A STUDY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ABILITY OF THE ARCHIVES DEPARTMENT OF THE HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY TO CARRY OUT DOCUMENT REPAIRS

by

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Abstract

The objective of this thesis was to determine whether the establishment and operation of an archives service by the Hudson’s Bay Company had an effect on the company’s ability to carry out document repairs. Data collection methods included reviews of published material, archival records of the Hudson’s Bay Company, and semi-structured interviews. The study found that the Hudson’s Bay Company’s commitment to operating a modern archives service in accordance with accepted archive administration practices had a substantial effect on its ability to carry out document repairs. The principled approach to repair, as practiced by the Public Record Office, was a major influence. A review of secondary sources placed this development squarely within the context of archival developments in 20th century England. Overall, the thesis findings add to the growing conversation about conservation history in England, in particular archive conservation history as it occurred outside of the Public Record Office in the 20th century, by discussing how some methods of repair that were devised, adopted and extended by the Public Record Office in the 19th and 20th centuries were adopted and applied in the 20th century by a well-established business corporation.
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List of Abbreviations

AM Archives of Manitoba
ARA Archives and Records Association
BRA British Records Association
HBC Hudson’s Bay Company
HBCA Hudson’s Bay Company Archives
HBCA/AM Hudson’s Bay Company Archives division, Archives of Manitoba
HBRs Hudson’s Bay Record Society
HMC Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts
HMSO His/Her Majesty’s Stationery Office
IIC International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works
NRA National Register of Archives
LCC London County Council
LSPGA London School of Printing and Graphic Arts
£ Pound sterling
PRO Public Record Office
RG Record Group
RRS Red River Settlement
SoA Society of Local Archivists (1947-1954); Society of Archivists (1954-2010)
TNA The National Archives
Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Prior to the Hudson’s Bay Company’s recognition of the historical value of its older records in 1919 and efforts to organize the archives in the 1920s to support publication, records from the Hudson’s Bay Company Archives (HBCA) do not appear to have come up as priorities for repair. Simmons observes that mention of document repair in the records of the HBC comes first in the 20th century. By the late 1920s repair had become an important preservation measure for the HBC, yet until 1950, most repairs of material from the HBCA had been carried out by current and former repairers and binders of the Public Record Office (PRO) as the HBC’s Archives Department (est. 1931) did not have the skills, equipment, or personnel in place to be able to carry out such work. This state of affairs began to change in 1950 when the Archives Department sent one of its employees to the PRO and later, the London School of Printing and Graphic Arts (LSPGA), to receive instruction in the principles and practice of archive repair. This training focused on the methods of the PRO, as described in Hilary Jenkinson’s influential *A Manual of Archive Administration*.

The Archives Department sent several of its employees to the LSPGA course over the next 15-20 years; after being trained, these employees carried out repairs and other operations on hundreds of items from the HBCA, in stocked workrooms established and maintained by the Archives Department on HBC premises in London. Such capacity was a supportive element of the HBC’s commitment to operate an archives service. These developments were in line with efforts undertaken by many local records offices and other archives across England in the 20th century. The Archives Department continued to send staff members out for such training until at least
1966, however most repair treatments carried out on HBC records during the period 1965-1974 were carried out off-site by contractors.

1.2 Rationale for the Study
There is a general lack of research on the conservation history of the Archives Department and on conservation history in general. It is important that a study be done on this topic in order to provide missing details for the ongoing conversation about the preservation history of the HBCA and to add to the emerging discussion about conservation history, specifically archive conservation history.

1.3 Research Question
The fundamental question motivating my research is as follows: What is the relationship between the development of the HBC Archives Department and the ability of the Archives Department to carry out document repairs?

1.4 Hypothesis
My contention is that the HBC’s commitment to developing an archives service in accordance with accepted archive administrative principles and practices had a positive effect on the ability of the Archives Department to carry out document repairs.

1.5 Literature Review
This thesis builds primarily upon a 2007 study by Deidre Simmons in which Simmons examines the history of the HBCA from 1670 through 1974 and considers the records in different contexts including British and Canadian archival traditions.³

Simmons’ study is silent about whether the history of the HBCA included the establishment and operation of a repair workshop. This said, the study shows how the HBC looked to the PRO and to Sir Hilary Jenkinson for advice and services related to the repair of damaged records from the
HBC’s historic archives from the 1920s through the 1960s. Simmons’ only reference to the development of the in-house capacity for document repair work occurs when mention is made about how the archivist’s assistant, Frank Batchelor, took a course on document repair and bookbinding at the PRO in 1950 and was responsible for much of the document repair work carried out at the Archives Department in the 1950s and 60s. The study is silent about the details of the repair work carried out at the Archives Department and makes no reference to the ability of the Archives Department to carry out document repairs in the 1970s. This information forms the framework for the current thesis, which attempts to fill in the missing details to provide an expanded view of the history of the HBC’s actions relating to the development of an archives service.

The current study also builds upon Donna Holmes’ 2008 master’s thesis *Old Company Records: the effect of custodial history on the arrangement and description of selected archival collections of business records* which considers how archival practitioners influenced the arrangement and description of the records of four corporations: the Dutch East India Company, the English East India Company, the Royal African Company and the HBC. While Holmes’ thesis does not deal specifically with the proposed topic, it does, as noted by Holmes, provide support for Terry Cook’s premise that archivists are “active shapers rather than passive keepers” and goes on to argue how archivists shaped developments in the noted archives. In the case of developments in the archives of the Royal African Company and the HBC, Holmes writes in detail of the direct influence of Sir Hilary Jenkinson on their arrangement and description, drawing heavily from Simmons’ 2007 study to support her discussion about Jenkinson’s role in the arrangement and description of the HBCA in the early 1930s. Of special relevance to the current thesis is the question posed by Holmes of the part that may have been played by Jenkinson’s text *A Manual of Archive Administration* on the development of other archival functions of the Archives Department, given that the HBC had copies of this text in its possession, the latter detail also
noted in the 2007 study by Simmons. The system used to arrange and describe the HBCA in 1932 and in use for more than 70 years was based on the rules for arrangement and description documented in the *Manual.* The current study attempts to show whether the principles and practices of repair recorded in the *Manual* actually influenced the repair practices of the Archives Department, repair as identified as an element of the “physical defence of archives”\(^6\), one of the primary duties of the archivist, as defined in the *Manual.*

The review of the literature found that relatively little has been written on the subject of the history of development of archive repair sections and repairers in England. Elizabeth Shepherd, in describing the scope of her text, *Archives and Archivists in 20\(^{th}\) Century England* (2009), notes significant gaps in the literature including the archive conservation literature. She states:

The role of departments of manuscripts and archives in the national libraries and museums (such as the British Museum and Bodleian Library) and other specialist national institutions has not been fully examined and needs to be further explored. More work should be done on the development of the HMC and its influence on the [archivist] profession. No historical account of the ‘repair’, conservation and preservation field exists. More fruitful research could be undertaken into the history of the hundreds of individual archives and records management services in England, in particular specialist archives in universities and businesses. There are few accounts of the professional bodies…. There is no comparable history of educational developments in related fields, such as conservation and preservation. New work should be done on the many comparative and influencing factors, for example, to look at the comparative historical development of sister professions (preservation, libraries, museums)….\(^7\)

This thesis attempts to provide an historical account of the repair and conservation history of an English corporation which should add to the necessary body of research encouraged by Shepherd. In addition, this thesis considers other sources that provide a wider historical context for developments in the Archives Department including publications by Cook, Baynes-Cope, Bearman, Ellis, Fowler, Jenkinson, Marwick, Procter, Roper, Shepherd, Smith and Wardle whose works when considered collectively provide details of the historical context, evolution and development of archives, of archival theory and practice, of the archives profession, and of
principles, ethics, and practices in archive repair and archive conservation primarily in 20th century England.

1.6 Methodology

The dependent variable of this study is the ability of the Archives Department to carry out document repair work. The independent variables include the availability of requisite organizational and technical infrastructure and financial resources of the Archives Department, the actions taken by the Archives Department to build the in-house capacity necessary to carry out archive repairs, norms of practice in archives in England for the period under study, the availability of repair and training services in England, and the influence of Sir Hilary Jenkinson and other theorists and practitioners on the development of the Archives Department.

These variables were measured through a qualitative review of scholarly journal articles, monographs, scholarly essays, textbooks, written personal communications, and online publications discovered through use of scholarly electronic database search engines, and through qualitative primary source research, primarily of administrative records of the HBC Archives Department c. 1931-74, and of interview data collected by the author between 2004 and 2007.

1.7 Data Treatment

Data treatment included a two-step critical review of secondary and primary sources for information pertaining to the noted variables. This information was recorded and analyzed to identify patterns and themes in the data.

1.7.1 Step One - Review of Secondary Literature

The first step was to determine the historical context for the period in which the HBC was developing an archive service. The first step of the research was met through a review of secondary sources on the topic by authors with specialized knowledge of the development of the
HBC’s archive service and/or the development of archives and archives conservation profession in England during the period under study.

1.7.2 Step Two - Review of Primary Documentation

The second step was a review of primary documentation created by the HBC Archives Department for evidence of the ability of the Department to carry out archive repairs. The documentation reviewed includes the following sources:

1.7.2.1 Record Group 20 – Series 2 – HBC Archives Department Administrative Subject Files (London) 1931-74.

The subject files of this complete series of records consist primarily of annual reports, correspondence and memoranda relating to the operation of the Archives Department. All files were reviewed for evidence of the ability of the Archives Department to carry out archive repairs.

Files searched included:

1. RG20/2/125-131 – Monthly and Annual Reports, 1950-74
2. RG20/2/154 – Policy – plans to transfer Archives to Canada, 1970-74
3. RG20/2/20 – Archives – Repairs, [1970]-1973
4. RG20/2/29 – Bookbinding and repairs, 1957-74
5. RG20/2/30 – Bookbinding and repairs, 1931-57
6. RG20/2/31 – Bookbinding and repairs – general correspondence, 1937-57
7. RG20/2/32 – Bookbinding and repairs – orders for material, 1946-55
8. RG20/2/175 – Stock, samples, Repair Room, [1965]-1974
9. RG20/2/180 – Bookbinding and repairs – supplies, 1957-74
1.7.2.2 HBCA/AM, unprocessed RG 20, H2-203-007, card index record of binding and repairs, January 1950 – January 2000.

This data set includes a complete and homogenous population of historic records documenting repairs carried out on HBCA material during the period 1950-1974 and was reviewed for evidence of the ability of the Archives Department to carry out archive repairs during that time period.

