people save old receipts and those receipts that are associated with the construction of a building can be very useful. In this case an old receipt from blacksmith Peter Mitchell lists the various hardware items provided for the new I.O.O.F (Independent Order of Odd Fellows) Hall in Neepawa, as well as the prices paid and the date sold (January 1904).

Occasionally, pioneer experiences have been collected into published form, usually by a descendent. Hardships, successes and daily, weekly and monthly activities are all usually recorded, often with information about the construction of various buildings. These kinds of texts will be informative for anyone doing research on pioneer buildings.

Directories

*Before the introduction of telephones (and telephone books), which allowed business people to contact and monitor a local population for business purposes, directories were used to locate accurate names, titles and addresses. In Manitoba, the Henderson Directory Company began publishing an annual directory in 1879, and until 1908 included all significant communities in the province. After 1908 individual **Henderson's Directories** were produced only for Manitoba's largest towns and cities -- Winnipeg, Brandon and Portage la Prairie. Extensive collections of Henderson's Directories are available at the Legislative Library, Winnipeg's Centennial Library and Brandon University.*

*A Henderson's Directory will yield a considerable amount of information about a building's occupants and their occupations, and can provide a **social, economic and physical context** for buildings and neighbourhoods. The*

*one specific building-related fact that you might be able to discover is an **approximate date of a building's construction** (see below, #2). It should be noted that information in the directory was compiled through door-to-door canvassing by company representatives and that the data was not double-checked. Consequently, there can be the occasional error. Occupants were sometimes omitted. Secondary buildings like commercial warehouses were occasionally left out. Also, because canvassing was carried out only over a series of days each year, the information a directory will contain is only accurate for that limited period. Nevertheless, directories are generally reliable and are one of the best sources for basic data. The extract opposite is a typical example, from the 1907 Henderson's Brandon City Directory, with the following information highlighted:*

1. Street Directory Large directories were usually divided into two distinct sections, the **Street Directory** and the **Alphabetical Directory** (see below, #3 and 4). The Street Directory section provided a house by house, or building by building, listing according to the structure's location on the street, and listed the occupants of each building. Finding all this information is easy. The directory listed streets alphabetically, but also broke the street down into blocks by identifying all intersecting streets. Because street names were occasionally changed, it is sometimes necessary to cross-reference this source with an appropriate civic plan (see *Village, Town & City Plans*, pages 54 & 55).

where the address -- and therefore the building -- no longer appears. That date suggests a possible date of construction. The street directory also yields information on neighbours, their occupations, and thus provides a sense of the social and economic texture

2. "452 Cody Emeson" A specific street address in the street directory, in this case 452 Tenth Street, reveals the name of the principal resident. Note that the person identified is the occupant, not necessarily the owner; you will have to refer to other sources (*Land Titles Records*, pages 38 & 41 and *Assessment Records*, pages 42 & 43) to confirm ownership. Occasionally a street directory will also include occupations and the names of other residents. A researcher can use a street directory to establish a ballpark construction date: search backwards in time through the set of directories to that point

of the neighbourhood. It is even possible, searching through a number of directories, to piece together the physical development of the neighbourhood; with a map of the area you will be able to plot, year by year, the addition of buildings and services.

3. and 4. Alphabetical Directory This section of the directory provides an alphabetical listing of the inhabitants of the community, according to surname. Cross-referencing the name identified above in the street directory (**Emeson [probably Emerson] Cody**, here highlighted as #4), provides the full first name as well as his occupation (travel agent) and a reference that will permit a reader to find the street address. Because previous directories will also list an occupant's address, it is possible to trace, through various year's alphabetical listings, the movements of an individual within

a community.

Newspapers

*Newspapers have been available to Manitobans since 1859, when the **Nor'Wester** began operation at the Red River Settlement. Over the course of a hundred years, more than 670 newspapers have served this province. Some of these endeavours lasted only for a few issues; others have endured for decades. Usually produced on a weekly, and in larger centres on a daily, schedule newspapers chronicled current events at a local, national and international level. Because they were commercial enterprises, they also provided advertising space for businesses, institutions and governments. The Legislative Library has an extensive collection of historic newspapers, and many museums and libraries maintain collections of newspapers produced locally.*

*Buildings were occasionally the subject of a newspaper editor's attention. Building construction was considered news and a variety of articles and advertising features were used to disseminate this information. Any of these pieces might reveal **building dates**, **owner's***

***names**, **their histories**, **building illustrations** and **architect's and contractor's names**. It should be noted that early newspapers can offer some physical challenges for a researcher. Many did not have images or illustrations, the type was often small and text was typically run together without headlines and with little consideration for spacing or design. Nevertheless most newspapers tended to follow a formula throughout their production, with certain kinds of information located in the same place from issue to issue. Researchers are advised to try to establish a construction date (even down to the month) before beginning newspaper research. Even for small newspapers the amount of information you might have to go through, just for one year, can total several hundred pages. Despite these cautions, newspapers are an extremely valuable source. The examples opposite (set as a collage), with magnified portions, illustrates some typical building-related information found in newspapers.*

1. Newspaper Specials At certain times of the year many newspapers devoted whole issues to promoting, or commemorating, developments in the community. Sometimes the special was completely devoted to a detailed listing of new buildings. These issues, which were very common among Manitoba's newspaper community between 1880 and 1910, were a distinctive way for an urban centre to trumpet its material prosperity. Building numbers usually appeared in the autumn of the year, often near a holiday (like Christmas) though some were published during the first months of the succeeding year (January and February). Another kind of special, often called the Harvest Special, might deal with more issues, but still would prominently feature buildings. The appearance of special issues tends to taper off after 1910, when communities found other ways to measure their material progress.

2. Articles Short articles in newspapers often provided news about various people and buildings. These articles can appear at random throughout a newspaper, but are often found in a "Local News" or "Town Topics" column.

3. Tender Calls These were notices alerting building contractors that they were invited to submit bids for the construction of a new building. Tender calls are most frequently found for public structures, like town halls and schools, although a large number of tenders were called during the 1880s and 1890s for commercial structures and private residences. Because architects usually acted as the agent for the owner in construction matters, these tenders can sometimes be the only source for the name of a building's designer.

Magazines, Catalogues and Bulletins

Unlike newspapers (which were aimed at the whole local population, and therefore covered a great variety of subjects), magazines, catalogues and bulletins were more focused endeavours. They were designed to appeal to a smaller, more narrowly defined audience, providing that audience with information of a more technical nature. A small number of magazines, catalogues and bulletins have been produced that dealt with a variety of building

issues in Manitoba. Most of these will be available at the Legislative Library of Manitoba or at university libraries. It also might be possible that a local museum or archive has a collection of certain magazines. The examples opposite contain some typical examples of building-related information available to a researcher.

1. Magazine Article This extract from the magazine *Construction* featured an article on the work of Winnipeg architect Herbert B. Rugh. A number of plan drawings were reproduced to allow for professional critiques. Magazines devoted to buildings and construction typically focused on major projects, with references to only a handful of Manitoba buildings. Nevertheless, magazines, like *Nor'-West Farmer*, *Western Construction*, *The Colonist* and *Western Canada Contractor & Builder*, were good sources for information on architects and contractors. These publications could also feature articles on new building techniques, innovations in planning and construction and the results of research projects. Occasionally, there might be a focus on issues associated with farm buildings, although it was rare to actually feature extant buildings.

2. Catalogue Sample Large department stores, lumber companies and building design companies offered the public a variety of designs through illustrated catalogues. Even the Canadian Pacific Railway Company developed prefabricated house designs for settlers. This extract, from *The T. Eaton Co. Catalogue* of 1911–12, features some examples of house and barn designs. Not only plans, but building materials were part of the package. Eatons also produced a *Plan Book of Ideal Homes* in 1919. Other popular catalogue distributors included *Radford's Combined House and Barn Plan Book*, *Alladin Homes*, *Radford's Practical Barn Plans* and *Outbuildings and Stock Sheds*. Whether they actually bought the plans, or just used the catalogue image for a guide, many builders in the West relied on catalogues for design inspiration. In many cases, this might be the only source for suggesting a building's design origins.

3. Bulletin Extract Government and educational authorities provided bulletin updates on design and technical developments associated with buildings. This extract from a Manitoba Agricultural College bulletin, *Plans for Farm Buildings* (1913), featured a number of award-winning designs for farm house schemes. And in 1917 the Manitoba Department of Agriculture and Immigration published *Better Farm Homes*, another interesting guide. For those researchers who cannot determine the design origins of their building, this might prove a final avenue for exploration.

A variety of contemporary magazines and journals contain material that focuses on heritage architecture. It is possible to get excellent information on technical matters (historic construction practices, materials, tools), as well as on more esoteric subjects (architectural styles and historically important architects). University libraries will be the most likely repository for academic journals, while newsstands and public libraries offer the best chance to find

collections of popular heritage
magazines.

Institutional Chronicles

Institutions of all descriptions report or promote their activities in a variety of published formats. The production of institutional records might be required by legislation (various government department annual reports, for example), or simply be a popular product intended as a commemorative vehicle (a church centennial history, for example). These sources often contain valuable building-related information, like **construction dates, construction materials** and the **names of people involved**. At the same time, these materials are not to be confused with the day-to-day*

in-house materials that are produced by institutions; these are discussed in Institutional Documents, pages 46 & 47. Many government chronicles are preserved at the Legislative Library. Materials from other institutions might be in their own archive, or may have been donated to a university. The examples illustrated opposite, and discussed below, are typical of the kinds of institutional chronicles that will be useful for certain building research projects.

1. Provincial Government Annual Report

Both federal and provincial governments were required to produce reports that accounted for their annual activities. In this instance the provincial REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING 30TH NOVEMBER 1912 contains the report of the Provincial Architect. Here, Victor Horwood details, over the course of ten pages, the building activities for that year. Seventeen projects were discussed, ranging from the massive (like work done on the new Legislative Building in Winnipeg and the Hospital for the Insane in Brandon) to the minor (like the Gaoler's Cottage in Morden). Most building projects undertaken for the Province of Manitoba would have been the responsibility of the provincial Department of Public Works (including **court houses, land titles offices, mental hospitals, large educational facilities, jails**), although the Department of Education would have produced annual reports that contained information on **school buildings**. Crown corporations, like telephone companies, hydro companies or street car companies, would also have reported their building activities in annual reports. Federally, it was the Department of Public Works, exclusively, that was responsible for the design and construction of buildings owned by the Federal Government (**post offices, customs buildings, federal office buildings**). Over the years, as government annual reports became more sophisticated, illustrations and photographs of buildings might be included. Finally, railway companies, banks, grain companies and major department stores all produced annual reports that may be of interest for a researcher seeking information on their buildings. Annual reports of the

Provincial and Federal governments are kept at the Legislative Library. Annual reports of other institutions may be held at a public archive or in the institution's own repository.

2. Corporate Newsletter

Besides their annual reports, many institutions also produced more informal publications that might contain information on buildings. In this case the Manitoba Telephone System's in-house publication, *The Telephone Echo*, contains photographic images of the utility's smaller buildings.

3. Commemorative History

This booklet, GATHERED IN HIS NAME, a history of the Anglican congregation of Christ Church in Selkirk, contains various images of the church (the first church, construction photographs, interiors), photographs of people, and a synopsis of important dates (including various dates associated with the construction of the church).