1.7.2.3 Interview data

Interview data recorded by Robert Ridgen between 2004 and 2007 during interviews with former HBCA Keeper, Shirlee A. Smith about the repair work completed c. 1931-74 were reviewed to gather information about the Archives Department’s document repair capacity and the effect of Sir Hilary Jenkinson and other theorists and practitioners on its development. Interview data were obtained via email and telephone conversations.

1.8 Summary of Chapters

The next chapter reviews how archive repair sections and repairers in England developed, from the establishment of the PRO Act in 1838 through to the physical transfer of the HBCA to Winnipeg in 1974. It examines the legislative and theoretical context, assesses how archive repair operations developed in government and other archives, and explores the effect of educators, central government archive services, professional archives societies, and training on the development of repairers. This chapter provides historical context for the activities of the Archives Department discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3 examines the findings of the review of primary source documentation for evidence about the development of the Archives Department’s capacity for in-house document repairs from
the 1920s to the early 1970s. It analyses how this capacity developed and discusses the effect of
educators, central government archive services, the HBC’s commitment to developing a
professional archives service, and formal training in principled document repair on the
development of in-house archive repair skills. This chapter provides information which, seen
against the context identified in the previous chapter, allows for discussion in Chapter 4 of the
relationship between the HBC’s commitment to developing an archives service and the ability of
the Archives Department to carry out document repairs c. 1931-1974.

The final chapter discusses findings of the previous two chapters and provides conclusions about
the impact of the development of a professional archives service on the ability of the HBC
Archives Department to carry out archive repairs c. 1931-1974. In closing, the final chapter
provides recommendations for further research.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction
This chapter reviews the literature for information about how archive repair sections and repairers in England developed from the time of the establishment of the PRO in 1838 through to the time of the transfer of the HBCA to Canada in 1974. Following aspects of Elizabeth Shepherd’s approach to understanding how archives and an archives profession developed in 20th century England, the study reviews how archive repair sections developed in central, local government, and private archives, and explores how formal societies, education and training influenced the growth of the conservation profession. This chapter provides historical context for the activities of the Archives Department discussed in Chapter 3.

2.2 Evolution of Archives in England
The history of the keeping of the public records in Britain from the time of the Norman Conquest until about the mid-19th century is a history of great accumulations of records, non-centralized storage sometimes in damp, insecure buildings, and the survival of masses of records. Tom Nesmith explained that this time period was a time when the core archival functions (acquisition, appraisal, arrangement and description, preservation, reference, public programming) as they are understood today had not yet been developed, and when preservation for records was marked not by the use of repair or treatment, but by the significant use of architecture. Simmons contends that in Britain “[r]ecords management and archival science as independent subjects were really only recognized in the twentieth century.”

A large part of the public records at that time were legal and court records and for more than 300 years from the reign of Elizabeth I they were in the care of keepers who were caught up in the
day-to-day administration of the courts. Wernham describes these keepers further and their recognition of the value of the records in their care with the following statement:

For officials like these, care of the archives could at best be only a secondary consideration. For them, the value of their records would lie chiefly in their usefulness for reference in the current business or in the fees they yielded from searchers…. mostly litigants or their attorneys.

Exceptional record keepers included the likes of Arthur Agarde, who in the 16th century drew up inventories of Exchequer treasury records in his care and listed fire, water, rats and mice, misplacing and ‘plain taking of them away’ as the fivefold hurts to records. Wernham sums up the preservation efforts undertaken for the public records in the 16th and 17th centuries as “oases of care in the desert of neglect.”

By 1800 public records were housed in 60 different buildings in London and Westminster including the Tower of London, Somerset House, Carlton Ride and the Chapter House of Westminster Abbey. In 1799 a Committee was struck to look into the status of the public records and surveyed hundreds of repositories in England, Wales and Scotland. Among its recommendations was a proposal for a Royal Commission, which evolved into six commissions (the Record Commission) between 1800 and 1837 tasked with looking into ways to reform the central government record-keeping system. A Select Committee report in 1836 identified the fact that the records were ‘deposited in different and widely scattered buildings’ as a major issue and recommended a single repository for the central government records including the records held by the State Paper Office.

As a result, the government proclaimed the PRO Act 1838, the first UK legislation to make provision for records. Under the 1838 Act, a Keeper (the Master of the Rolls) was authorized to control public access to records and to establish fees for their consultation. The position was
also required to nominate a Deputy Keeper as Chief Record Keeper. Additional powers of the Master of the Rolls included the ability to make orders “for cleaning, repairing, preserving and arranging all the Public Records under his Charge and Superintendence ....”

The PRO Act 1838 established the PRO, one of the first national archives in the world. It was established as a non-ministerial Department and in 1841 it consisted of nine storehouses including Rolls House. A purpose-built PRO building complete with administrative offices, research rooms and storage vaults was built on the grounds of the Rolls Estate in 1852, and by 1870, it contained all of the different divisions of the PRO along with the State Paper Office, and the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts (HMC). Various expansions were added to the PRO building until 1900 with a second building opened at Kew in 1977.

The PRO Act 1838 allowed provision initially for court and legal records, however an Order-in-Council in 1852 expanded the scope to include all public records, this to legalize the PRO’s practice since 1838 of accepting older records from government departments. The PRO Act 1877 created a system whereby current administrative records of the central government could be transferred to the PRO. Today the Public Records are acquired, preserved and made accessible under the provisions of the PRO Act 1958, the Public Records (Scotland) Act 1937, the Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923, and the Government of Wales Act 1998. The following description summarizes the effectiveness of records legislation in place in England by the early 21st century:

Legislative provision for central government records is fairly strong, but that for other public authorities (including local government and universities) is weak. Business and private archives have little statutory protection. Most legislation is

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1 In 2003 the PRO and the HMC were combined to form The National Archives of England, Wales and the UK, The (TNA).
enabling not mandatory and, generally, legislation confirmed existing provision rather than driving future expansion.30

Churches, estates, local records authoritiesii, businesses and other entities in England have also accumulated vast collections of records. Simmons explains how such large accumulations of records have survived in Britain:

The Public Record Office Act in 1838 focused on the public record, leaving considerable numbers of valuable religious, secular, and business records in private hands, at the mercy of time and the environment. Other records survived simply because no one bothered to destroy them. Jenkinson has noted ‘as for the older documents accumulated by Companies in their own keeping, preservation has been … a matter of chance while the Companies survived’.31

In the 19th century government support for preservation of private archives was provided to a certain extent by the action of national libraries which collected and preserved private records and by the HMC after 1869 which produced inventories of family and estate papers of “enormous quantity, age, and historical significance.”32 Shepherd contends that “[s]pecialist and business archives did not really emerge until the 1960s.”33 Haunton explains how a network of county archives expanded between 1945 and 1959 as a result of the work of the National Register of Archives (NRA) and county record committees and how by the mid-1960s almost every county in England and Wales had established a county record office.34 Local record offices in England developed as a result of “[i]ndividual enthusiasms and local vagaries of politics and funding, rather than central government leadership or legislative legitimacy…”35 In general, archives in 19th

ii For a typology of five distinct models of local records office see Margaret Procter & Elizabeth Shepherd (2013) Writing the record office, Archives and Records: The Journal of the Archives and Records Association, 34:1, 1-8, DOI: 10.1080/23257962.2013.799462. To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/23257962.2013.799462.
and 20th century England did not engage with the business of government and in consequence their needs were not supported by legislation.36

Other important influences in the history of the evolution of English archives include the idea of the public institution which arose as a result of the French Revolution, the rise of interest in the historical information contained in archives and in historical publication beginning in the mid-19th century, the adoption of ideas about archive administration which the British archival theorist Hilary Jenkinson introduced to Britain in the early 20th century, the emergence of an English archives profession in the 1930s, and the work of archives-related societies, professional associations and university and training programs in England in the 20th and 21st centuries.

2.3 Evolution of the Principled Approach to Document Repair (1838-1952)

The development of library and archival conservation in Western Europe and the United States from the mid-19th century through the early 20th century is characterized by two separate traditions: the library tradition, which focuses on keeping published materials in circulation for as long as possible prior to discarding them, and the archives tradition, which deals with unique and original materials of archival value and acts to keep them indefinitely.37 The origins of the archives tradition in conservation are obscure as it was only in the late 19th century when large institutions with collections of cultural or monetary value began to establish in-house repair sections that repairs began to be regularly documented.38

Bearman contends that archive and library repair and conservation principles and ethics originated from a philosophy applied to the care of the public records of England and Wales and explains how the repair policies of Sir Henry Cole—applied while Cole was an assistant keeper at the PRO’s Carlton Ride storehouse c.1841-51—were especially influential.39 Bearman also explains how Cole—who was also responsible for repairs at the repository—ensured that “no
process of repair would in any way compromise the integrity of the archives as legal
documents”40 and how under Cole’s direction, great care was taken to safeguard all textual,
aesthetic and surviving structural elements of records being treated.41

Cole’s involvement with the Record Commission that oversaw the rebinding of a number of
important medieval volumes, including Domesday Book in 1819, and the removal and retention
of their undecorated covers as “historic relics in their own right”42 may have influenced his
approach to the repair and preservation of records.43 Bearman explains that “[t]his custom of
saving old, undecorated covers is in marked contrast to the common nineteenth century
bookbinding trade habit of preserving only the decorated parts of old bindings and inlaying them
into new covers.”44

Cole’s policies for the repair of damaged records were passed down to and refined by his
successors including Hilary Jenkinson, the latter of who documented them in A Manual of
Archive Administration, first published in 1922, and Roger Ellis, whose principles appear in the
well-known paper, The Principles of Archive Repair, published in 1951.45

Jenkinson’s Manual defined principles and procedures for archive work and was greatly
influenced by the contributions to archival science made by several European writers and by
several of Jenkinson’s colleagues in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.46 The publication of the
1937 edition coincided with the beginnings of the British archivist profession and was very
influential, to the extent that it kept British archival theory from advancing for many years.47
Procter, commenting on the status of the Manual in 2008 points to and agrees with Roger Ellis’
commentary in the introduction to the 1965 re-issue of the second edition of the Manual about
how Jenkinson’s advice on management practices are dated, but that,
…the statements of principle contained in the *Manual* have remained valid, and Jenkinson’s definition of Archives, and his exposition of the concept of custody and of the duties of the Archivist, have remained fundamental to archive thought in the English-speaking countries.\(^{48}\)

On the issue of the status of Jenkinson’s advice on and approach to repair, Ellis, in the introduction to the 1966 re-issue of the second edition of the *Manual*, states:

> Scientific research into the problems raised by the preservation and repair of archives has been developed to a remarkable degree, and indeed it is in this field that the most striking progress has been made. Jenkinson dealt with it in the *Manual*, according to the state of knowledge at the time, and to the 1937 edition he added a special Appendix on ‘Some Enemies of Manuscripts’ which treated in practical fashion the pests of bacteria, insects and mould growths; but no mention was made of the decay through chemical action which is now recognized as so widespread and so destructive, and the cause of the dreaded ‘brown decay’ was still unknown. The processes of document repair described in the *Manual* are those which were perfected before the development of plastic in recent years made possible the ‘lamination’ processes introduced by Mr. W.J. Barrow and extended and improved by Mr. W.H. Langwell…. Even in his own time Jenkinson was known to be cautious in his attitude to the use of ‘chemicals’ in the preservation and restoration of archives, and the modern Archivist who wishes to study the use of Santobrite, Topane, or Panacide, or needs guidance over the wide range of insecticides now offered, will not find the answers in the *Manual*…\(^{49}\)

Jenkinson’s repair principles are documented in the *Manual* under the ‘Physical Defence of Archives’, one of two primary responsibilities defined in the *Manual* for the archivist, the other being the ‘Moral Defence of Archives’ with its emphasis on the importance of maintaining the character of evidence in context especially via provenance and original order.\(^{50}\) The primary focus of the ‘Repairs’ section is on principles and rules for the work, as well as materials of repair and methods used for the repair of parchment and paper, bindings, and seals. Emphasis is placed on the importance of ensuring that the repair methods and materials used would in no way decrease the value of the records as evidence, and on how the repairer could meet this requirement by endeavouring “to put nothing into his Archives which was not there when he
received it and to take away nothing which was." The Manual provides two rules to assist the repairer in meeting this principle: 1) Where possible, replace missing material with like material and 2) Document all repairs with a signed, dated note so that it is clear that a repair has been done. Jenkinson discusses a range of materials and techniques for the physical treatment of paper, parchment, inks, bindings, and wax seals and urges the archivist to ensure that “quality as well as the character” of the repairing material selected matched the physical properties of the original to ensure that both new and old material respond the same way to environmental conditions.

In September 1951, Roger Ellis read his paper at the opening of a course on record and document repair at the London School of Printing and Graphic Arts. Ellis’ principles of archives repair as defined in The Principles of Archive Repair are summarized by Baynes-Cope into five basic rules:

1. No process of repair shall be allowed to remove, diminish or obscure in any way the document’s value as evidence;
2. No process of repair shall be used which would in any way damage or weaken the materials of which the document is made;
3. The process of repair should not interfere in any way with any subsequent treatment that the document may need;
4. The process of repair should not diminish in any way the aesthetic appearance of non-archival material;
5. No process of repair should be irreversible.

Baynes-Cope explains that Ellis’ publication slightly pre-dates the “Chemical Revolution” which began when W.J. Barrow’s de-acidification process “came to fruition.” Baynes-Cope explains how de-acidification was the first true conservation treatment process and notes that after its adoption, “[one] began to think not of ‘processes of repair’ but of ‘conservation’ ….” Baynes-Cope contends that the two processes were distinctly different from one another as “Conservation has involved, from its very beginning, processes which were not reversible.” Baynes-Cope notes that conservation ethics which developed as the field developed were based
on the principles of archive repair which evolved at the PRO. Roper summarizes the history of the development of archive repair at the PRO and its influence on the British archival community in the 20th century with the following statement:

[The] craftsmanship and techniques [of the repairers and binders] were refined and extended with experience, and a framework of principles was constructed, initially by Jenkinson himself in the inter-war period and since the Second World War by Roger Ellis and his successors as heads of what is now the Conservation Department. These principles and practices were diffused through the profession as local and other record offices developed their own conservation services from the 1940s onwards, partly through poaching [PRO] staff, partly through the provision of training in the PRO (later formalized through the Society of Archivists Training Scheme for Archives Conservators until [the PRO] had to drop out in 1979-1981) and partly through the [SoA’s] Technical Committee (and to a lesser extent its Conservation Group).

2.4 The PRO Repairing Department c. 1838-1952

Repair and binding operations at the PRO began in 1838 though not on an extensive scale. Regardless, it is reasonable to expect that the damage in the archives at that time was extensive, for as noted by Jenkinson,

[s]peaking generally we may say that in a large repository the amount of repairing work to be done will be so great that our object must be, while sacrificing no element of efficiency and safety, to secure the greatest possible economy and speed in working.

Initially, the repairers belonged to a general support staff grade and in consequence, in addition to repair work, it was not uncommon for them to be assigned other duties. The Stationery Office (HSMO) provided the PRO with binders from 1838 until about 1950 when the practice was abandoned. By about 1895, the repairers had become a regularized section, but from that point until about 1950 they embodied a common grade with repository and search room workers and in consequence, it was not uncommon for repairers to be re-assigned or promoted to other sections.
within the grade.66 Hilary Jenkinson re-organized the section in 1922 when he was an Assistant Keeper, in charge of repairs.67 Smith reports that in 1935, the PRO’s repairing section had a staff of about twenty men, “the most extensive establishment of its kind in Europe.”68 Between the wars Jenkinson instituted his repairing principles and extended the duties of the section to include wax seal repairs.69 Smith reports that in the mid-1930s all of the repairers were generalists but that some of the men had developed extra skill in operations such as wax seal repair, the laying out of outsize parchment documents, and the abrasion of repair parchment.70 Smith contends that although there were many differences in the approach taken to repairs at the PRO in the mid-1930s, the repair techniques employed were “kept uniform.”71 iii Repairer duties between 1922 and about 1950 included the preparation of records for storage although where practicable, this task was given to less skilled workers.72 Repairer responsibilities between WWI and WWII were expanded to include photography and reprography services, but these requirements ended about 1950 when the common grade of worker of which the repairers formed a part was divided into three distinct groups, one of which was ‘Binding and Repairs’.73 By 1952 repairs at the PRO were being carried out by twenty-six men including a “Superintendent of Binding and Repairs (‘Foreman Craftsman’), a Foreman, and a Deputy Foreman”.74 Jenkinson notes that the only bookbinder on the staff of the repairing section by about 1950 was the Superintendent.75 Roper explains that “more recently”76 the increased role of repairers caused them to be re-classified as conservation officers, a professional grade with equivalency to that of curatorial officers.77

In 1935, the repairing section was set up in a number of converted strongrooms (record storage vaults) including “three large rooms for straight repair work, one room for seal repair and

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molding, and a bindery, not to mention storerooms for supplies, etc.”. Regular registration of all repair projects began in 1882 with the keeping of a repairs register, and beginning in 1922, under Jenkinson, an index to this register was kept, which, together with a labelling system, facilitated the tracking of the repair history of records. All repairs carried out from 1922 onward were carried out under the supervision of an Assistant Keeper, whose responsibilities included approving treatment measures, assigning priorities for the treatments, determining reproduction requirements, and administering policy.

The PRO had a history of devising, adopting and refining repair techniques. Jenkinson mentions how the use the use of silk gauze was one of many “borrowings” from foreign colleagues. Wardle explains how the methods of repair employed at the PRO by 1960 were the methods that the PRO had used since the early 20th century:

The Repairing Department at the Public Record Office remains faithful to what are known as traditional methods of document repair—that is, parchment documents are repaired with parchment … paper documents with paper; when the written surface must be strengthened, silk gauze is applied; only wheat flour paste is used as an adhesive, and the size applied to paper documents is gelatine size made from parchment waste. The basic methods now employed were introduced about 50 years ago, and it is satisfactory to be able to record that the experience has justified them; they have stood the test of time. Lamination processes using sheets of cellulose acetate or other plastic material have not so far been introduced, largely from caution and a desire to see the long-term effects of such processes before adopting them. It is felt that there is a possibility that the complex synthetic materials used may in time undergo changes which could frustrate the purposes of the repair.

This general adherence to traditional methods, however, does not imply a rejection of any change or innovation; there is, in fact, a continual search for improvements in method and for

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Ellis, in his introduction to the 1966 re-issue of the 1937 edition of the *Manual* (the second edition) states that “[r]epairers and craftsmen can receive training in document repair at a special course instituted by the London County Council, where the instruction follows the practice of the Public Record Office as set forth in the *Manual* …”[^84] This information appears to suggest that by the mid-1960s the principles and methods of repair as described in the *Manual* (1937) were still very much the practice of the PRO. The use of newer processes such as de-acidification and cellulose acetate foil lamination appear not to have been adopted by the PRO at this time, as Marwick describes how officials in charge of repairs at the PRO—from Jenkinson in the 1940s to Wardle in the early 1960s—had reservations about the use of such processes in the preservation of documents.[^85] Jenkinson himself explains his cautious attitude about the use of chemical treatments:

> We should also, while counselling the Archivist to make the fullest use of any advice that the Chemist can give him, warn him in regard to modern materials that no laboratory test can tell us what the effect of time will be on materials and that the unique character of Archives make unjustifiable anything in the nature of experiment in regard to them except where all known methods of treatment have failed (for instance) to arrest decay.[^86]

Although Jenkinson advised such caution, the PRO nevertheless relied on the advice of scientists in the 20th century; between 1922 and 1952 it sought preservation advice frequently from various institutions and individuals including the Imperial College of Science—regarding mould control; the Laboratory of the Government Chemist or the British Museum Laboratory—regarding the chemistry of materials (e.g. medieval sealing waxes); the Research Department of the Natural History Museum or the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research—regarding insect pest identification and control methods; the Hendon Police Laboratory—regarding the salvage of...
burned documents; the Stationery Office—regarding a repair paper specification; and, “the proceedings of our colleagues in American Archives”.  

In terms of productivity, indications are that from 1922 through 1949, the Repair Department carried out repairs on 66,000 documents—many of which had multiple paper leaves or membranes of parchment—and 21,000 seals, while from 1949 to 1952 over 20,000 individual membranes of parchment and paper leaves were repaired “without counting such other operations as Binding, Filing, Cleaning and Flattening, Seal Repair and Moulding of Seals”.  

Processes commonly used at the PRO during this time period at this time included framing, backing/filling, a method for hardening the moulds of seals, and a method for securing sheets to volumes by use of doubled, doubled guards.  

Rag paper (made to specification for the PRO by HSMO), parchment, parchment size, flour paste, linen backing material, and transparent silk gauze was also employed, the use of which “was based many years ago on procedure at the Vatican ….”  