* For the purposes of this publication, institutions are defined as any large public entity, like corporations, churches and governments.

Local Histories

Local histories have become a popular way for communities to honour their past. The strongest impetus for the production of local histories began during Canada's centennial in 1967. It was then that there was widespread recognition of the need to document and preserve images and memories for the benefit of future generations. With their collections of information on pioneers, early buildings, social and economic developments and notable events that shaped the locale, these publications have become a valuable resource. More than 400 local histories (most concentrating on a town or municipality) have been produced in Manitoba. The Legislative Library of Manitoba contains a complete collection of local histories. Local libraries will generally contain those volumes devoted to nearby locales.

*Many local histories contain a wealth of information that can be of use to a building researcher. It is certainly possible to locate specific buildings. There are almost always detailed sections devoted to **churches and schools**, with information about the **date of construction, costs, personnel, anecdotes and early photographs**. Some histories contain information on other **public and commercial buildings**, with equally detailed historical*

*information. Sections devoted to **houses** are sometimes included, although the factual information is limited (a name and perhaps a date). The real value of these sections devoted to houses is that they can be useful if you want to consider a comparison of buildings in terms of architectural style. And even if a particular building cannot be located in the book, it is always possible to gather a good deal of information to put it into a broader architectural or historical context. Significant events that might have had a bearing on building developments -- like the introduction of electricity, the creation of a brickyard or the opening of a saw mill -- are often featured. The focus of local histories, however, is on families, and while these sections contain information about the social, cultural and economic developments that affected the family, and the community, they only occasionally contain information specifically related to buildings. Only in those instances where a family name has been linked to a building identified in the first part of a local history will it be worth referring to the family history section for more detailed information. The extracts opposite provide some typical examples of building information found in local histories.*

1. Typical page This page has a brief history of the community, and is illustrated with an aerial photograph. It might be possible to locate a building under consideration in the image, and thus put it into an original, or at least historic, context.

2. Typical page This particular entry, on a school building, provides an image that shows the structure at an early date, the number of students that used the building, their dress, and in the little image at the lower right, the teacher's mode of transportation. In many building research projects, this type of information will certainly be of interest, but it will be in those projects concerned with a building that has been much-altered that the display of original shapes, materials and finishes will be important for a thorough analysis of the building. The text provides information on the date of construction, the amount of a grant for construction, teachers' names and salaries.

3. Typical page This is a page drawn from a larger section devoted to early houses. The captions provide some basic information about each building. Even if the building under consideration is not represented, the images can be used where it is deemed important to compare the building with others from the community in terms of style, design, construction or original environment.

Specialized Histories

Manitoba's past has been well-served by trained historians. The range of topics covered in published history texts and unpublished university theses is a very broad one, running from general provincial histories, to overview studies of historic architecture, to very detailed studies of a specific subject. General histories can help a researcher place an individual building against the backdrop of larger

developments in the province. Books devoted to historic architecture often highlight specific building types and styles that can also help you put your building into a larger context. University theses are typically much more focused, dealing with a particular subject in great detail -- the history of stone construction, for example.

A list of all the academic works that have been written about Manitoba is too long to include here. Six of the most important general histories, however, have been listed below. A perusal of a library index file can reveal a number of others that may be of importance for a specific building research project.

George Bryce. *A History of Manitoba*, (1986, The Canada History Company).

Lionel Dorge. *Introduction a l'etude des Franco-Manitobains*, (1973, La Societe Historique de Saint-Boniface).

Gerald Friesen. *The Canadian Prairies - A History*, (1984, University of Toronto Press).

James A. Jackson. *The Centennial History of Manitoba*, (1970, McClelland and Stewart).

W.L. Morton. *Manitoba: A History*, (1957, University of Toronto Press).

F.H. Schofield. *The Story of Manitoba*, (1913, S.J. Clarke Publishing Company).

Specialized histories that focus on a variety of architectural subjects (like building types and styles, construction practices and materials) are, again, too numerous to list here. However, some studies with a specific focus on buildings in Manitoba include:

Marilyn Baker. *Symbol in Stone*, (1986, Hyperion Press).

Charles Bohi. *Canadian National's Western Depots*, (1977, Fitzhenry & Whiteside) and *Canadian Pacific's Western Depots* (1993, South Platte Press).

Lillian Gibbons. *Stories Houses Tell*, (1978, Hyperion Press).

Bob Hainstock. *Barns of Western Canada*, (1985, Braemar Books).

Harold Kalman. *A History of Canadian Architecture, Volumes 1 & 2*, (1994, Oxford University Press).

Gillian Moir, et. al. *Early Buildings of Manitoba*, (1973, Peguis Publishers).

Murray Peterson and Robert Sweeney. *Winnipeg Landmarks*, (1995, Watson Dwyer).

Basil Rotoff, et. al. *Monuments to Faith*, (1990, University of Manitoba Press).

A variety of contemporary published material that focuses on heritage architecture, ranging from academic journals to popular magazines, may also contain useful information. University libraries will be the most likely repository for academic journals, while public libraries offer the best chance to find collections of popular heritage magazines.

The Federal Government's Department of Canadian Heritage has produced a number of publications that deal with buildings and architectural history. A complete listing cannot be included here, but you should be aware that there is a **Manuscript Report Series** (consisting of hundreds of titles, and of an academic nature), a more popular series devoted to architectural styles (itself part of the series, **Studies in Archaeology, Architecture and History**) and a set of publications related to architecture included in the **History and Archaeology Series**.

The Historic Resources Branch of Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship has produced several studies that might be of use to a building researcher. The first group below is devoted to specific building types, in which a complete building inventory is combined with an introduction that sketches the history of the type. The second group is devoted to in-depth architectural histories of four districts in the province that feature the architecture of early settlement groups. The final notation will be useful for those researchers seeking to discuss or analyze their buildings in terms of architectural style. All of these branch publications are available at public libraries in Manitoba.

Building Theme Studies

Neil Bingham. *A Study of the Church Buildings in Manitoba of the Congregational, Methodist, Presbyterian and United Churches of Canada*, 1987.

David Butterfield. *A Study of Public School Buildings in Manitoba*, 1994.

Kelly Crossman. *A Study of Anglican Church Buildings in Manitoba*, 1989.

Patricia Trainor, et. al. *Railway Stations of Manitoba: A Building Inventory*, 1987.

Ukrainian Churches of Manitoba: A Building Inventory, 1987.

Planning District Studies

David Butterfield. *Architectural Heritage: The Selkirk and District Planning Area*, 1988.

David Butterfield and Ed Ledohowski. *Architectural Heritage: The Brandon and Area Planning District*, 1983; *Architectural Heritage: The Eastern Interlake Planning District*, 1983; and *Architectural Heritage: The MSTW Planning District*, 1984.

Style Guides

How-To Series 5: A Guide to Identifying Architectural Styles in Manitoba, 1991.

The City of Winnipeg, through its Historic Buildings Project and Historical Buildings Committee, produces an annual publication entitled *The Year Past* (begun in 1979), that highlights interesting and important buildings in Winnipeg. These can be useful if your research project involves comparison with other buildings of a certain type or style.

DOCUMENTS

Parish Files

With the passage of the Manitoba Act in 1870 (providing for Manitoba's entry into the Canadian Confederation) the Dominion Government undertook to officially define land ownership. Although European settlers had been occupying land throughout the province for more than 50 years, ownership was according to rather informal traditions. It was necessary under the new system that pioneers prove their claim to the land. And, because it was a legal undertaking, this claim had to be in writing. The resulting collection of paperwork was gathered under the generic title of Parish Files (parishes, made up of a number of river lots, formed the basis of land organization when Manitoba entered Confederation; parishes and river lots are discussed in more detail in Parish Plans, pages 58 & 59). The Parish Files can be a good source for gathering information on the early financial activity associated with a particular river lot. Parish Files could include such things as affidavits, letters from lawyers, statements from occupants and

statements from those proposing a counterclaim. In most cases you will have to review several dozen documents. In some instances you might have to plow through several hundred documents that were required to finally settle an ownership dispute. Parish Files have been preserved at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba.

For the building researcher, the most useful of the Parish Files will be the two volumes of the Parish and Settlement General Register and individual Applications for Patent. It is in these materials that there is the strongest possibility of finding minor references to buildings (the fact that you had undertaken construction lent credibility to your claim to the River Lot). The examples opposite contain the following information that might be useful in those building research projects concerned with River Lots:

1. PARISH AND SETTLEMENT GENERAL REGISTER, etc. This is an extract from the Parish Register for St. James. Near the top of the register page are the ten categories identified for this record: Lot No. (Parish Files are arranged according by parish names and river lot number); Part of Land (any other ownership tied to that property); Grant No. (each landowner was identified by a grant number); Nature of Grant (these are abbreviated legal references); Name; Date of Patent; Patent Ref. No. (an internal government code); Liber. (Latin for "book" or "volume", another internal government reference); Folio (Latin for "page", yet another internal reference); and Remarks (notes that might be required for clarification of the preceding information). These categories are all that is needed to make a quick reference to the final disposition of the land. The information for Lot 59 has been extracted and enlarged and is discussed below as #2.

2. "Lot 59" This line of the register provides the following useful information: the Grant number (**331**); the Nature of the Grant (**MAG**, the abbreviation for *Manitoba Act Grant*, the most common type of land grant); the name of the official owner (**Alban Fidler**); and the date of the patent, that is, the day ownership was confirmed (**28 July 1876**).

3. "In the matter of the application of John William Sellwood . . . I, Cornelius Fidler . . . (farmer), etc." This is part of an actual **Application for**

Patent, in this case for River Lot 55 in the Parish of St. James. Embedded in the legal text is a reference to buildings: "*The said John W Sellwood has farmed the said lands and has cultivated the same every year - since going into possession of the same. He has during this time built two dwelling houses on the lands and has fenced it and made other improvements on the same, etc.*"

Homestead Files

*Rural settlement that occurred after 1870 (when Manitoba entered the Canadian Confederation) was subject to the **Dominion Lands Act**. That act created a huge square grid system of land division in Western Canada (see Township Plans, pages 60 & 61 for more information). It was the smallest square in this system -- the quarter section -- that became the basic unit of settlement. Certain quarter sections (or portions of quarter sections) were reserved for sale, with the proceeds going to support such undertakings as the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway and school construction. Some land was sold separately by the Hudson Bay Company and there are documents in the Provincial Archives relating to those transactions. The greatest proportion, however, was available as free homestead grants to any born or naturalized British subject who paid a small registration fee (\$10) and met certain land improvement conditions. It was necessary for the Federal Department of the Interior (which administered the Dominion Lands Act) to create a file for each homestead grant. In Manitoba, Homestead Files are maintained on microfilm at the Provincial*

Archives.