### 2.5 How the PRO, Local Record Offices and Professional Bodies Shaped Archive Repair Sections and Repairers in English Archives c. 1920s-1960s

Starting in 1922, the PRO allowed its repairers to take on private work, officially, but after hours, for organizations outside of the PRO including county record offices, private businesses, colleges, schools, hospitals, religious organizations, and individuals.  

This policy was afforded for its “obvious public utility” and to provide an opportunity for the repairers to gain additional experience. Local bodies interested in setting up their own repair departments could also arrange for a representative to receive the necessary basic instruction at the Public Record Office. Many organizations accessed this service including Hoare’s Bank, the Society for the Propagation of the Bible – Church of England, the London Guildhall Library, Suffolk Record
Office, and Cambridge University Library, and the HBC in London. The following extract from Smith’s report describes how the HBC benefited from the PRO’s advisory services between the late 1920s and the early 1930s:

The Hudson’s Bay Company in London has recently become cognizant of the value of its original records and has taken precautions to insure their proper safekeeping and availability to students. Mr. Jenkinson of the Public Record Office was consulted in the matter of arrangement and other physical details, and a former foreman of repairs in the same office, Mr. Byerley, was commissioned to repair and rebind all material which was in bad condition.

The following extract taken from Simmons’ 2007 study *Keepers of the Record* appears to confirm that some important aspects of HBC’s archives operation were based upon practices recommended by Hilary Jenkinson in 1922:

Richard Leveson Gower became the first Company archivist in 1931. Within a year, in preparation for the opening of the records to scholars, Hilary Jenkinson was one of two consultants invited to inspect the archives. The theories of selection, arrangement and description of archival material set out in Jenkinson’s *A Manual of Archive Administration* were the basis for the classification scheme set up for the archives dating from prior to 1870. The arrangements and resulting finding aids made at that time are the same ones used today, with many of the research tools available electronically.

By 1947 the demand for repair facilities had reached a critical point as local record offices became inundated with depositions of family archives, most of which were in bad condition. These depositions were spurred by the actions of the British Records Association (BRA), National Register of Archives, and the Pilgrim’s Survey of Ecclesiastical Archives. This time period was at a time when few local record offices had established repair workshops (and those that did had small scale operations), trained repairers were uncommon, treatment supplies were scarce, and some local authorities did not make funds available for records that they did not

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own. Organizations and individuals requesting private repair services of the PRO at the time could not expect a fast turnaround as the Repair Department had a three year waiting list for private repairs and had also imposed a moratorium on further outside work.

Several investigations and initiatives undertaken by government and non-government bodies in the 1940s demonstrate the level of concern about archival developments and the lack of repair services and training at the time. For example, in 1941, the Council of the BRA investigated the possibility of establishing and running a ‘Repair service for English Archives’ and concluded that repair training should be an inclusive part of any education programme for the emerging English archivist profession. In 1943, Hilary Jenkinson, in his role as Secretary of the BRA, issued a major report on archival reconstruction, with a number of recommendations including the development of a “central inspectorate for archives to coordinate local and national repositories and set standards for repair….” Shepherd notes that in 1945, the Secretary of the BRA (Jenkinson), wrote a letter to the Provost of University College, University of London proposing that the University re-establish its Library Science program with a ‘School of and Diploma of Archive Science’ as well as ‘an experimental Repairing Centre’. The University subsequently established the archival science program in 1947, but not the repairing centre.

In 1950, following collaborative efforts of the Society of (Local) Archivists (SoA), the BRA, the PRO, and the London County Council (LCC) a practical course in record and document repair techniques was established at the London School of Printing and Graphic Arts (LSPGA). The first course was opened in September 1950 by Sir Hilary Jenkinson. By 1955 one course per year was being held, classes for which were held on a weekly basis over a period of several weeks. Instructors and examiners for the course were drawn from the Repair Department of

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vi Records of the HBC Archives Department indicate that the first course in record and document repair at the LSPGA was opened in January 1951. See Chapter 3 for details.
PRO. Students were mainly residents of the London area. During its first five years, 58 students attended the classes and challenged the examination. By the mid-1950s the course had become a regular offering in the LCC’s education programme.

By the mid-1950s local authorities had become more generous with funds for repairs and repair workshop spaces, and individual “craftsmen” and “craftswomen” could develop skills in binding and repair at two principle locations: the PRO, and the LSPGA. Various individuals took these courses including the Director of the Hastings Borough Museum, and binders from the Nottingham City Library and the Leicestershire, West Sussex and Winchester city record offices. Instruction in repair was also provided at local record offices including Somerset, Lancashire, and Bedfordshire, the latter of produced seven repairers during the period 1948-55. The Borough Librarian of Warrington was known to have attended a training session at Lancashire.

Bedfordshire Record Office, under the direction of its Records Committee chairman and honorary director G. Herbert Fowler from 1912 until his death in 1940, were in many ways pioneers in the administration of local record offices and Fowler was also a skilled repairer. Fowler had his own repair workshop set up in his house—which included a parchment drying frame devised by Douglas Cockerell—where he took on private work as well as repairs for the Record Office, but most official work for Bedfordshire took place in a repair workshop set up in the Record Office building basement, the work performed by assistants who had been trained in repair by Fowler. Fowler’s repair methods were nearly the same as those used at the PRO but Fowler—a former marine zoologist—was “constantly making experiments in advanced technique”. Many of the archivists who went on to lead the development of the expanding network of new county record offices in England were trained at Bedfordshire. Its archive administration methods—including
repairing treatments—were documented by Fowler in his text *Care of County Muniments* which Fowler wrote in 1923 “to encourage county councils to preserve their records.” It was re-issued in the 1930s and remained significant in Britain for many years.

During 1948-55 the ability of local authorities to undertake in-house document repairs and binding varied. Some such as Birmingham City Library were at the planning stage, while others, such as Wiltshire Record Office, which hired a full-time repairer in 1951, were capable of undertaking all of their own repairs. During the BRA’s annual conference in 1953, twenty three local record offices exhibited examples of documents that were repaired in their own repair workshops, and by 1955 the PRO was accepting outside work “though at a greatly reduced volume”. Some local record offices were themselves taking on private repair work at the time including the Sheffield City Library, Somerset Record Office, and Winchester Record Office, while others took on repairs for other local authorities (e.g. Surrey Record Office took on repairs for Kingston-on-Thames Record Office). 1948-55 was also a time when suppliers of repair materials, and private repairers and binders—a number of whom had taken the LCC course—began to offer their services.

With few exceptions the methods used in the record office workshops in the 1950s were the methods of the PRO. Small differences in technique included Bedfordshire County Record Office’s use of a spray shellac to consolidate flaking ink and the House of Lord’s Records Office preference for the fungicidal properties of Santobrite over thymol. The British Museum’s use of a Barrow laminator was a major exception.

### 2.6 Archive Conservation Education in the UK 1960s-1990s

The 1966 Florence Flood was a defining moment in the history of the archive conservation profession in the UK, when the role of the archive repairer began to evolve from the technical
role of a craftsman, to that of a professional conservator.\textsuperscript{131} The flood created a unique opportunity for experienced repairers and bookbinders not only to assist in a major recovery effort, but to learn new skills and observe different materials and techniques in an unfamiliar setting.\textsuperscript{132} The UK was well-represented at this event and individuals such as Christopher Clarkson\textsuperscript{vii} and Anthony Cains\textsuperscript{viii} brought back and applied much learning and began to effect rapid change within the profession.\textsuperscript{133} Conservators subsequently became interested in the chemical make-up of the materials that they were treating and in consequence, they began to seek input from outside professionals such as scientists in the paper and leather industries.\textsuperscript{134} Rhys-Lewis contends that after the 1966 Florence Flood,

\begin{quote}
[m]uch higher technical standards were expected, papers for journals and advisory newsletters were written, and new demands were made on the suppliers of materials. Conservators, as the practitioners became known, have developed a wide-ranging and innovative network of firms who specialise in both materials and equipment.\textsuperscript{135, ix}
\end{quote}

Such expectations helped to create the specialist areas that evolved in the UK which, in turn, spurred the need for and the development of professional groups and formal education courses.\textsuperscript{136}

Edwards explains how the archive conservation profession changed during the period 1969-1999:

\begin{quote}
In the 1960s, ‘archive repairers’, as they were then known, were considered artisans, working with their hands, concerned only with the practical repair of documents. They were often thought of as handymen around the office, who could put their hand to anything when required, such as moving boxes, putting up shelving and the like. Many of them came from trade bindery backgrounds where a trade apprenticeship possibly instilled a similar approach. Pay and status were low.

Nowadays, the profession of archive conservator is different. Whilst the practical aspect of the work is still there, most
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{vii} Book conservator.
\textsuperscript{viii} Book conservator.
\textsuperscript{ix} The first British standard to deal with conservation treatments was BS 4971 Part 1 – Recommendations for repair and allied processes for the conservation of documents. Treatment of sheets, membranes and seals (1973). This standard addresses a wide variety of testing procedures for paper, inks, parchment and seals and includes de-acidification and lamination. Contributors to its development included the British Library, the BRA, the London School of Printing, the SoA, the PRO and others.
conservators have a much wider involvement in the overall aspect of a record repository. Advising on strongroom environmental conditions, packaging requirements, good handling techniques, stabilisation, and dealing with incoming collections, exhibitions, reprographics and so on are all part of the modern conservator’s repertoire. Other recent developments have seen major involvement in disaster control planning and the preservation and conservation of modern media. Conservators are expected to understand the chemistry of materials as diverse as twelfth-century parchment and twentieth-century photographs, their manufacturing processes, and their required storage conditions and packaging. This knowledge allows them to make considered choices when selecting suitable conservation techniques. Conservators now fill posts as preservation managers with responsibility not only for conservation but also for other areas, such as buildings maintenance.137

The major factors in this change of status were “improved training”138 and the “availability of conservation training courses”.139 Edwards describes the conservation training programs offered by eight different institutions and/or societies in the UK in 1999, specifically, the Society of Archivists’ Conservation Training Scheme (est. 1973); Camberwell College of Arts BA and MA courses in conservation (est. 1990); West Dean College, Sussex ‘Conservation of Rare Books and Manuscripts’ course; University of Northumbria at Newcastle MA ‘Conservation of Fine Art’ course; Guildford College, Surrey ‘Fine Bookbinding and Conservation Course’; Roehampton Institute, London BA course in calligraphy and bookbinding; De Montford University, Lincoln BA honours course in ‘Conservation and Restoration’; and the Ciantar Neville, London paper conservation course (est. 1998).140

The idea for the SoA course originated during the Society’s annual meeting of archive repairers at Exeter in 1968, out of concerns raised by attendees about the lack of training for repairers in the UK outside of the PRO and the India Office.141 By 1999 the course consisted of 24 weeks of practical training placements over two years with a focus on paper and parchment repair, bookbinding, and seal repair.142 A grade of 60% in all aspects assessed constituted a passing grade and was based on instructors’ reports on the placements, a two-hour written exam and an
oral portfolio assessment. By 1999 the course was teaching essentially the same class content as was taught since the course was established.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a brief overview of the history of the development of archive repair in England and provides historical context for the activities of the HBC described in Chapter 3. The material in the chapter has shown that prior to the passage of the PRO Act 1838, repair did not figure as a preservation measure in Britain and that the vast collections of public records that had survived to this point—including large numbers of very old records—had survived largely as a result of storage measures. It is reasonable to expect that the chemical stability of the records themselves also played a role in their survival. A similar story can be told about how large numbers of local, business, private and religious records have also survived in Britain. Extra provision for records during this phase of their lifecycle was simply not a priority, for circumstances were such that record keepers at that time were not in the business of ensuring long-term access to the records in their care.

The chapter has also shown that principled and ethical archive repair and conservation evolved out of preservation for public records in England and Wales in the early 19th century and that this approach is strongly identified with the repairing policies of officials in charge of repair operations at the PRO, notably the policies of Cole, Jenkinson, and Ellis. The repairing policies and practices advocated by Cole, Jenkinson and Ellis pre-date the “Chemical Revolution” which Baynes-Cope associates with the realization of Barrow’s de-acidification process in the 1950s.
Evidence presented in this chapter also illustrates that in the 20th century many record keeping entities outside central government adopted the repairing principles and practices of the PRO and that this knowledge transfer occurred in several ways. The chapter describes how a repairing section developed at the PRO and how the repairers developed their skills on the job, devising, adopting, and refining physical repair techniques and how in the 20th century these skills were made available to outside entities through repair and advisory services and training. Indications are that the HBC was one of many outside entities that benefited from this policy. Jenkinson’s Manual was also a popular resource; the Manual contained a section on repairs which reflected the principles and practices of the PRO and it became the primary handbook for the archivist profession. Other means of knowledge transfer included Fowler’s publication The Care of County Muniments (1923) and his repair training at Bedfordshire Record Office, professional bodies such as the BRA, the SoA, the recruitment of former PRO staff to the growing network of local record offices beginning in the 1940s, and the LCC course in record and document repair at the LSPGA in the 1950s and 60s.

The transition towards greater professionalism in the field, beginning in the late 1960s, was marked by an increase in the interest in the science behind preservation, the need for professional associations and formal education and training courses, and by the emergence of the archive conservator. The participation of many skilled repairers and binders in the recovery effort during the 1966 Florence Flood was a defining moment in this history. The response effort brought skilled repairers and binders from the U.K. and other nations together and resulted in a knowledge transfer within the international archive repair community and a reaching out from the community toward other professionals such as chemists. The evolution of the profession is characterized by an increased interest in the chemical composition of materials, the development of science-based technical standards, the establishment of specialist areas and professional
groups, a growing interest in modern media, and other changes. Formal education played a role in this shift with university courses available at many institutions and training offered by the Society of Archivists Conservation Training Scheme. By the 1980’s significant changes had occurred in the focus of the work and the professional status of conservators.
Chapter 3

HBC Archives Department Document Repair Ability

3.1 Introduction
This chapter examines primary sources for evidence of the ability of the HBC to carry out archive repairs in the 20th century. Where necessary, secondary sources are drawn upon to illustrate, describe or support a finding. The results are summarized into a narrative which will be drawn upon to help support the conclusion presented in Chapter 4.

3.2 Repair of HBCA materials c.1920s-1970s
The earliest repair documentation found during the search is contained in a memo and report on the status of the Archives Department written on 15 July 1931 by Richard H.G. Leveson Gower (HBC Archivist, 1931-48) and addressed to his supervisor, J. Chadwick Brooks (HBC Secretary, 1923-48). Activities and outcomes covered in the report appear under seven different headings including ‘Publications’; ‘Accessibility of HBC Records to Searchers’; ‘Inquiries’; ‘Collection and data indexing’; ‘Preservation of records’; ‘Classification of records’; and ‘HBC Library’. The reference to repairs appears under ‘Preservation of records’ and reads:

The records are now in a far better state of Preservation than they were some two or three years ago. This has been made possible mainly through the assistance of Mr. Byerley (bookbinder) since 1928. All the most important and oldest Books and Documents have now been put into a state of repair which should last for many years to come. But, it has not as yet been possible to repair all the Maps, as I should have wished, but I hope that this may be possible at some future date. Mr. Byerley has now completed the majority of the work for which he was engaged, and as he also undertakes casual work, it is hoped that it may perhaps be possible to obtain his assistance when any further repair work is necessary.\[146]
Leveson Gower’s report had been written approximately two months after the Governor and Committee decided to allow access to the pre-1870 records of the HBC—which set the HBC on track to developing a modern archives service—and to make Leveson Gower the first HBC archivist. Which records were the subject of Byerley’s attention and where the work was undertaken is undetermined as no further details of his work were found during the search. However, it is reasonable to expect that the repairs were carried out at Hudson’s Bay House, the HBC’s headquarters building at 52-68 Bishopsgate, London, where the archives were housed during the years 1928-39 and 1945-55. In addition, it is reasonable to expect that the records had been identified as priorities for repair during efforts in the 1920s to organize the archives to support research and publication initiatives and during subsequent research and transcription work in the 1920s and early 1930s. Leveson Gower and other HBC records department personnel tasked with assisting in these efforts may well have had direct involvement, however formally, in the identification and selection of items for repair.

An informal survey by this author of some 4000 bound volumes created during the date range 1671-1920 found close to 120 volumes bearing relatively new backs and endpapers, leaves sewn on guards, and other applied materials and techniques (paper fills and frames, silking). Many of the repairs appeared to have been carried out in keeping with the PRO practice described by Hilary Jenkinson in A Manual of Archive Administration (1922, 1937). Few of the items were observed to contain a repairer’s note and a search of other documentation sources found that only about two dozen of these interventions had been documented, all of them dating from the time

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x These efforts were led by the historian, Sir William Schooling c.1920-26 and by Sir Arthur Doughty, Dominion Archivist and Keeper of the Records, Public Archives of Canada c.1926-30. For details see Deidre Simmons’ Keepers of the Record, 2007.

xi The scan was conducted in 2006 on the main floor level of the HBCA/AM vaults expansion completed in 1999.
None of the documentation was observed to have been signed and dated by A.W. Byerley.

A review of pay records revealed that Byerley had been hired by the HBC to work in the Head Office of the Governor and Committee in the position of Book Binder on April 1, 1928 at the age of about 70 and that he was paid £276 per annum to work in that capacity until he retired from the HBC on 31 May 1931. Cantwell asserts that Albert W. Byerley worked at the PRO, London between 1894 and the early 1920s, holding the post of Chief Binder and Repairer, and for a brief period between 1920 and 1923, the post of Superintendent. In addition, Cantwell contends that in 1938, the maximum annual pay for a superintendent at the PRO was increased from £277 to £300. Smith describes how “… a former foreman of repairs [in the PRO], Mr. Byerley, was commissioned [by the HBC] to repair and rebind all material [in the HBCA] which was in bad condition.” Given this information, indications are that Byerley had been a senior repairer and binder in the PRO, that he worked full-time for the HBC from April 1928 through May 1931 and that his salary at the HBC would have compared well to his salary while a superintendent at the PRO. Further research is encouraged to find evidence of Byerley’s work in the HBCA.

The next chronological reference found on the subject of repairs carried out for HBCA material appears in a summary of Archives Department activities submitted by Secretary Brooks for inclusion in the 1939 edition of the British Records Association (BRA) publication The Year’s Work in Archives. It reads,

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xii Documentation sources searched include repaired records viewed on the main floor level of the HBCA/AM vaults expansion completed in 1999; HBCA/AM, 8900, A.102/2027, 1920-74; HBCA/AM, 11897, RG/20/2, 1931-74; HBCA/AM, unprocessed RG 20, H2-203-007, Card index of repairs, 1950-2000; and the conservation project log of the Archives of Manitoba (1982-present).

xiii Information in this section is taken from HBCA/AM, 8128, A.1/169, Appendices 188 & 190, 9 April 1929; HBCA/AM, 8128, A.1/170, Appendix 90, 11 March 1930; and, HBCA/AM, unprocessed HBC records, 1969/02, T-128-2, H2-239-003, Salaries of London staff, Head office, 1 April 1928 – 31 April 1933.
Four large maps—two of North America by Arrowsmith of 1795 and 1823, one of Hudson’s Bay Region by Philip Turnor, 1794, and one of Canada by G.E. Desbarats, Montreal, 1873—which were in need of repair were sent to the Public Record Office for the necessary attention. They have now been returned to us and the results of the work carried out are most satisfactory.150

Summaries submitted in 1935, 1936, 1937 and 1938 make no mention of repairs, although prior to 1939 the BRA’s annual call for contributions to The Year’s Work in Archives made no request for a summary of repair activities.xiv Further historic documentation associated with the repair of these items was not located during the search. This said, in early 1932 the HBC had the Turnor map photographed at the British Museum for J.B. Tyrrell, the Canadian geologist and cartographer.xv As noted by Simmons (2007), in September 1931, Tyrrell was the first outside researcher to be granted access to the HBCA after the Governor and Committee decision in May 1931 to allow outside researchers access to the pre-1870 archives.151 Given this information, it is reasonable to expect that the Turnor map was identified as priority for repair as a result of J.B. Tyrrell’s research request. If so, such activity would appear to be in keeping with a strategy advocated by Hilary Jenkinson in the Manual: “… while repairs, if the Archive collection is an old one, should be systematically conducted by classes, where the need for them is noticed in individual cases as single documents are produced these should be dealt with, if possible, forthwith.”152

A search undertaken in 2006 by this author for physical evidence of these repairs discovered possible evidence of a PRO direct intervention on HBCA G.2/32, an outsize, multi-sheet, rolled manuscript map depicting Hudson’s Bay and region c.1794 by Philip Turnor. Repairing materials

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xv The BRA, still extant, was established as a professional archives association in 1932 in London; HBC became a member in 1933. For details of the HBC’s membership in the BRA, see Deidre Simmons, Keepers of the Record. The History of the Hudson’s Bay Company Archives (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queens University Press, 2007), 226.
xiv Information in this section was taken from HBCA/AM, 11926, RG20/4/307, Research correspondence: Turnor, Philip, 1931-32.
and techniques documented during the search include edging and fills made with a heavy, cream, laid paper and paper reinforcement with silk gauze (silking). In addition, the map was observed to be mounted to a paper and linen backing, the top edge of which was connected to a paper tube and the bottom edge of which had linen tapes attached for tying. This system of packaging bore close resemblance to a design recommended by Hilary Jenkinson in the *Manual* (1937):

> Documents too large [to be kept flat] may be guarded at each end with unbleached linen, or mounted on linen projecting beyond the two ends: the surplus linen at one end is then wrapped round and pasted to a four-inch strawboard cylinder slightly longer than the width of the document … that at the other serves as a cover after the document has been rolled up and has tapes attached to tie round: it is a good plan to cut the linen at the outer end to a breadth several inches greater than the length of the cylinder so that the projecting portions of linen, when all is rolled up, can be turned over and tucked inside the cylinder.\(^{153}\)

Given this information it is reasonable to expect that the map could have been repaired and mounted at the PRO in the 1930s.