*A typical set of Homestead Files generally consists of an Application for Homestead Patent, a variety of inspectors reports, notarized or sworn statements from the settler, various pieces of correspondence, receipts for payments and, finally, a confirmation to indicate that patent had been awarded. For the building researcher, the **Application for Homestead Patent** and the **inspectors reports** are usually the most valuable sources, as they were most likely to contain information on the first buildings on the homestead. In some rare cases the records for a certain homestead have not been preserved; don't despair, however, because all homestead transactions were recorded in abbreviated form in **Township General Registers**. Homestead Files are organized according to section-township-range numbers, so you should become familiar with that system, discussed on pages 60 and 61. The samples illustrated opposite are discussed below.*

1. Sworn Statement of Prokip Kyrvyrega, etc.

This is the first page of a two-page Application for Homestead Patent. The Department of the Interior required each applicant to supply certain information as part of the qualifying procedure to claim a homestead. A series of questions ascertained the applicant's age, marital and familial conditions, amount of ground cultivated and the **types of buildings** situated on the property. Inspector's reports followed, along with notarized statements to guarantee that the requirements of settlement had been met. In this case, a brief biographical sketch is provided for Prokip Kyrvyrega, who homesteaded here (SE18-5-6E) in April of 1901. Thus, we find the size of the family (6, "wife and five children") and his occupation (farmer). Of greater interest is the inclusion of information about the buildings that the family constructed (in answer to questions #11 and #12 on the form): a "17x30 ft logs, straw roofed] house [valued at \$200]" and a "stable, 40x20 ft logs, straw roof[valued at \$50]".

2. Homestead Inspector's Report

Mr. Kyrvyrega's progress has been enumerated, including information about buildings constructed. For the building researcher this information will be useful if there are still buildings on the farm that seem to date from the time of homesteading (the log construction and the dimensions will help narrow the investigation). Otherwise, the information will be useful as background for an analysis of the development of the farm. The remainder of the form details the Kyrvyregas' activity on the farm and provides information on the nature of the land.

If you are not inclined to dig through all the ancillary documents to find the applications or

*inspector's reports, or do not need the information from those materials, you can refer to the pertinent **Township General Register** for some basic information (original owner's name, the date patent was requested, the date patent was given and occasionally financial obligations required of the homesteader). These large bound books (housed at the Provincial Archives) are organized according to section-township-range numbers, and with a single index line devoted to each entry, locating information in them is very simple.*

"Old System" Land Titles Records

The creation and maintenance of accurate, reliable records of private land ownership, and the transactions that affect ownership, are the responsibility of the provincial government, through its Land Titles Branch. In Manitoba's land titles system there are actually two recording processes at work. The original system, called "Old System", was established in 1870. That operation was superseded in 1885 by a more regulated program of registration called the "New System" (documents from that system are discussed in the next source). Land transactions registered after 1885 will have been recorded in the New System if a Real Property Application (RPA) was made on a title was created. And in many cases, property originally registered in the Old System has been transferred into this New System. There is, however, a considerable amount of land still registered in the Old System.*

While materials available from Land Titles can be valuable in a building research project, you

1 and 2. The original *grant* from the Crown (#1, sporting the large wax seal) features the name of the first owner (Joseph St. Germain) and the precise property description ("Ninth Township in the Fourth Range East of the Principal Meridian . . . and being comprised of The North East Quarter and the South Half of the North West Quarter of Section Seventeen of the said Township). A *deed* associated with this property (#2, with the title "This Indenture" elaborately embellished) provides information on the transfer of the property between George Patterson and Ellen Murray, later owners of the property.

3, 4, 5 and 6. Abstract Page and details Instead of hunting down the patent grant and the various deeds that will be associated with this property, you can refer to the abstract page and get the whole picture at a glance. The only thing you need to know to narrow your search is the property description, in this case S.E. Section 34 Township 1 Range 6 E (#3) (See TOWNSHIP PLANS, pages 60 & 61, VILLAGE, TOWN & CITY PLANS, pages 64 & 65, and PARISH PLANS, pages 58 & 59 for an explanation of land divisions.) The abstract then highlights a variety of pieces of information. The *No. of Instrument* and *Instrument* (#4) refer

*should be aware that these documents relate only to land transactions; they do not contain any direct information on buildings. What they will reveal are the **names of owners**, the **official legal description** of the property and the various **financial transactions** that describe its history. The documentary base for the Old System includes three records: **grants**, **deeds** and an index or register of transactions called an **abstract book**. For the building researcher, it is the abstract book that will be of particular use. In most cases, it is possible to refer to a single page of an abstract book and get a history of property ownership. One caveat to using these materials involves access and cost. It is not generally possible to undertake your own search through these records; Land Titles staff will retrieve documents you request, and there will be a fee assessed for every document pulled. The examples opposite, discussed below, yield the following information:*

to the kinds of financial transactions involved and will likely be a mortgage, lien or deed. A number of abbreviations were used to describe instruments (common abbreviations are **Q.C.** for **Quit Claim**; **B.S.** for **Bargain and Sale**; and **D.M.** for **Discharged Mortgage**). All of these notations should be checked with Land Titles staff for clarification. *Its Date* and *Date of Registry* (#5) are the records, respectively, of the date when the transaction was signed and the date when Land Titles registered that transaction. Finally, *Grantor* and *Grantee* (#6) are the names of, respectively, the person or institution selling the property or granting the mortgage, and the name of the person or institution receiving the property.

* There are six district offices, in Brandon, Dauphin, Morden, Neepawa, Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg.

“New System” Land Titles Records

*Compared with the “Old System” of land titles records (discussed in the previous source), the Torrens, or “New System” is a guaranteed process for recording and registering land transactions. In this system, established in 1885 under the Real Property Act, all pertinent information reflecting each new transaction is brought up to date and is certified as correct on one document: the **Certificate of Title**. For Land Titles staff, this procedure means that there is no need to create the abstract books that were a key component of the Old System. For a building researcher, however, this system can entail more work. Because it is not possible to refer to a single index, you will have to undertake a search that links all the certificates associated with a piece of property into a chain of ownership.*

A Certificate of Title (commonly abbreviated CT) contains very precise information, and while some of it is presented in legal language, it is

*fairly easily understood. In a CT you may find a written legal **description of the property**, the **name of the previous owner**, the **name of the purchaser**, their **occupations** at the date of transfer, the **purchase price** and the **type of transfer**. What these documents will not reveal is any direct information on buildings, although it is possible to ascertain some building-related information (see below, #5 and #6). By collecting a chain of certificates, it will be possible to trace changes in ownership through the years. You should be forewarned that it is not possible to undertake your own title search. Land Titles staff will undertake that task, and there will charge for every document pulled (naturally, for a historic building the title search could add up to a significant amount of money). The example opposite contains the following data:*

1. Title Number This is the number applied to a particular certificate. Numbers are added sequentially according to the entry of a new title into the system. The Certificate of Title number makes retrieval by Land Titles staff easier.

2. “Inger M. Goulding” This section of the Certificate lists the name of the new owner (or executor) of the property, along with their community of residence and may note their occupation.

3. “. . . Is now seized of an estate in fee simple . . .” This is one of several standardized legal phrases that describe the nature of ownership. An “estate in fee simple” is the clearest expression of outright ownership (other land titles materials describe the concept more poetically as “the right to use land down to the centre of the earth and up to the heavens forever for whatever the owner wishes . . .”) Some other ownership definitions include *freehold estate*, *estate in remainder* and *leasehold estate*.

4. Legal description of the property This description, which can be quite lengthy and convoluted, is absolutely essential in identifying a particular piece of land. This description identifies this parcel as distinct from its immediate neighbours. If this information is not

copied verbatim, all other information collected through Land Titles could be for a different piece of property.

5 and 6. New Certificate of Title In recent years, Land Titles offices have adopted a computer system that provides even more comprehensive CTs. Where older CTs featured financial transactions on the reverse side, these documents put them up front (#6). It is possible to ascertain a building’s date of construction by reviewing a chain of CTs and focusing on values: where land value suddenly rises, it is likely that a building has been added. Conversely, where value drops, it is probable that a building has been demolished.

Assessment Records

*In Manitoba, land and buildings have been assessed, and taxed from an early date. Over the years, municipal governments, as well as the Province, have ensured that thorough and precise records on property and building values have been maintained. Records go back to the 1870s in certain jurisdictions. A variety of records may be available, including **assessment rolls**, **assessor's field books** and **tax collector's rolls** (assessment records and tax records are each the responsibility of a separate government agency, although the historic records may now be stored in the same place). Many jurisdictions maintain excellent archives of assessment and tax records, although the actual retrieval policies may be different (in the City of Winnipeg, for example, which maintains a major archive of assessment and tax collection documents, it is generally not possible to search through any of these documents without the assistance of civic authorities). In many smaller jurisdictions, however, assessment and tax records are usually more easily accessible. At the same time, it might*

be necessary to get approval from local municipal authorities to gain access to these materials. The effort is usually worth it, however, because these documents can be one of the most useful of sources. Usually, it is the assessment records, rather than the tax records, that offer the greatest potential for building-related information. Tax collector's rolls tended to feature technical and mathematical information that helped determine rates of taxation.

*For the building researcher, **assessment records** can offer the opportunity to determine the **names** and **social background** of land owners and tenants, **property limits** and the **value of land and buildings**. Some assessment records also highlight religious affiliation, types of farm animals and **types of buildings**. The example opposite, of a tax assessment roll for the City of Brandon, contains the following information that may be of use in a building research project:*

1 and 2. "1897 ASSESSMENT ROLL WARD No. 1"

Because they are so big (and usually spread over two pages) this example combines, for clarity, a full page and an extract from the facing page (#2). Even so, the welter of categories is evident, looking along the top lines of each sample. Information that will be useful for a building researcher is extracted below, with reference to a highlighted entry.

3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 From the full page example you will be able to find the **number of the roll** (#3, and in this example, 2658), the **name of the occupant** (#4, William Foxall), their **occupation** (#5, photographer), their **residence** (#6, City [of Brandon]; clearly these lots were being bought in anticipation of occupancy as there is no one actually living on them) and a few other sections that the Brandon authorities have filled out, like the total number of the household (here 4) and the number of stock (here 1 cow). Because these kinds of books were produced commercially for sale to any local government in Canada, they contained as many categories as might be needed by any jurisdiction. The extract from the facing page contains a variety of land information and, most importantly, information on buildings. It appears that Mr. Foxall constructed a building on this lot (#7) and that

the assessors have concluded a final value of the property to be worth \$1250 (#8): \$1000 for the building and \$250 for the land. Sometimes the assessment books do not actually record buildings. In those cases it is still possible, by

reviewing a few year's worth of assessment records, to be able to determine activities associated with building construction; changes in assessment values (up or down) usually indicated that construction or demolition of a building had occurred.

Building Permits

*The increasing sophistication of buildings, and their greater density in urban centres, brought increasing risks to life, from fire especially. To ensure a greater measure of safety in the construction of new buildings, it became clear by the late 19th century that some control had to be exercised over building design and the use of materials. In Winnipeg, a system that required the issuance of permits for plumbing gradually was modified to address the whole structure. By the turn of the century in Winnipeg, and later in other urban jurisdictions, builders were required to submit plans to a local government in order to get a **building permit** (see Architects' Drawings, pages 76 & 77, for a discussion of plans).*

Unfortunately, building permits can be very difficult to locate. They were not required for rural buildings. Nor was a comprehensive system

*in place in many communities in the early decades of the century. And where permits were required, many jurisdictions have not found it necessary to retain them (consult with Murray Peterson re: WPG). Nevertheless, if you can get your hands on one, you will find it an invaluable source of information. The building permit will reveal the **date construction was intended to begin**, the **name of the contractor and architect** (if one was involved), the **original building function**, the **dimensions**, **estimated cost** and **materials** used in construction. A permit also was required for subsequent construction as well, so it is even possible to trace those changes. The example illustrated opposite contain the following data:*

1. and 2 - 16. "Application for Permit to Build" This example, from Winnipeg, is a typical example. It includes a wealth of information: the permit number (**611**), part of a numerical sequence that identifies this building as the 611th project to receive a permit in that year. This 1902 permit, also contains the following information magnified in circles from top to bottom: **#2. Name of Owner (Orange Association)**; **#3. Name of Builder (T. Sharpe)**; **#4. Name of Architect (S. Hooper)**; **#5. Purpose of Building (Warehouse Lodge Room)**; various **dimensions** (#7. and 8. on the form), **materials** (#9. through 15. on the form), the size of components (#16. through 20. on the form) and the **estimated cost** of the building (#29. on the form).