Brooks’ summary for the BRA’s *The Year’s Work in Archives* in 1940 indicates that archival operations including “large repairs”\(^ {154}\) were impeded due to planning associated with the transfer of the HBCA out of London and by the fact that in July 1939 the archives had been transferred to a rural area and were no longer accessible “except in urgent cases”.\(^ {155}\) Brooks’ report was referring to air raid precautions which in July 1939 saw the HBC pack the archives into 550 custom-made packing cases at Bishopsgate and ship the cases with their contents to Hexton Manor, Hertfordshire, where they remained, stored in cellar rooms, for the next six years.\(^ {xvi}\) Hexton Manor was the residence of Patrick Ashley Cooper, HBC Governor between 1931 and 1952.\(^ {156}\) Some records remained behind at Bishopsgate including unclassified post-1870 records.

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\(^{xvi}\) Information in this section is taken from HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/1, Air raid precautions, 1939-45.
of HBC posts in North America and records needed for publication by the Hudson’s Bay Record Society Ltd. Further details about the Hexton years will be discussed later in the chapter.

Brooks’ 1941 submission for inclusion in *The Year’s Work in Archives* reports under ‘Repairs’ that “[n]o large scale repairs have been undertaken, but minor repairs to documents still in London are being carried out in the Archives Department.”

No submission was found for 1942 but Brooks’ 1943 submission was discovered and was found to include the following passage under ‘Repairs’:

> Minor repairs to documents still remaining in London continue to be carried out in the Archives Department. A contemporary copy of the 1842 maps of posts of Vancouver Island showing the site selected for a proposed new establishment (i.e. Fort Victoria, now the City of Victoria which celebrated its centenary this year) was most satisfactorily repaired for us by the Public Record Office.

These references to repairs to records still remaining in London during the Second World War were the first found to make mention of repairs being carried out on records at the Archives Department. Interestingly, the suggestion of continued reliance on the PRO to perform repairs at the time, even though the repair work was carried out on a copy of a map, appear to indicate that the Archives Department did not have the capacity at the time to effect repairs on large format records. No further documentation of these repairs was observed during the review and due to time constraints a search of post-1870 Section B records and records required for the HBRS publication effort for possible physical evidence of these repairs was not started. However, given that only two staff members were working in the Archives Department during the war years, Alice Johnson, Assistant Archivist, who took over in an acting capacity in 1939 after Leveson Gower was called to active duty, and her assistant, T.A. Mayhew, it is reasonable to expect that

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xvii Information in this section is taken from HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/40, Brooks to Hunt, 23 July 1940.
the repairs were carried out by Johnson and/or Mayhew. In 1939, Johnson’s responsibilities included:

[carrying out research work and assembling the information on behalf of correspondents’ or departmental enquiries; typing and indexing of the various catalogues compiled by Mr. Leveson Gower; filing; keeping up to date Library catalogue, attending to visiting students in the absence of Mayhew…. research work and typing for the Hudson’s Bay Record Society.]

Mayhew’s duties at the time included:

[labelling and boxing of classified records; keeping in order both classified and unclassified records; attending to the requirements of visiting students, general duties such as keeping clean and tidy the rooms used by the Archives Department; packing and making preparations for the loading and unloading of boxes during the move to Hexton.]

Given the differences in job duties, it is likely that minor repairs at the time were Mayhew’s responsibility. No mention of repairs is made in summaries submitted in 1948 for the period between 1943 and 1948—publication of *The Year’s Work in Archives* was halted during this period—or in the summary submitted in 1949.

The next chronological reference observed about repairs carried out on HBCA material appears in a summary report written by Leveson Gower on 26 January 1948 and addressed to the Secretary (Rudolph Arturo Reynolds, Secretary, 1948-71) on work undertaken in the Archives Department in 1947. It reads:

During the period under review, the Account Books of the Red River Settlement (Class E.7) have been repaired at the Public Record Office, together with two Montreal Correspondence Books (B.134/b/13 and 14). Repairs were also undertaken to our first Fur Sale Catalogue (A.54/1). The Red River Registers (E.4/1 and 2) [sic] were divided into three parts and rebound.

A review of RG20/2/1 (Archives Department file: Air raid precautions – Oct. 1938 – 12 June 1945) provides insight into the details of the story related to the damage and repair of the noted
Red River Settlement (RRS) volumes. Indications are that these items had become damaged during a water event sometime between early July 1939 and early June 1945 while they were being stored at Hexton Manor.

During the time when the HBCA were at Hexton, Mayhew carried out occasional retrievals of small numbers of records, bringing them back to Bishopsgate for researchers and for the work associated with the HBRS publications, and returning some to Hexton again. By September 1941 Mayhew had become aware of high humidity in the cellars, and of mould affecting the contents of several packing cases and reported his findings to Brooks. On November 5, 1941, Mayhew and one Mr. Waters, the HBC’s Chief Engineer, conducted an assessment of the condition of the storage spaces, took “air condition” readings, and opened one case in each of the eight storage sections into which the archives had been arranged. They found that all of the cases opened contained damp documents but that the documents in the cases opened in Sections 1-2 were quite damp and had mouldy surfaces, and that the cases themselves contained many of what Mayhew guessed were spiders. As noted by Mayhew, “[t]he documents in Section No. 1 [were] the very early H.B.C. documents.” Brooks asked Waters to look into steps to correcting the humidity problem and directed Mayhew to develop a process for opening the cases and wiping the mould and dampness from the contents. This response led to further assessment of the problem and to the development and implementation of measures to mitigate the problem over the next three years. These measures included drying, mould remediation and environmental monitoring and control. 188 out of 550 cases of records had been found to contain material affected by damp and mildew and of the affected cases, most had been kept within a couple of inches of the floor.
Spot temperature readings were taken and recorded on five different days between late February and late November 1942. Interestingly, Mayhew appears to have consulted Hilary Jenkinson’s *A Manual of Archive Administration* (1937) for guidance and recognized the value of hygrothermographs as he admits to not knowing how the noted readings “would compare with hygrometer readings, as suggested by Mr. Hilary Jenkinson in Archives Administration, p.223.” In a memorandum dated 11 March 1942 Brooks directed Johnson to have a conversation with Hilary Jenkinson about some staining and spots that Brooks had noticed on pages of several vellum bound books which Mayhew had retrieved from Hexton, and to ask Jenkinson whether any specific preservation was needed to deal with it. On 17 March 1942, Johnson met with Assistant Keepers Hilary Jenkinson and David Evans at the PRO to discuss the issue and in a handwritten addition to the noted memorandum, Johnson documents the outcome of her meeting and a follow-up report to Brooks. It reads:

I saw Mr. Jenkinson and Mr. Evans at the Public Record Office on 17th March and showed them certain records. They both questioned me very closely as to the place of store, the method of packing and what we were doing to overcome the dampness. We would appear to be working on the right lines. They strongly expressed a wish to see the basement at Hexton and asked if this could be arranged. I saw Mr. Brooks on the same day and made a report to him. It will not be convenient to arrange transport from either Luton or Hitchin so the matter is to be left in abeyance.

This information provides evidence of a continued reliance of the HBC on Jenkinson and the PRO at the time for preservation advice.

It was not until May 29, 1945 when the archives were in the midst of being prepared for return to Bishopsgate that the noted RRS records were discovered. Mayhew questioned the estate plumber and carpenter at Hexton, a Mr. Brasier, about the source of the water. Brasier’s best determination was that the source of the water was probably storm water that had not drained properly due to a clogged area drain and that the water had instead poured into the house through...
an open window and onto the floor of the Butler’s quarters, which were above the room where the RSS records were being kept. This water appears to have dripped through holes in the floor through which pipes were routed, and onto the tops of the two cases housing the RRS records. Mayhew inspected the cases and noticed water stains which gave indication that the water ran along the tops of and penetrated the two cases. Mayhew determined that the damage had remained undetected at Hexton because they were hidden from view, as the case tops were six inches from the ceiling. In a memorandum from Johnson to Brooks dated June 11, 1945, Johnson lists the damaged RRS account books and a number of publications, describes their condition and proposes recovery options. The final paragraph of the memorandum reads:

It is suggested that we get into touch with the Repairs Department of the Public Record Office and ask for their advice and assistance in repairing both the documents and the published volumes. If they are not able to repair any or some of the published volumes I suggest that we get into touch with Messrs. Francis Edwards, Ltd., who may be able to help us in replacing them from their present stocks or from future purchases.

Brooks agreed with Johnson’s recommendations to consult with the PRO Repair Department and make arrangements for the necessary repairs and Messrs. Francis Edwards Ltd to replace the damaged publications. In early November 1945 the HBC received an estimate dated October 22, 1945 from V. Palmer, Repair Department, PRO in the amount of £19 to £21 for labour and material (including 18 yards of silk gauze) to effect repairs in preparation for rebinding the RRS account books. In the estimate, Palmer noted that the 15 published volumes were too badly damaged to repair but that these were now in a dry condition. The HBC must have consulted with Palmer shortly thereafter for Brooks placed an order for 18 yards of silk or cotton gauze in particular patterns from Messrs. Ryland & Sons Ltd, Manchester. Interestingly, Brooks’ letter mentions how the material would be used and highlights the historical value of the RRS records. It also implores the vendor to provide details that could help the HBC make an application to the Board of Trade for permission to obtain the noted quantity of material without
the need for a rationing coupon. In a letter dated November 5, 1945 Brooks gave Palmer approval to proceed with repairs to the RRS account books and noted that Mayhew had already provided Palmer with the requisite 18 yards of silk gauze. In addition, Brooks acknowledged receipt of the dried published books and mentioned that Palmer should have by that time received payment for “first aid repairs” carried out for the published books. T.E. Hassell, Chief Binder, PRO provided an estimate to the HBC dated January 3, 1946 that showed the cost to bind the 18 RRS registers would be 10 shillings per account book and that the volumes would be bound in brown cloth. After discussing the matter with Brooks, Johnson wrote Hassell, giving him permission to proceed with the treatment. Hassell telephoned Johnson on December 13, 1946 to say nine of the registers needed special bindings and that these registers had been bound at a cost of 12/6d per book to which Johnson agreed.