1918 have been preserved at the Provincial Archives.

*Most communities that maintained building permits ensured that there was an easy way to access basic information about the permit. Standard **register books** were often produced as a commercial venture and sold to local governments, which could fill out those portions they deemed necessary. In most cases, an index will include specific information on the proposed construction, like: the **name of the owner**; the **cost**; the **number of storeys**; the **materials**, the building's **purpose**; **heating**, **plumbing**, **lighting**, **elevators** and **fire escapes**; the name of the **architect**; the name of the **builder**; and finally, what the permit was issued for (as a new building or as an alteration). The *Brandon permit books from 1903 to**

Institutional Documents

Besides the promotional or official records of their activities (see INSTITUTIONAL CHRONICLES, pages 36 & 37) major public entities like governments, corporations and churches also produced, and have often retained, a great deal of their day-to-day operating material. Building plans, contracts, even meeting minute books might contain information about building projects associated with that institution. However, this kind of material was usually not intended for public review, and therefore might not be readily accessible. And of course, all of this material may

also still be an integral part of ongoing operations, making retrieval of certain documents difficult. Despite these potential obstacles, these documents will prove useful for those researchers involved in projects that focus on the buildings erected by various institutions. The examples opposite suggest the range of documentary material that might be available.

1. Provincial Department of Public Works Correspondence

The Provincial Government of Manitoba has retained an impressive archive of many of its operating records, preserved at the Provincial Archives. Those departments that contain information that may be of use in a building research project include: Agriculture (Manitoba Immigration Agents), Attorney General (Land Titles Survey Data from 1876-1933), Education (Annual Reports of School Trustees, School District Half-Yearly Returns, School District Registers and Inspector's Reports), Natural Resources (Parish Files and Homestead Files) and Public Works (Photographs; Project Plans and Specifications from 1905-1977; and Government Buildings, specifically construction, design, contracts, inspection, maintenance and renovations). In this case, a collection of various letters and reports from 1915 reveals some of the activity associated with the construction of the new Law Courts and Central Power House in Winnipeg. This particular notation, one of several inspection reports from the Deputy Minister to the Minister of Public Works, details estimates from the Provincial Architect for the construction of passenger elevators.

2. Grain Growers Grain Co., Standard Elevator, detail

Most institutions either had staff architects, or commissioned architects, to produce the designs for their new buildings. In this case, the Grain Growers Grain Company, in 1917, commissioned Theodore Kipp, Designers to produce a complete set of drawings for the design of a standard elevator that was to be used across the West. This extract, one page of 27, features the Elevator Head and Rope Tension drawings. (For more information on these kinds of graphic materials, see *Architects' Drawings*, pages 76 & 77). It also may be possible to focus on service trades associated with the building industry to get historical information; shop

your information, it is common practice, if an institutional building has changed hands, to provide the original plans to the new owner. Also, an important collection of institutional drawings, that for buildings of the Province of Manitoba, is held by the Provincial Archives.

3. Department of Education Photograph

Many institutions express the pride of their architectural accomplishments through the use of photographs, and often maintain an in-house collection. Here, the provincial Department of Education actually had their school inspectors take photographs of almost every school building in the province during the 1920s and 30s, as part of a comprehensive inspection program. There are hundreds of images in this collection (now held at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba). The most useful examples, like the one here, reveal the original, or early physical situation, with piles of logs for heating, horses for transport and the kinds of exercise apparatus installed on playgrounds.

drawings for stone building projects, for example, may have been preserved by stone manufacturing companies. For

MAPS AND PLANS

Parish Plans

*The first land survey at the Red River Settlement was carried out in 1813 by Peter Fidler, an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company. Modelled on the Quebec system, land was divided into thin strips -- river lots -- that stretched back several miles from the rivers. This system provided all landowners with access to the water, at that time an important avenue of transport. Over the course of several years a variety of plans were created, based on the parish boundaries of various Roman Catholic and Anglican churches. Plans were prepared for the **Anglican parishes** of Headingley, High Bluff, Kildonan, Poplar Point, Portage la Prairie, St. Andrew, St. Clement, St. James, St. John, St. Paul, St. Peter and for the **Roman Catholic parishes** of Baie St. Paul, St. Agathe, Ste. Anne, St. Boniface, St. Charles, St. Francois-Xavier, St. Laurent, St. Norbert and St. Vital. All of these plans are preserved at the Provincial Archives.*

There are three kinds of parish plans that were prepared to describe the land and land

*ownership of the province's early European settlements (other parish maps, prepared for a variety of other purposes, may also be of use to a building researcher). The first set of plans were **base maps**, containing interesting and valuable information about **geography, vegetation, settlement patterns, trails, pioneer occupation and building locations**. A second set of plans (actually a copy of the base maps) contains the names of landowners. These plans are termed **cadastral**, a technical term denoting an official record of ownership and boundaries for the purposes of taxation. The third set of plans provides the patent number for each River Lot (the **patent** is the legal term for the grant by the government of land to a private individual). All of these plans have been preserved at the Provincial Archives. The example opposite, of the 1874 cadastral plan for the Parish of Ste. Anne (with pertinent portions magnified), yields some basic information of interest for a building researcher.*

1. "59" This is the river lot number. If it is necessary to use this number as a reference to other sources, the number should be combined with the parish name (here, Lot 59, Ste. Anne) to avoid confusion with a similarly numbered river lot in another parish. Note that because lots were surveyed on either side of the river, the numbering system for each parish commenced on one side of the river and concluded at the lot directly opposite the first. In the case of Ste. Anne, the numbering began with river lot 1 on the southeast bank of the Seine River and concluded with a very thin river lot 83 on the northeast bank. It is the river lot number that you will use to connect with materials in PARISH FILES (pages 42 & 43).

2. "12°00", 3. "427.00ac" and 4. "160°00" A variety of numerical references were used to more completely describe land holdings. Thus, **12°00 (#2)** indicates the width of the river lot, measured in chain lengths. One chain (these were actual metal chains used by surveyors) was 66 feet (33 metres) long. As you can see, most lots were 12, or nearly 12 chains wide; a few were wider, some more narrow. The number **427.00 ac (#3)** is the computed area of the lot, measured in acres. Each river lot was the subject of this computation. Occasionally a number

provides a reference to the length of a lot (**160°00, #4**), again measured in chains.

5. "Church" The parish church, as well as the **Gov [Government] Depot** have been plotted. The rest of the small black squares and rectangles represent buildings, likely houses and stables. On the actual plan, which is colour-coded, the dotted areas are pink and denoted cultivated land. Referring to the base plan provides a clearer indication of this information.

6. "Angelique Grouette" The name of the owner of river lot 21, at the time of the survey in 1874.

Township Plans

With the entry of Manitoba into the Canadian Confederation in 1870, it became necessary to survey the land in anticipation of settlement. The river lot system (discussed in PARISH PLANS, pages 50 & 51) was deemed inappropriate for the large expanses of prairie that lay beyond the rivers. As an alternative, the Dominion Land Survey adopted the American model, in which all the land was divided into a huge rectangular grid of six mile square townships (the townships, in turn, were composed of 36 squares, called sections, each measuring one mile square). Surveyors were dispatched beginning in 1870, and by 1910 much of Manitoba had been surveyed. A surveyor's notebook was the basic on-site record of the proceedings. These notebooks were sent to Ottawa, where they were rendered as township plans, and collected into large binders to be used by government officials.

*There are two sets of Township Plans, both available at the Provincial Archives. One set contains the base survey, carried out in the 1870s and early 1880s. A second set of plans is a copy of the first, with the record of individual land ownership written in by officials of the Department of the Interior (these plans are termed **cadastal**, a technical term denoting an official record of ownership and boundaries for the purposes of taxation). Both sets of plans are preserved at the Provincial Archives. The base plans, are usually excellent sources of information on the topography of the township, with references to waterways, vegetation and land quality. If a settler was occupying the land at the time of the survey, their activities and any buildings they would have constructed were recorded. The example illustrated opposite, and discussed below, is typical of the hundreds of township plans prepared for Manitoba.*

1. "PLAN OF TOWNSHIP N^o 10, etc." The map reference number. To locate a specific township -- and thence a specific farm site -- it is necessary to become familiar with three words: **Township**, **Range** and **Section**; and a simple consecutive numbering system. The **Township** number locates a specific set of township/squares that extend in a horizontal line parallel to the United States border. The **Range** number locates a specific set of townships in a vertical line that extends north from the U.S. border. Range numbers were also designated as west (W) or east (E) of the Prime Meridian. The **Section** number describes one of 36 smaller squares that make up the whole township. In this example, the Township number is 10, the Range number is 19 West (the abbreviation for this is 10-19W, part of the present site of the City of Brandon). The identification of any one of the 36 sections (#25 for example) enlarges the alphanumeric code to read 25-10-19W. It is also possible to further qualify the location by subdividing the section into quarters, based on the compass direction: northwest (NW), northeast (NE), southwest (SW) and southeast (SE). It is this code number that you will use to connect with materials in HOMESTEAD FILES (pages 44 & 45).

2. "25", 3. "Log Dwelling etc.", 4. "127" and **5. "39.99"** For the purpose of discussion, a particular section, is here extracted and enlarged (#2). This example is from the collection of **base plans**. It was drawn in 1881 and is a typical example. In this instance the surveyor has noted two occupants on the section: **A. Laird** (on the SE quarter) had a **log dwelling and stable** (#3) and had ploughed a stretch of land near the river. On the SW quarter **John Arthur** occupied the land, had ploughed land along the river, but does not appear to have yet constructed any buildings. A **rail fence** ran through the two quarter sections. The few numerical references included were the surveyor's acreage calculations for a particular piece of land (#4: **127**) and for the section length, measured in surveyors' chains (#5: **39.99**).

6. "14" and 7. "Sale 6218 J.H Brock" This extract of section **14** is actually from the **cadastal** collection of township plans. In this

instance the original homesteader's name (*J.H Brock*) and the property sale number (*6218*) have been written onto a copy of the base maps.

Land Titles Plans

*The major divisions of land (according to the river lot and township surveys, discussed in the two previous sources) was further subdivided wherever a community or neighbourhood developed. The owners of such properties -- usually land developers -- undertook to subdivide the land into lots that could be sold to prospective buyers. And, of course, it was necessary to have that property surveyed and for that survey to be registered in a Land Titles office (to be **registered** meant that the survey was reviewed by government officials and confirmed as correct). There are more than 55,000 registered plans held by Land Titles offices in the province (about 33,000 for the City of Winnipeg, 22,000 for other Manitoba communities and districts).*

*For the building researcher, a Land Titles plan can be a useful piece of information when considering **early land development** and **ownership** for the area. These plans, however, never include building-specific information (they*

were, after all, usually created in anticipation of construction). There is also one catch involved with retrieving these plans: you cannot actually refer to a master map to select a particular plan. There simply are too many (55,000) to casually flip through to find the one you need. Instead, you have to first know the plan number. The easiest way to determine the plan number is to refer to your own assessment records (if you are researching your own building) or to contemporary civic or municipal plans prepared by provincial assessment offices. In Winnipeg you can refer to the McPhillip's Bros. Atlas of 1907 (in the Provincial Archives) which contains the original subdivision plan numbers. The example illustrated opposite, with certain parts magnified, contains the following information of potential use in a building research project:

1. "Plan No. 336". Entered and Registered in the Neepawa Land Titles Office this 26th day of June A.D. 1905 at 10.13 o'clock as Plan No 336 All of this precise information contains one key number, the plan number: 336.

2. "Wm MacKenzie, etc." and 3. "I George Bartlett Benister, etc." The first set of text (#2) contains the names of the owners of the land comprising plan number 336. Other plans will include the word "Owner" to distinguish this piece of information. The second set of text (#3) includes various declarations by surveyors and officials.

4. "SW 1/4" and 5. "BULLER AVE." The first reference (#4) is part of the sectional information that describes this particular piece of land (see *Township Plans*, pages 60 & 61 for more information on this survey numbering system). The second reference (#5, *BULLER AVE.*) has been identified as a reminder that proposed street names were usually included on such surveys. It is important to know, however, that street names were revised over time. In this instance most of these names were changed to numbers as the community of Dauphin developed.

6. "42" and 7. "9" These are the code numbers used to describe a particular piece of land in plan number 336. Almost every survey of a subdivision in Manitoba undertaken before 1940 produced a plan in which a large rectan-

gle was broken down into increasingly smaller rectangles. The number 42 is the **block number**, the number 9 is the **lot number**. The very small numbers shown within each block indicate the lot sizes; most surveys of the time produced lots of 50 foot (16 metre) widths and 100 foot (32 metre) depths. It is important to note that the original survey will not necessarily describe the actual property divisions that might have been changed as the lots were sold. In many cases, the 50 foot-wide lots were too large (or too small) for some prospective buyers, who negotiated to have their lot sizes changed. Unfortunately, this information only shows up in more recent plans; you will have to review other Land Titles documents (see "*New System*" *Land Titles Records*, pages 46 & 47) or civic plans to determine the actual property divisions that took place after the first survey.

Village, Town and City Plans

*Village, town and city plans were created for a variety of reasons. Most often they were formal records commissioned by the civic body to be used by civic employees and by citizens for reference. But they might also be commercial endeavours undertaken as advertising by corporations or by real estate developers. For the building researcher, a community plan will be of interest primarily for establishing **early legal property divisions**. Certain plans also can be used for discerning legal references required for*

*further research into a particular piece of property. For those researchers interested in the growth of a particular area, or of the whole community, civic plans can provide a good sense of **land development**. These kinds of maps might be available at any number of locations: museums, archives, civic offices and libraries may have historic plans of the community. The example opposite yields the following information:*

1. **DICKSON'S MAP OF THE CITY OF BRANDON,**

etc. Community plans could be prepared by any number of authorities, for any number of purposes. Here, the Mayor and City Council of Brandon have undertaken to produce a comprehensive plan of their community. Note that part of the title block refers to the fact that the map was "*Compiled from the latest registered plans and surveys, etc.*" Most civic plans were likewise compiled from official plans registered in Land Titles Offices (see the previous source, LAND TITLE PLANS) and were sometimes coloured to better distinguish major property divisions. Also note that for many civic plans, what is shown might only be expectation for growth, and may not describe the actual extent of the community at that time. Two portions of the plan have been extracted and enlarged for clarity, one discussed below in #2, #3, #4 and #5 and the other as #6.

2. **"HAWTHORNE AVE."** All community maps identified street names. What can be interesting (and occasionally confusing) are those instances where the actual street names were changed over time. In this case, Hawthorne Ave. ultimately became XXX St. sometime in the XXXFs. It is often necessary to check a variety of maps to determine the evolution of street names.

3. **S. W 1/4** This alphanumeric code is the quarter section reference required to distinguish this piece of land from others on this plan. Please see TOWNSHIP PLANS (pages 52 & 53) for a brief explanation of this system. Communities that developed over the River Lot system (Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie, most notably) will naturally be subdivided according to the river lot (with the lot numbers somehow identified on the map). In these cases, refer to PARISH PLANS, pages 58 &

59, for a brief introduction to that system.

4. **25** and 5. **38** Within the quarter section, *these two numbers comprise a code reference used to identify a specific parcel of land. The first (larger) number (#4: 25) represents a **block**, and distinguishes this specific larger piece of land from the other 39 blocks that make up this quarter section. The second (tiny) number (#5: 38) identifies one of the forty pieces of property, termed **lots**, that constitute block #25. A lot is the smallest subdivision of land possible within this system. (In larger communities there is still one piece of information required for a full legal description: the **plan number**. The plan number, which identifies specific subdivisions, is critical in searching Land Titles materials, but it is usually not identified on civic plans; the plan number must be searched in Land Titles or assessment records.)*

6. **COURT HOUSE AND GAOL** On this particular plan a number of public buildings have been identified. The researcher who has found this plan is lucky, as most other maps of this type do not include information about buildings.

For Winnipeg research projects, the McPhillip's Bros. 1907 atlas contains a valuable component: an owner's abstract. This list of names of the original owners of property (not buildings) in the city may enable you to bypass Land Titles searches for information on ownership.

Fire Insurance Plans

Fire insurance plans were developed in North America after the disastrous Chicago Fire of 1871. That conflagration, which destroyed much of Chicago, prompted insurance companies to carefully record buildings in urban centres to determine the potential for fire risk. Detailed plans, often compiled in atlases, were produced by professional cartographers for fire insurance underwriting firms, which in turn lent copies to insurance companies. Because these plans were working documents, overlays were often made to original maps as new information was made available. To avoid confusion as updated plans were prepared, or as old plans became dog-eared, they would be returned to their point of origin for destruction. Thus the collection of extant plans is limited, with a set from 1917–1919 still available for Winnipeg, Brandon, Portage la Prairie, Dauphin and for approximately 70 smaller communities. Two other series may

also be of interest: one contains updates laid over the 1917–1919 base maps; the other is a newer set of maps that date from the mid-1950s. These collections of fire insurance plans is held at the Provincial Archives. You might also find certain individual plans in a local museum or archive.

*For urban centres, and especially for buildings constructed before 1919, this source is extremely valuable. Each fire insurance plan will provide detailed information about **individual buildings**: their **size, shape, type of construction, materials, number of storeys and lot size**. Moreover, by referring to updated sets of maps it is possible to create a land use history for a specific site. The example opposite, discussed below, contains the following data:*

1. 416 and 2. 4161 The sheet number (**416**) is from the Winnipeg Fire Atlas series of 1917–19, which is composed of almost 750 sheets. Sheet 416 focused on an area in the city's then-south end (presently called Osborne Village). A key map at the beginning of the atlas provided easy reference for the whole city. At that time the city did not include Assiniboia (St. James), East Kildonan, St. Boniface, St. Norbert or St. Vital, which all appear on separate plans. The number **4161 (#2)** is simply a code number that enabled insurance employees to quickly refer to a building.

3. AUGUSTINE CHURCH, etc. Large buildings often were named and a considerable amount of detail was included, as indicated in this magnified view. Here you can find tower heights, room functions, door openings ("D") and window openings ("W"). On the original map the building was colour-coded blue to indicate its stone construction.

4. "TACHE APARTMENTS" The exact outline of the building's floor plan is provided, along with a variety of coded information that is easily understood with reference to the *Key of Signs* that accompanied each volume.

5. "D" The abbreviation for dwelling. Most of the buildings on this plan were houses, colour-coded yellow on the actual plan to indicate wood frame construction. Building heights, expressed in storeys (here, 2 ½) and other coded details were provided. You will be able to find things like furnace types and heating systems.

6. STRADBROOK AVE (FORMERLY SPADINA AVE) Street names were occasionally changed, and the plans usually included both names to help readers avoid confusion.

7. 421 and 558 The first number here (**421**) was the municipal street address, the second (**558**) was simply an insurance company reference. The coding is explained in the *Key of Signs*.

8. Symbol A variety of symbols and letters were used to indicate fire and water services. These were all identified on the *Key of Signs*.

Cummins Maps

Cummins Rural Directory Maps were issued commercially as a service for rural clients. A typical Cummins directory was composed of approximately 100 sheets, and was available through the Cummins Map Company of Winnipeg. The maps were issued periodically beginning in the early 1900s, but the 1918 and 1923 versions are the only complete sets known to exist (these are preserved at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba). Cummins Maps are useful

primarily for locating farm occupants and pin-pointing the locations of early post offices, railway stations, schools and churches. For those researchers interested in land ownership during the five year period of the extant maps (1918 to 1923), the maps will also be of interest. The example opposite yields the following information that may be pertinent in a building research project:

1. "Tp. 14" This reference, and the others along the right-hand side, as well as those along the bottom, delineate the location of this part of Manitoba for the original subscribers. Please see *Township Plans* (pages 52 & 53) for an introduction to the section-township-range system.

2. "Mrs. D McFee" Mrs. McFee was the owner of the NE quarter of section 31. The arrows, however, also indicate that she owned the SE quarter of that section, as well as the NE quarter of section 30.

3. "Grassmere" The legend at the bottom of the sheet provides the symbols that are used to locate schools (like Grassmere) as well as post offices. However, you will also notice that a few of the school symbols located on the map are not accompanied with a name; it will require additional research to find that information.

VISUAL RECORDS

Photographs

Once the camera became a compact, easy-to-use device, people began to photograph with abandon. Photographs were often produced to commemorate an event (a family gathering, a party, a parade, even disasters) in which buildings might appear only incidentally. Photographs might also be produced specifically to promote or commemorate a building; typically this was for commercial or administrative purposes (see Institutional Documents, pages 54 & 55, point #3).