A search of the HBCA by this author in 2007 for these volumes resulted in the discovery of 18 RRS account books (E.7/1-2, 34, 38-42, 43, 44-51) and two Montreal correspondence books (B.134/b/13-14) very much bearing evidence of having been repaired at the PRO in 1946-47. The noted sales catalogue was not located during the search. A visual examination of the RRS volumes at the time revealed them to be either whole bound in brown cloth, or quarter-bound in buckram and brown cloth with vellum points. Repairing materials and techniques were very much in evidence in each of the rebound volumes and all repairs observed appeared to be fully intact and functioning. Materials and techniques used for the repair of leaves included cream, laid paper, paste, and silk gauze, applied in the form of backings, patches, fills, and frames. Cover repairs were made with cream, laid paper, where necessary. Ground in, but no loose surface dirt was observed, suggesting that the records had been surface cleaned prior to being repaired. All leaves had rattle and lay very flat, possible evidence of having been sized and pressed. Folio numbers hand-scribed in graphite on one corner of each folio were clear evidence of a binder’s
organizational efforts. Some endpapers and leaves were sewn on guards of yellow, wove paper. All but HBCA E.7/41 and E.7/49 appeared to have bound-in original endpapers. Re-use of original sewing holes was inconsistent. Tape outlines, and dirt, stain and crease patterns observed in most of the volumes were an indication that these volumes had different covers prior to being repaired.

What appeared to be original covers or cover elements were observed to have been retained within three of the 18 RRS volumes observed namely E.7/41 which contained a bound-in, stiffened, marble paper cover, E.7/49 which contained a bound-in cover made from heavy, cream, wove, writing paper, and E.7/39 which contained identification labels affixed to a thin loose sheet of marble paper. In addition, nine of the RRS volumes (E.7/1, 21, 34, 38-39, 42-45) were observed to be multi-section spring-back books in buckram and brown cloth, with vellum points. The other nine volumes (E.7/2, 40-41, 46-51) were observed to be hollow back, single-section, case bindings. Given the complexity and durability of the spring-back binding and the great skill required to bind a book in this style, it is reasonable to expect that the nine RRS registers that needed “special bindings”¹⁹⁴ were one in the same with the nine spring-back books observed during the search. In addition, use of the spring-back binding for volumes such as account books and registers was in keeping with PRO practice at the time, for its use with some “heavy volumes”¹⁹⁵ is advocated by Hilary Jenkinson in the Manual (1937).

None of the other volumes in this series were observed at the time to be bound in brown cloth. Most single-section volumes observed had paper covers, paper self covers, or were unbound, and the few obvious multi-section volumes observed included tight, flat back books, quarter bound in leather with marble paper covering material over thin boards, and hollow back books in vellum. Given the noted repair materials and techniques, binding styles, and corresponding
documentation in the HBCA, it is reasonable to expect that these volumes were repaired and rebound by workmen of the PRO Repair Department in 1946-47.

Documentation about how the Montreal correspondence books became damaged was not found during the search but a visual examination revealed evidence of water damage in each in the form of staining, losses, and mould. In addition, each book was observed to contain paper repair materials and techniques including laid and wove paper applied in the form of patches, fills and edges. The books were observed to be press copy books bound as spring back bindings in black book cloth. As with the RRS volumes this covering material and binding style was not observed elsewhere in the series. For example, Montreal correspondence books B.134/b/12 (Montreal Department Letter Book – Lachine Letters – 1854-56) and B.134/b/15 (Montreal Department Letter Book – Lachine Outward – 1857-59) were observed to be tight, quarter bound, flat-back bindings, with cloth sides and leather corner protectors. The two repaired and bound Montreal correspondence books each bore a repairer’s note tipped in at the front endpapers, written in typescript on paper, undersigned in dark pen and ink with two sets if initials and dates, one set of initials being undecipherable, dated 10/3/47 and the other obviously those of Richard Leveson Gower, dated 11 Mar 47. The text in the body of each note read:

For the repair of the paper in this volume, damaged by water, a thin repairing paper of the quality normally used was not procured. It has therefore been repaired with a thin tough bank paper.¹⁹⁶

Given the noted repair materials, binding styles, repairer’s notes and associated documentation, it is evident that Montreal correspondence books B.134/b/13 and 14 bore evidence of having been subjected to a treatment by workmen of the PRO Repair Department in 1947.

Leveson Gower’s 27 January 1948 report to Brooks marked the start of a little practice which saw the Archivist regularly producing monthly and annual reports on the work of the Archives.
Department and sending them to the Secretary. This practice continued until 8 July 1970 when at
the request of the Secretary, it was discontinued.\textsuperscript{197} Activities are covered under a number of
different headings in these reports, commonly ‘Visitors’, ‘Accessions’, ‘Classification’,
‘Microfilming’. Information under ‘Bookbinding and Repairs’ commonly includes a listing of the
number and types of items or titles of items that were the subject of bookbinding and repair work
and a brief description of the work that was performed. Few items are identified by classification
reference number and few details are provided about the circumstances under which items were
flagged for attention. A brief scan of the activities documented in other sections in the monthly
and annual reports (e.g. ‘Visitors’, ‘Classification’, ‘Correspondence and Enquiries’,
‘Microfilming’, ‘Hudson's Bay Records Society’, etc.) found some references to records that are
listed under ‘Bookbinding and Repairs’ suggesting that some records may have been identified as
priorities for repair or binding work during activities associated with the noted operations. A
review of written operational procedures of the Archives Department compiled c.1955-1972\textsuperscript{xviii}
found several references to the condition of documents and repairs to records which suggested
that items could have been identified as priorities for treatment during a number of different
archive operations where material was physically handled including cataloguing, classification,
research, and microfilming. Further investigation is encouraged to determine to what extent this
appears to have been the case.

Mention of repairs and other treatments may be found under other headings, too. For example,
under ‘Microfilming’ thousands of items are documented as having been ‘thymolised’ in

\textsuperscript{xviii} These procedures are found in HBCA/AM, 11975, RG20/5/1, Notes on classification, catalogues,
microfilming, library, etc., Aug. 1955 - June 1965 and HBCA/AM, 11975, RG20/5/2, Notes on the
Hudson’s Bay Company Archives Department, June 1972.
preparation for microfilming between 1950 and the late 1960s. In addition, occasional references appear under ‘Microfilming’ indicating that certain records could not be microfilmed until they had been repaired. Mention of circumstances interfering with progress on bookbinding and repairs also appears in the reports, examples of which include microfilming, preparing the HBCA and the Archives Department for the move from Bishopsgate to Beaver House in 1955, and the effect of A. Frank Batchelor’s resignation in December, 1964, most in-house repairs having been carried out by Batchelor prior to that date.

Occasional other memoranda from this time make reference to treatments carried out on records and the circumstances arising which led to the records becoming priorities. For example, a memorandum dated May 2, 1951 includes a passage that describes a problem and treatments that were being applied to 246 unclassified volumes that had been overlooked by the Archives Department and recently discovered in Strongroom 6 at 68 Bishopsgate. It reads:

I must mention that the books are in such a bad state, owing to mildew, that we cannot possibly take them into the Archives Room as the trouble will spread. At present they are in “The Dump” being cleaned, aired and thymolised, page by page. It is a long process.198

Which room is being referred to as “The Dump” is undetermined, although it is possible that it was the informal name of a storeroom on the basement floor of Bishopsgate.xix

These reports represent a major source of HBCA repair history documentation for the period and were relied upon heavily as a reference for the remainder of the exercise. Another important documentation resource that was drawn upon is the card file index established in 1950 that was used by the Archives Department to flag items bookbinding and repairs and to document

xix Information in this section is taken from HBCA/11897, RG20/2/1, Memorandum, Archivist to F.A. Stacpole, Esq., 2 March 1939.
bookbinding and repairs carried out on HBCA items during the period under study. This index will be described in more detail later in the chapter.

Monthly and annual reports for the Archives Department for the years 1948 through 1949 were reviewed for details of document repair activities. Indications are that repairs, cleaning and mould remediation were carried out on numerous items at the time and that in 1949 “[s]ome 15 pieces that had suffered deterioration during the war years were rebound.”\textsuperscript{199} Specific details about particular treatments are undocumented. However, the reports for 1948 and 1949 provide clear indication that much of the cleaning and mould remediation at the time was carried out by T.A. Mayhew with some cleaning assistance provided by co-assistant, Robert Harvey. Indications are that some records became priorities for treatment and/or were treated during operations such as sorting and classification. For example, under ‘Classification’ in the 1948 Annual Report ‘cleaning’ is one of several activities listed along with ‘labelling’, ‘stamping’, ‘boxing’, and ‘housing’ as having been carried out that year for more than 260 folders of loose and bound but previously unexamined and unclassified London Correspondence Inward ca. 1871-1948, and Commissioner’s Records.\textsuperscript{200}

Indications are that cleaning in addition to mould remediation was also being carried out at the time, mostly for items that had become damaged by water and mildew while at Hexton and that thymol powder was the fungicide of choice. A possible clue to the extent of the mildew problem and the recovery measures being carried out to deal with it is reflected under ‘Classification’ in the monthly report on the activities of the Archives Department for March 1949. It reads: “Many of the records that were at Hexton during the War bear traces of mildew. These are being treated and labels which have suffered from dampness are being replaced.”\textsuperscript{201} How Mayhew may have learned and applied his skills is undetermined, although he could well have picked up and applied
some knowledge from reading publications held in the Archives Library which at the time included copies of Jenkinson’s *Manual* (1937) and Adelaide E. Minogue’s *The Repair & Preservation of Records* (1943).*xx

Johnson’s monthly report on the activities of the Archives Department in January 1950 contains a brief mention of the number of items that were rebound or repaired that month under the heading, ‘Repairs, etc.’ It reads: “Six letter books have been rebound and four documents repaired.”*xx\(^2\) Similarly, under ‘Bookbinding and Repairs’ in the February 1950 report Johnson notes that “seven volumes were bound or rebound and other minor repairs were made to documents.”*xx\(^3\) While no mention of specific documents bound, rebound or repaired appears in the reports, or how they came up for treatment, the repair cards created in January and February of 1950 document how 20 items, including 13 volumes of correspondence—six in January and seven in February—were the subject of repair and binding operations at the time. Table 1 presents a general transcription of the documentation contained in the repair card data set for January and February 1950. How the documented items records became priorities for repair is undetermined but given that D.21/1-19 (Chipman Correspondence Out 1891-1900) are listed as newly classified items in the February 1950 monthly report and the repair cards from January and February 1950 document repair and binding operations carried out on 10 of these items, it is possible that the work could have occurred during a classification process.