Thousands of photographs that feature historic buildings have been collected by archives, interested groups and individuals throughout this province (the collections at the Provincial Archives and the Western Canada Pictorial Index are the most impressive in this province). However, it is often very difficult to track down a photograph for a specific building. Unfortunately, photographs of houses are especially difficult to

*locate, and photographs of any building's interior are even more scarce (early camera technology made the creation of images with artificial lighting more difficult than it is today). Public and commercial buildings, those structures whose construction could be seen as a community effort (schools, churches, town halls, railway stations), are perhaps more commonly the subject of photographs, where the need to memorialize or promote was greater. Nevertheless, the effort expended in trying to locate early images of a building can add immeasurably to a better understanding of a building and of its early context. It also is possible occasionally to use photographs to suggest **construction dates**; the presence of period automobiles and clothing in a photograph may help you determine an approximate date. The examples opposite indicate the range of photographs that a building researcher might find useful.*

1, 2, 3 and 4. Photographs A researcher interested in the building illustrated at the top left (#1) is lucky indeed. The image was almost certainly created to commemorate an event (the bunting on the verandah and the number of people suggest a party, perhaps Dominion Day), but in positioning the camera so far from the scene, the photographer has included a full view of the house. For the researcher in need of information about original elements, components and finishes, the image will be especially useful. Even those photographs that only feature part of a building can still be useful (#2, top right), providing information about certain building components and finishes. In this case window and door treatments are evident and are clear enough to be analyzed. While many buildings appear incidentally in a photograph of a social event, there is one particular building-related event that occasioned the production of a photograph: a building under construction. Such images are more common for large urban projects (centre left, #3), but even then they tend to be rare. At the same time the information that such a photograph will contain (early construction procedures and materials) can be of considerable importance depending on the nature of the research project. Many communities produced souvenir booklets that included photographic images of their finest buildings (centre right, #4). These can be useful even if

the building under consideration is not included; those buildings promoted might offer good sources for comparison in terms of design, style and materials. Finally, magazines and newspapers also included photographic images of buildings, especially large public structures (see those sources, pages 30–33 for more information).

5. Photographic Perspective The construction of tall buildings (grain elevators for example) allowed for the creation of photographs of whole neighbourhoods (and with the airplane, even of whole communities). Such aerial perspectives, like the one illustrated here, can provide the researcher with an opportunity to put a building into an earlier context. It was not necessary, however, to climb 20 metres in the air to create a photographic perspective. It was also common to create panoramic images from ground level. Typically, the objects of such images were commercial areas; it is rare to encounter a residential street perspective.

Architects' Drawings

Except for those structures that were built according to vernacular traditions (like pioneer log buildings, barns and farm outbuildings), almost any building will have had some sort of drawn materials prepared to aid in its construction. The complexities involved even in fairly simple buildings meant that some sort of communication was required between designer and builder. For many buildings these drawings will be ephemera, disposed of when the building was completed. After all, the drawings were only an instrument in the building's creation; there usually would be small benefit in keeping them once the real thing was completed. However, for any building designed by an architect (typically expensive or large and expensive), it is more likely that the drawings required for construction will have survived, somewhere. Drawings might be held by the present building owner, or could be preserved in a local archive. The Provincial Archives has an impressive collection for buildings commissioned by the Province, as well as drawings from a variety of local architects'

*commissions for private and corporate projects. The nature of architectural drawings depended on the nature of the building project. For small projects, drawings might be simple and few in number. For large, expensive projects, the amount of visual material needed to ensure fidelity to the design was great and very complex, with even the smallest detail carefully rendered. Along with the drawings (collectively called plans), architects often provided a builder with written **specifications** that described in minute detail the materials and finishes that were to be used. These materials are not to be confused with presentation drawings, which are discussed in the next source. One important caveat associated with the architect's drawings can actually be of use for a building researcher. It was not uncommon for changes to be made to the building as construction proceeded. Thus reviewing an architect's drawings can provide evidence of original intent and help better understand the final result. An example of an architects' drawing, opposite, is analyzed below.*

1. Design for Church, etc. This is the architect's name for the particular design project. While he has been able to describe his intentions on just one sheet, it is more common to see major design projects recorded on several sheets, to more fully describe every aspect and detail of the proposed building. Most plans are recorded on large pieces of paper and are rolled and stored in tubes.

2. Scale: 8 feet to one Inch Building plans are measured drawings which describe the building in accurate, miniaturized, detail. All drawings on this sheet, and any others in the series, will likely be set at this scale.

3. C.O. Wickenden This notation identifies the architect. In many other cases this information will be contained in a panel extending along the bottom of the sheet. It usually identifies the architect, the project and the office location.

4. Ground Floor Plan, 5. Elevation and 6.

Cross Section Plans are scaled drawings that represent a building's spatial, material and structural configuration as seen through an imaginary horizontal cut through the building. If a historic building has been upgraded over the years, with new services and even reconfigured rooms, it will be useful to try and track down the plans to determine the designer's original intent. **Elevations** are drawings of each external face of a building, usually designated according to their compass direction. A **cross section** is an imaginary vertical cut drawn through the building's interior and is provided to show vertical measurements and specific construction details.

Artists' Renderings

Throughout history, certain buildings have been popular subjects for artist's and their patron's attention. Paintings, drawings and lithographic prints depicting buildings were produced for a number of reasons, but the most common was as a promotional or commemorative record. Because artists' renderings of buildings were usually produced for a commercial purpose, it is imperative that a researcher scrutinize an image carefully before accepting the information as factual. Exaggerations and omissions, for the purposes of aesthetic taste, clarity or for promotional reasons, are not uncommon.

Nevertheless, when they can be found, such images are interesting; they may not tell you much about a building you don't already know, but you might get a sense of the expectations of the architect or those who commissioned the production of the image. Finding these kinds of images can be challenging. They might be in a family collection, an archive or in some kind of published material (a book or magazine). The examples opposite, discussed below, suggest the types of renderings that feature buildings.

1. Competition Perspective Compared with the plans and specification that architects produced to ensure the accurate construction of their building (see *Architects' Drawings*, pages 64 & 65), competition or presentation drawings were intended to promote the project, usually at an early stage in the process. Thus, the images tend to place the building in the best possible light. That often meant omitting from the image any neighbouring buildings, unsightly wires and signs and any other intrusions that might impair a sense of the building's beauty. Such images, nevertheless are useful, if they can be found (typically they were produced only for the most expensive projects). In this instance the rendering is of interest because it shows that an important design change was made in the upper floors of the building – instead of the columned arcade illustrated here, a continuous band was used.

2. and 3. Lithographic Illustrations The nature of book and magazine printing in the late 19th and even early 20th centuries meant that it was less expensive to hire an illustrator to create a line drawing than it was to reproduce a photograph. Because these drawings were usually copied from photographs, however, the range of artistic license was often limited to excising an unsightly tree or adding people for a sense of realism. Buildings featured in such endeavours tended to be expensive or prestigious projects (#2). Besides individual buildings, lithographs of street perspectives were also often reproduced in books and magazines to promote a community (#3).

4. Bird's Eye View The picturesque name given to these images is derived from the dramatic perspective that presents a community as seen from a great height. Their creation was typically a commercial effort, undertaken during the mid-19th to early 20th centuries (like #2 and #3 above, produced through a lithographic process). Used for promotion, these images usually faithfully record existing building locations, but they can exaggerate the size of buildings, the width of water courses and the extent of the community itself. They do, however, offer the opportunity to put buildings into a larger context. In Manitoba it is known that the communities of Winnipeg, Emerson (illustrated here), Selkirk and Portage la Prairie commissioned Bird's Eye Views. These images are available at the Provincial Archives, and may also be located in a variety of local repositories (archives, museums, libraries).

5. Painting Very few buildings will have been the subject for a painting. If commissioned, they likely will be devoted to large and expensive projects. But is also possible that an artist might have chosen to illustrate any building for purely personal reasons. In this case, a pioneer house appears to be a fairly faithful representation of the building and its immediate environment (one important feature that a painting offers is the

depiction of original colours). Nevertheless, a building researcher must approach the information with some caution. Because it is an imaginative creation, there is bound to be some degree of artistic license at work here: was the landscape so lush?; more importantly, was there really such a carefully detailed verandah on the building?

APPENDIX

REPOSITORIES

CASE STUDIES

CHARTS

REPOSITORIES

Throughout this guide a number of repositories for sources have been mentioned. The following list contains those sites enumerated in the text, as well as other important repositories in Manitoba. Please note that while archivists and librarians may have training in research, even in history, they are not at your beck and call. Also that all repositories have certain hours. It is always advisable to call first.

Manitoba
Archives
Library
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Anglican Church Archives Synod Office, Keele
at in District Box 118
Keele, Ontario P9N 3X

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Museums:

Please see the booklet Museums
in Manitoba, available from
Advisory and Training Services,

Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature,
190 Rupert Avenue, Winnipeg,
Manitoba, R3B 0N2.

Other Archives:

Please see the booklet, Directory
of Archives in Manitoba, published
by the Association of Manitoba
Archivists, Box 27007 Lombard
Concourse, One Lombard Place,
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 3K1

Local Libraries:

Please refer to the booklet

CASE STUDIES

This section will include one-page case studies of a few typical research processes. The typical examples will be:

- a house (Brandon);
- an old log barn (rural);
- a rural one-room school;
- a commercial building (small town); and
- a government building (Winnipeg).

CASE STUDY #1

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Negrych Farm

Address: SE 14-27-22W (Gilbert Plains area)

CASE STUDY #2

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Westminster Houses

Addresses: 740–752 Westminster Avenue, Winnipeg

CASE STUDY #3

THE RESEARCH PROJECT

Rosser Avenue Commercial Block

Between 9th and 10th Streets (Brown's Drug Store,
Higginbotham Block, Burchill Block, Halpin Block,
Bertrand Block, Laplont Block, Yukon Block)

CASE STUDY #4

THE RESEARCH PROJECT
Lutheran Church, Baldur
Address:

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

*Building research is the process of asking a series of questions. Some basic questions are abbreviated below: **Building Age**; **Original Owner**; **Owner's Occupation**; **Occupants**; **Architect**; **Contractor**; **Building Materials**; **Style**; **Renovations**; and **Environment** (*Environment refers to contextual information on the neighbourhood*). To use this chart, look down the column for each question to get a sense of those sources that will likely have information on that issue.*

SOURCE	Bldg. Age	Orig. Own.	Occ- Workupant	Arch. Con-	Bldg. trac-	Style Mater-	Reno- or	Env- va-iron- ials	tions ment	
THE BUILDING	m		m		m		m	m	m	m
PEOPLE	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
CHRONICLES										
Personal Papers	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	
Local Histories	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Directories	m	m	m	m						m
Newspapers	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Magazines, etc.	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Inst. Chronicles	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Academic Hist.	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
DOCUMENTS										
Parish Files	m	m	m	m						
Homestead Files	m	m	m	m			m		m	m
L.T. Abstracts	m	m	m	m						
L.T. Certificates	m	m	m	m						
Tax Records	m	m	m	m			m		m	m
Bldg. Permits	m	m	m		m	m	m	m	m	
Inst. Documents	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	
MAPS AND PLANS										
Parish Plans	m	m		m						m
Township Plans	m	m	m	m			m			m
Civic Plans		m								m
Fire Ins. Plans	m						m		m	m
Cummins Maps				m						m
VISUAL RECORDS										
Photographs	m			m			m	m	m	m
Architects' Dwgs.	m	m			m		m	m	m	
Art. Renderings	m						m	m	m	m

m high probability that you will get information

m fair probability that you will get information

m low probability that you will get information

* if there is no dot, there is no possibility that you will get information

CHARTS

The following three charts suggest three different ways in which you can use the sources discussed in this publication. While the charts are intended as general aids in the research process, they should not be seen as substitutes for a thorough review of the actual texts, nor as guides for a research process.

*The first chart indicates which **repositories** are most likely to contain the sources. The second chart identifies nine **building types** and indicates from which of the 24 research sources you can expect to find information. The third chart suggests which sources will provide specific information on some of the **basic questions** often raised in building research. These last two charts can be used in tandem.*

BUILDING TYPES

*A useful way to focus your research is to identify your building type and then search for information. To use this chart, identify your building type and look down the column to determine which sources will likely have information. The building types have mostly been abbreviated: **Urban Residence**; **Rural Residence**; **Farm Outbuilding**; **Commercial Building** (store, bank, etc.); **Urban School**; **Rural School**; **Church**; **Government Building** (federal, provincial or municipal); and **Industrial Building** (brick yard, etc.).*

SOURCE	Urb. Res.	Rural Res.	Farm Out-Bldg.	Comm-ercial Bldg.	Urb. School	Rural School	Church	Gov't Bldg.	Industrial
THE BUILDING	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
PEOPLE	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
CHRONICLES									
Personal Papers	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Local Histories	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Directories	m			m				m	m
Newspapers	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Magazines, etc.	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Inst. Chronicles				m	m	m	m	m	m
Academic Hist.	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
DOCUMENTS									
Parish Files	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Homestead Files	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
L.T. Abstracts	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
L.T. Certificates	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Tax Records	m	m	m	m	m	m			m
Bldg. Permits	m	m		m	m	m	m	m	m
Inst. Documents				m	m	m	m	m	m
MAPS AND PLANS									
Parish Plans	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Township Plans	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Civic Plans	m			m	m		m	m	m
Fire Ins. Plans	m			m	m		m	m	m
Cummins Maps		m	m	m		m	m	m	m
VISUAL RECORDS									
Photographs	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m
Architects' Dwgs.	m	m		m	m	m	m	m	m
Art. Renderings	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m

m high probability that you will get information

m fair probability that you will get information

m low probability that you will get information

* if there is no dot, there is no possibility that you will get information

REPOSITORIES

*The 22 textual and visual sources (identified under the headings of **Chronicles, Documents, Maps and Plans and Visual Records**) are located in a variety of repositories in the province. This chart provides a quick sense of the availability of sources for various repositories.*

SOURCE	Leg. Library	Prov. Archives	Public Libraries	University Libraries	Museums Libraries	Gov't Offices & Archives
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CHRONICLES

Personal Papers		m		m	m	m
Local Histories	m			m	m	m
Directories	m			m	m	m
Newspapers	m			m	m	m
Magazines, etc.	m			m		
Inst. Chronicles	m					m
Academic Hist.	m			m	m	

DOCUMENTS

Parish Files		m				
Homestead Files		m				
L.T. Abstracts						m
L.T. Certificates						m
Tax Records						m
Bldg. Permits		m				m
Inst. Documents		m			m	m

MAPS AND PLANS

Parish Plans		m			m	
Township Plans		m			m	
Civic Plans		m		m	m	m
Fire Ins. Plans		m			m	
Cummins Maps		m			m	

VISUAL RECORDS

Photographs		m		m	m	
Architects' Dwgs.		m			m	m
Art. Renderings		m			m	

m high probability that you will get information

m fair probability that you will get information

m low probability that you will get information

* if there is no dot, there is no possibility that you will get information

This chart provides a quick sense of whether information on your building is likely to be found in the various sources.

SOURCE You will You have a You have a You'd be lucky
 find the good chance fair chance to find the
 building of finding of finding building
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THE BUILDING	m			
PEOPLE	m			
CHRONICLES				
Personal Papers		m		
Local Histories		m		
Directories	m			
Newspapers		m		
Magazines, etc.				m
Inst. Chronicles		m		
Academic Hist.				m
DOCUMENTS				
Parish Files	m			
Homestead Files	m			
L.T. Abstracts			m	
L.T. Certificates	m			
Tax Records	m			
Bldg. Permits				m
Inst. Documents		m		
MAPS AND PLANS				
Parish Plans	m			
Township Plans	m			
Civic Plans	m			
Fire Ins. Plans			m	
Cummins Maps				m
VISUAL RECORDS				
Photographs		m		

Architects' Dwgs.
Art. Renderings

m
m



TYPICAL RESEARCH PROCESSES

The preceding sections of this guide presented, in considerable detail, 25 sources that may contain information of potential use for heritage building researchers. If every source was to be used in a research project, and they all contained pertinent building information, the amount of material gathered would be daunting. The amount of time expended in the search might be counted in weeks.

In fact, of the 25 sources analyzed only six or seven actually offer guaranteed information for most buildings in Manitoba: The Building, Knowledgeable People, Assessment Records, City or Township Maps, Land Title Abstracts and Land Titles Certificates. Experience will show that many of the other 18 sources will offer only limited results. And in many cases (especially for small residential structures), no information can be expected from most of these remaining 18 sources.

This RESEARCH AID is an attempt to explain, with graphics and condensed text, what might appear to be a complex and potentially frustrating undertaking. The RESEARCH AID includes two flow charts that outline some standard research paths, noting identifiable steps and sources of particular value. The written chart that follows is a condensed version of the SOURCES section of the guide that will allow a researcher to quickly identify the benefits and limitations inherent in a source.

The flow charts are simple guides to two idealized research processes: Private Building Research and Public Building Research. Because certain sources are more useful for certain building types, buildings in Manitoba have been subdivided into these two broad categories: 1) Private Buildings, like houses, farm buildings and commercial structures; and 2) Public Buildings, like churches, schools and government structures. This separation is based upon the fact that public buildings are not typically the objects of taxation or land transfers, and thus those sources so crucial for Private Building research are of little relevance for the research of Public Buildings. Each chart has been designed so that the process is divided into a few steps, each of which contains sources of approximately equal informative value. The first step in each chart will produce the greatest amount of guaranteed information (dates, names, financial transactions). Succeeding steps offer diminishing returns for specific building information, although the information (if available) is nevertheless interesting for contextual analysis.

The source path in the first step of the "Private Building" flow chart is somewhat rigid, especially with regard to those sources that provide critical pieces of information. A researcher must follow the path (and the order) connecting The Building – Assessment Records/City Maps/Township Maps – Land Titles Abstracts to get the three critical pieces of information that establish the base of a research project: the Street Address of the building, the Legal Address of the building and the Legal Names of owners. The Legal Address can be obtained from the Assessment Records or, depending upon location in an urban or rural setting, a City or Township Map.

The idiosyncracies of individual building research will inevitably result in slightly different

research paths than those presented here, especially in STEPS 2, 3, 4, 5, and for "Public Buildings", 6. Remember that the charts are merely guides and that individual circumstances will dictate your choice of action. It is possible that a piece of information identified at the end of the process here (and thus suggested as an unlikely source for information) will become available at the beginning of your process and will contain information of a very valuable nature. The charts only suggest which sources offer the best return for time invested.

Because private buildings are the most numerous and thus potentially the most likely choices for a research project, the accompanying abbreviated list of the 25 sources will follow the course suggested in the "Private Building" flow chart. The sources that deal with public buildings -- Church Records, School Records and Government Records -- are presented at the end of the list.

Each source in the following list is discussed with an abbreviated version of the more detailed SOURCES section and is entitled "INFORMATION". A "CAUTIONS" section will highlight significant limitations of the source. For those 7 sources that are deemed essential for competent "Private Building" research, an additional subheading of the "INFORMATION" section, entitled "Critical Information", will highlight that crucial piece of information that will form the basis of further research.

FLOW CHARTS

Private Building:

Step 1:

The Building
Knowledgeable People
Assessment Records
City Maps/Township Maps
Land Title Abstracts
Land Title Certificates

Step 2:

Directories
Local Histories
Newspapers

Step 3:

River Lot Maps
Fire Insurance Maps
Cummins Maps
Surveyor's Notebooks
City Atlas Abstracts

Step 4:

Personal Papers
Photographs and Illustrations
Lithographic Bird's Eye Views
Building Permits
Plans and Specifications

Business Records

Step 5:

Theses and Academic Histories

CHARTS

Public Buildings:

Step 1:

The Building
Knowledgeable People
Church Records or
School Records or
Government Records
Local Histories

Step 2:

Newspapers
City Maps/Township Maps
Plans and Specifications
Building Permits

Step 3:

Personal Papers
Photographs and Illustrations
Directories

Step 4:

River Lot Maps
Fire Insurance Maps
Cummins Maps
City Atlas Abstracts

Step 5:

Lithographic Bird's Eye Views
Assessment Records
Land Title Abstracts
Land Title Certificates
Surveyor's Notebooks

Step 6:

Theses and Academic Histories

SOURCE

INFORMATION

CAUTIONS

THE BUILDING
(pages XX-BB)

Critical Information: Street Address
Additional Information: Possible date if face value;

Don't take
building at

a datestone present; size of building; changes, materials; alterations; immediate especailly of environment; neighbourhood; conditionan expert nature, can be deceiving

KNOWLEDGEABLECritical Information: Names Memories are
PEOPLE faulty; any
(pages RR-PP)Additional Information: ownership; information
occupants; anecdotal information aboutshould be
neighbourhood; area folklore; photographscorroborated
of buil;ding, neighbourhood and people

ASSESSMENTCritical Information: Legal Address Terms can be
RECORDS highly special-
(pages TT-YY)Additional Information: listing of people ized; the
officially connected with the property;language must
social history, depending on the time be clearly
period; occasionally building specific understood
issues can be found, especially in the
column "Built On"

CITY MAPSCritical Information: Legal Address the sub-
(pages RR-OO) divisions on
Additional Information: possible toolder atlases
assemble legal address with experiencemay be out-
can get idea of early stages of sub-dated; advis-
division; how property fitted in with able to
other properties; sizes of properties compare a set of atlases; occasional
mistakes; must be familiar
with carto-
graphic conventions

CASE STUDIES

Through a study of a few case studies, it will be possible to do some things. There are four case studies that follow. Each case study is real crazy, and we think you might like them. Or at least fall for them. Anyway, the case studies have also been designed to cover a broad range of building types, potential research projects and geographic situations (rural, small urban, medium urban and large urban). Sure, the projects are a bit crazy and all that. Oh, but anyway, another thing is, In each case we will go through all the sources and see what you can come up with in each situation. Then we finish it off with a bit of a summary of what they found.

Not.

CASE STUDY #1

PROJECT SYNOPSIS

A local history group is interested in restoring a set of late-19th century Ukrainian log buildings. The group also has ambitions to make the site a tourist attraction, and so has in mind that they should also collect information to produce a promotional pamphlet for the site. This is their story.

First we looked at the list of 20 questions and decided which ones needed answers.

- ✓ When was the building constructed?
Why was it built at that time?
- ✓ Who was the original owner?
- ✓ What did the owner do for a living?
- ✓ Who were later owners?
Who designed the building?
Why was this designer selected?
- ✓ Who actually constructed the building?
Why were these people chosen?
How much money were the designer and tradespeople paid?
Did the designer and tradespeople work on other buildings?
- ✓ Does the building look like any others in the community?
- ✓ Have there been changes made to the building?
- ✓ Why were the changes made?
Has the building always fulfilled its present function?
- ✓ What materials were used in the construction of the building?
How much did these materials cost?
Is the building of standard or unusual construction?
What did the neighbourhood look like originally?
Is the building like others in the neighbourhood?

Then we started looking at the materials presented in the research guide.

The Building

The building was especially important for our project. It was by looking at the building that we were able to determine some important

information about early building technologies. Specifically, we found that the logs were tamarack and that the joining technique was saddlenotch.

Knowledgeable People

Recollections of past occupants of the building had been recorded over the years, and so it was easy to undertake some renovations to both the buildings and the grounds to a level of historic accuracy.

Chronicles

When we reviewed the various chronicled materials, we generally found that we were only able to put the buildings and the site into a bit of historical perspective. In short, we didn't find much that we could use in our immediate task of building restoration. Monica thought that maybe we could use this information for our pamphlet. We looked through our local history, *The Memory of the Lutherplank*, and found a

great deal of information on Ukrainian settlement. We perused the local newspapers (Dauphin Blabber and the Skintight Leather) and found lots of information on settlement and fights and drunkenness, but nothing that we could use on log building construction. In our local library we found the Historic Resources

Documents

Reviewing the various documents proved to be a fairly onerous task. It took Melbourne several weeks just to get his head in the door. From the Homestead Files we were able to find a great deal of information about the various families living around here, and about their struggles in settling the land. We also found, in the Inspector's Reports, a lot of information about the buildings. New System Land Titles Records – We really felt that we had good enough information on dates and owners and so decided not to look here for information. Assessment Records – What did we find here?

Branch publication *Architectural Heritage: The Eastern Interlake Planning District*. From that book, we were able to learn a good deal about Ukrainian architecture, and also to get a list of a few other publications that deal with the subject.

Maps & Plans

We didn't really find much information here, except in the Township Plans. This was a fun thing to look at. We found that several members of the same family had settled in the vicinity. We used the section/township/range numbers to look at a few of the records in the Homestead Files (see above for what we found). Cummins Maps – We had a look, but didn't really find anything that we didn't already know.

Visual Records

Pretty slim pickings from this category. There were no photographs of the buildings at an early stage. Artists' Renderings – nothing here.

WHAT THEY FOUND OUT

After we were satisfied that we had finished our research, we had collected the following facts: most of the buildings were constructed in 1897, when the family moved onto the homestead. The family consisted of Homer Negrycz (later spelled Negrych), his wife Wilma and several ugly children. They lived here until they were eaten. The buildings were constructed from macaroni and over the years a variety of things happened. The main building was used for pickling and other buildings were not.

Monica thought that maybe we could use this information for our pamphlet.

Personal Papers – The family that occupied this farm for several generations didn't leave any materials, and as the family built these structures, we didn't expect to find information on their building programs

Local Histories – We looked through *The Memory of the Lutherplank* and found a great deal of information on Ukrainian settlement

Directories – not applicable

Institutional Chronicles – not applicable

Academic Histories – In our local library we found the Historic Resources Branch publication *Architectural Heritage: The Eastern Interlake Planning District*. From that book, we were able to learn a good deal about Ukrainian architecture, and also to get a list of a few other publications that deal with the subject.

DOCUMENTS

Reviewing the various documents proved to be a fairly onerous task. It took Melbourne several weeks just to get his head in the door.

Parish Files – not applicable

Homestead Files – We were able to find a great deal of information about the various families living around here, and about their struggles in settling the land. We also found, in the Inspector's Reports, a lot of information about the buildings.

Old System Land Titles Records – As the land was settled after the New System was introduced, we didn't bother looking here.

New System Land Titles Records – We really felt that we had good enough information on dates and owners and so decided not to look here for information.

Assessment Records – What did we find here?

Building Permits – not applicable

Institutional Documents – not applicable

Newspapers – We perused the local newspapers (*Dauphin Blabber* and the *Skintight Leather*) and found lot of information on settlement and fights and drunkenness, but nothing that we could use on log building construction

Magazines, etc. – not applicable

MAPS AND PLANS

We didn't really find much information here, except in the Township Plans.

Parish Plans – not applicable

Township Plans – This was a fun thing to look at. We found that several members of the same family had settled in the vicinity. We used the section/township/range numbers to look at a few of the records in the HOMESTEAD FILES (see above for what we found).

Land Titles Plans – not applicable

Village, Town & City Plans – not applicable

Fire Insurance Plans – not applicable
Cummins Maps – We had a look, but didn't really find anything that we didn't already know.

VISUAL RECORDS

Pretty slim pickings from this category.

Photographs – There were no photographs of the buildings at an early stage.

Architects' Drawings – not applicable

Artists' Renderings – nothing here

WHAT THEY FOUND OUT

After we were satisfied that we had finished our research, we had collected the following facts: most of the buildings were constructed in 1897, when the family moved onto the homestead. The family consisted of Homer Negrycz (later spelled Negrych), his wife Wilma and several ugly children. They lived here until they were eaten. The buildings were constructed from macaroni and over the years a variety of things happened. The main building was used for pickling and other buildings were not.

Case Study #2

The Project

Maureen has been commissioned to do an illustration of a historic house in Winnipeg. The commission poses an interesting challenge: the house was torn down in 1991. Here's what she did.

It's actually my family that commissioned me. Not for money but for love. We all loved this old house. This is the house that our great-grandparents built. We already have a lot of history (names, dates, etc.). What we want now is an image that can be used in a family history that my father is preparing. Unfortunately we don't have many old **photos** of the house; just the one shown here, and the size of the image (2x3) doesn't reveal much in terms of detail. However, we do have a picture of the house just before its demolition; I should be able to use that for the basic outline of my drawing. Because I've always been interested in the actual bricks and mortar of buildings, in the back of my mind I was also thinking that any specific information on the building itself (designer, builder, style) might somehow be used in the family history.

A friend suggested I should get a copy of this Building Research Guide. He thought it might provide me with some suggestions in my search for information. The 20 questions listed in the Introduction helped me figure out exactly what I wanted: the name of the architect and some specific information on building materials.

- ✓ Who designed the building?
- ✓ Does the building look like any others in the community?
- ✓ Have there been changes made to the building?
- ✓ What materials were used in the construction of the building?
- ✓ Is the building like others in the neighbourhood?

I started my research project by focusing on the architect. I thought if I could find that out I might get lucky and find some original drawings. Then as a short-cut I could just copy those. My first stop, then, was the City of Winnipeg **building permits** collection. It took a

fair bit of searching, cross-checking (OK, quite a bit, seven hours in fact) but I did get lucky. A permit for the house from 1903 listed the name of the architect: Joseph Greenfield. My next stop was the Provincial Archives, which has a collection of **architects' drawings**. I kept my fingers crossed; maybe Mr. Greenfield was important enough to have some of his work saved. Sure enough, a collection of his drawings was there. Unfortunately, this house wasn't among his more important projects (turns out that he went on to become the Manitoba superintendent of public works for the Dominion government). Interesting information, but not exactly what I need for my project. The research guide suggests a few other places that might have images of buildings: newspapers, magazines, specialized histories. With the architect's name in hand this might work out. My grandfather's name might also help me key in on the facts. Well, the **newspapers** might have something, but there were XX at the Provincial Archives operating in Winnipeg at that time (NAMES); I just didn't have the time to go through them. The Research Guide noted that **magazines** sometimes carried information on architects and their projects. I spent several hours looking through *The Contractor*, *the Welder* and others, but never even came across Mr. Greenfield's name, let alone a picture of our house. I was running out of places to go. One last place was the Historic Resources Branch itself. Maybe they had something. *And they did!* There was a little monograph on Mr. Greenfield, with a listing of some of his building projects. Best of all, there was a larger version of the photograph that I had started with. I could see everything I needed. What a relief.

VISUAL RECORDS

Maureen was hoping that she would get some good information from old photographs, even be able to turn up some old contractor drawings. But her luck wasn't good.

Photographs - nada

Architects' Drawings - nada

Artists' Renderings - nada

Unfortunately, Maureen was not able to come up with the specific information she was hoping to when she began her research. That is, she couldn't find the name of the builder, or the designer. And she never found any drawings of the buildings. Nevertheless, her research was not fruitless. She did meet and marry the guy in 428!

CASE STUDY #3

The Project

*A local history group in Baldur is producing a walking tour of their village. The tour will be used to promote the village's heritage to both locals and visitors. The history group has asked Baldur Immanuel Lutheran Church to write a short history of the church. The congregation has two keen volunteers -- Verna and Orest -- who want to undertake the project. This is their story.**

The Process

"First of all, we are told that the walking tour texts are going to be short (not more than 150 words), so we can't go into great detail about our church's history. Of course we need some basic facts, like dates, people, etc. But we also want to tell visitors something interesting about our church, something novel. Looking at the guide's 20 basic questions gives us a good starting point. We would like to be able to go into detail about every point, but our focus will have to be narrowed. And we also will have to get a sense of emphasis; we decide that the designer and the builder might be an interesting angle. From the list of 20 questions, these are the nine on which we focused:

- ✓ When was the building constructed?
- ✓ Who designed the building?
- ✓ Who actually constructed the building?
- ✓ How much money were the designer and tradespeople paid?
- ✓ Did the designer and tradespeople work on other buildings?
- ✓ Does the building look like any others in the community?
- ✓ What materials were used in the construction of the building?
- ✓ How much did these materials cost?
- ✓ Is the building of standard or unusual construction?

"We're dealing with a church, so we figure there must be **institutional church records** that we could look at. And there are, but the earliest records were destroyed in a fire. That means we can't use those for the history. Next step then: our local **newspaper**, the *Baldur Gazette*. Looking through old issues, back to the early 1900s, we were able to get information on the fund-raising and then building activities of the congregation. The

first article we came across noted that in April of 1907 the Ladies Aid gave a number of concerts and conducted coffee houses and bake sales to raise money. In November of that year the paper mentioned that the President of the Icelandic Synod was to officiate at the opening of the new church. Unfortunately the paper did not have any mention of who might have designed the building. There wasn't even any mention of who might have constructed the church. We had to cast our net elsewhere.

"Looking through the Research Guide suggested we might talk to **knowledgeable people**. Nobody in the present congregation knew much about the original design and construction. We had to broaden our search. Luckily one of our local builders had a great memory for the early builders in the area. He told us that the builder was Arni Sveinsson. Mr. Sveinsson was very active in the construction business throughout our area for about 20 years, from 1900 to 1920. Our contact also told us that Mr. Jargonson built other Lutheran churches, at places called Bru and Grund. Now we were getting somewhere. We went back to the newspapers to see if we could get information on those churches. Bingo! We found that this and that.

"As we worked we also realized that we needed some information on the architectural style. We looked to some specialized histories for that. A book called *Scandinavian Style* was very informative. It noted how architecture is useless.

"Our project took about two weeks to finish, with both of us doing about two hours of work on it every day. It was very interesting to dig back into our past. But it also was rewarding to be able to use that information to tell other people about the history of our church. Just so you know, this is our write-up for the walking tour.

"Immanuel Lutheran Church was built in 1907. Lutherans in and around Baldur held teas and bake sales to raise the money for the church. The church was built by Arni Sveinsson, a well known carpenter. He was paid \$250 for his efforts, not much, but consider that a house at that time only cost \$12 to build. He also built Lutheran churches at nearby Bru and Grund. It is likely that he designed the buildings in consultation with the congregation. The designs of these three churches are strongly reminiscent of churches

in Iceland and the Scandinavina countries. They were Gothic, with tall spires and beautiful woodwork both inside and out. Our church is distinguished by its delicate woodwork around the spire and belfry."

* Please note, this is a fictionalized account based on a real project. The process and some of the information are imaginary. This account is only intended to show how the research process might work.