The January and February 1950 repair cards bear hand-scribed notes in ink and graphite. The documentation commonly includes a record classification code, a description, dates of creation of a record, a repairer’s initials or signature, a repairer’s note, and a project completion date.

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*xx Information in this section is taken from HBCA/AM, 8883, A.92/106/3, Sale to Chester, 19 March 1925; HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/87, List of books, 1929-1958; HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/33, Memorandum, Archivist to Wholesale Department, 16 April 1937; HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/118, Secretary to Canadian Committee, 21 January 1946.
Approximately half of the cards describe processes (e.g., patching, guarding, re-binding documents in original boards) that could be characterized as paper repair and book repair operations while the remainder document processes (binding loose documents into volumes, mounting maps) that might be characterized as “make-up” operations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50/01/02</td>
<td>D.21/6</td>
<td>Chipman Correspondence Out 1893-1894</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Guarding index pages with tape &amp; sewing into case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/01/02, 50/01/09</td>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>2 Maps Ex “Beaver”</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Mounting &amp; framing in celluloid &amp; cloth for hanging. Previously unmounted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/01/05</td>
<td>B.239/d/1381</td>
<td>YF Accounts 1884-1887</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Cover needed. Cover supplied &amp; sewn on (card folder).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/01/05</td>
<td>B.239/d/1412</td>
<td>YF Accounts.</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Back has been cut off &amp; several pages removed. Refixing back with rexine &amp; paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/01/18-50/01/19</td>
<td>B.134/d/29/a</td>
<td>Montreal Account Book</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Damaged by age, water &amp; wear &amp; tear. Resewing &amp; backing with cloth &amp; patching original boards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/01/24-50/01/25</td>
<td>D.21/5</td>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>Chipman Out Correspondence 1892-1893</td>
<td>AFB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/01/26</td>
<td>D.4/6/4-6</td>
<td>3 Vols Simpson Correspondence.</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Rebacking with cloth. New headband no.5. Leather perished through age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/01/31</td>
<td>D.21</td>
<td>unclassified</td>
<td>Chipman Out Correspondence</td>
<td>AFB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/02/01</td>
<td>D.21/4</td>
<td>Chipman Correspondence Out Mar – May 1892</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Patching back with old cloth &amp; refixing to frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/02/02</td>
<td>D.21/1</td>
<td>Chipman Correspondence Out Apr to Dec 1891</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Removing from derelict file &amp; sewing &amp; rebinding in original boards with cloth back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/02/03</td>
<td>D.21/7</td>
<td>Chipman Correspondence Out 1894</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Removing loose sheets from file and binding with millboard covers M.P. &amp; cloth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/02/06</td>
<td>D.21/9</td>
<td>Chipman Correspondence Out 1895</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Binding loose sheets into volume with old file boards &amp; cloth back. Sewn with brass wire.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/02/06</td>
<td>D.21/11</td>
<td>Chipman Correspondence Out 1896</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Binding loose sheets in cardboard covers with rexine back &amp; M.P. sides. Stabbed &amp; wire sewn (brass).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/02/08</td>
<td>D.21/13</td>
<td>Chipman Correspondence Out</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Binding single sheets into a volume. Sewing with brass wire &amp; covering with millboards, M.P. &amp; rexine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50/02/08</td>
<td>D.21/14</td>
<td>Chipman Correspondence Out 1898</td>
<td>AFB</td>
<td>Binding single sheets into a volume stitching with brass wire &amp; covering with millboard, M.P. &amp; rexine.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

xxi Information in Table 1 is taken from HBCA/AM, unprocessed RG 20, H2-203-007, Card index record of binding and repairs, January 1950 – January 2000.
Given the presence of these repairer notes in the records of the Archives Department and considering how the keeping of repairer notes and the use of the noted processes is advocated in the *Manual* (1922, 1937), it is reasonable to expect that Frank Batchelor and Alice Johnson had some familiarity at the time with the principled approach to repair advocated by Hilary Jenkinson.

A brief examination of the noted Chipman volumes during the exercise found that several of the volumes contain a repairer’s note written in graphite in Frank Batchelor’s hand, normally on a front endpaper. These notes provide a brief description of the work performed and are signed and dated. Several of the records appear to have been made up into rough volumes for storage, in the manner explained by Jenkinson in the *Manual* (1937). In addition, it is obvious that care has been taken to re-bind using original covers where possible. However, the function of the repair and binding work has in some cases nearly failed completely, which might lead one to suspect that Batchelor’s repair and bookbinding skills at the time was at an early stage of development. An examination of the other noted records was not undertaken during the exercise due to time constraints, but is encouraged to determine whether the records bear evidence of Batchelor’s interventions at the time and to determine whether they appear to have been carried out in accordance with the principles and practices of archive repair outlined in the *Manual*.

A search for clues as to how Batchelor may have picked up repair and bookbinding skills revealed nothing specific about his skills in this area. Batchelor entered the service of the HBC on May 10, 1946 and was appointed to the Fur Department where he served as a clerk in the Fur Warehouse Office and later the Fur Department General Office. Given this information it is reasonable to expect that he may have carried out rough binding work for the Fur Department, however, as his 1949 biography in the HBC London staff magazine *The Bay* makes no mention of

During the examination it was observed that the class and piece numbers for these records had been changed from 21/n to 13/n since the creation of the noted repair cards.
his background or skills as a document repairer, clerk, or binder, one might draw the conclusion that document repair and bookbinding were new to Batchelor at the time. This said, as may have been the case with Mayhew, Batchelor may have picked up his knowledge through reading publications such as the *Manual* or *The Repair and Preservation of Records*, copies of which were available at the time in the Archives Library. The February 1950 monthly report also makes reference to the establishment of a repair and bookbinding workshop in the Archives Department. It reads, “One corner of Strong Room No. 6 has been made into a Repair and Bookbinding workshop. The Maintenance Department has made some of the necessary equipment and a press has been supplied.” Further reference to this development appears in a progress report written by Johnson on March 27, 1950. It reads:

In the past we have only been able to undertake very minor repairs, but a workshop has been set up in part of Strong Room No. 6 and we can now undertake bookbinding and straightforward repairs to damaged documents and maps. Some equipment has already been made for us by the Maintenance Department, a press has been supplied, and we are now getting various estimates so that we can buy our millboard, cloth, etc. in economical quantities. All except the most difficult work can now be undertaken in the department. This should result not only in saving money, but in time. In the past, small but straightforward repair jobs took months because they were done during the spare time of the Public Record Office workers. This often meant great inconvenience to us if it was a book or document frequently in use.

Mention of these developments provides clear indication that the Archives Department was in the process of establishing its own repair and bookbinding operation at the time and that the reasons why, outside of the obvious necessity, had to do with convenience and cost savings. Discussion of estimates and orders for supplies appears later in the chapter. The following paragraph extracted from the same report provides further evidence of the Archives Department’s effort to establish an in-house repair operation at the time, specifically one employing the previously noted card index of repairs. It reads:
A card index record of all binding and repairs carried out in the Department or by the Public Record Office will be kept. Past experience has shown that it is extremely useful to know when and in what circumstances a book was rebound or repaired. All identification marks will be preserved. The staff has been instructed to place on record any book or document in need of treatment so that it can be dealt with in due course.

Other work noted in the report involved improving storage arrangements, and planning to continue activities such as unpacking and listing accumulations of unclassified records, arranging and classifying records, cataloguing, providing access services, etc. A brief description and analysis of the card index record of binding and repairs is probably warranted at this point of the chapter.

The card index record noted in Johnson’s March 27, 1950 report appears to have been in use in the Archives Department since at least early January 1950 with the first cards filed in it possibly being one and the same with the cards completed that month by Frank Batchelor. When first viewed in the Archives of Manitoba Conservation Lab by this author in 2002 or 2003, it had recently been retrieved from the former office of Judith Hudson Beattie, Keeper, HBCA (1990-2002). Upon examination it was found to contain 2,345 index cards housed in two, two-drawer, stackable, coated steel, card index file cabinets. One cabinet was found to contain records of completed repair and bookbinding projects and the other cabinet, records of items that had been identified as priorities for bookbinding or repairs. The materials and techniques of the documentation were inks and/or graphite on 3 x5” paper index cards. Written documentation included hand-scribed and typewritten script. The documentation was arranged in alphanumeric order by classification code and was found to be almost evenly divided between the two cabinets, with 1,278 cards filed in “Repairs Completed” cabinet and 1,067 cards filed in the “Awaiting Repairs” cabinet.
The date of creation for the card index record was determined to be 1950 to 2000, based on the dates in the documentation. The latter date was a bit of a surprise, especially given that the Conservation Lab at the Archives of Manitoba had been established in 1982 along with a Project Log and that documentation of conservation treatments carried out on HBCA material by conservators at the Archives of Manitoba has been recorded in the noted project log from 1982 to the present. Cards filed in the “Awaiting Repairs” cabinet were often found to bear a classification code and/or a title of a record and a brief description of a problem or a required remedy. Most of the cards filed in the “Repairs Completed” cabinet were found to bear similar details including a description of the operation carried out, a date of completion, and a signature. In addition, most of the “Repairs Completed” cards from 1982 onwards were found to include a number which corresponded with a project number in the Preservation Services Project Log at the Archives of Manitoba. A review of the “Repairs Completed” cabinet found that of the 1,278 cards present, 976 cards or approximately 76 per cent of the data set were completed prior to 1975.

When asked by this author in 2005 about the purpose of the card index, Shirlee Anne Smith, the former HBC archivist (1973-1974) and Keeper, HBCA (1974-1990) commented that she had been unaware of its existence.209

A review of the content of the pre-1975 repair card documentation found that 772 cards or approximately 79 per cent of the data set included documentation of repair and allied processes (e.g., cleaning, backing, patching, filling, sizing, pressing, re-binding, etc.) and subsequent actions (e.g., sewing into folders, making-up enclosures) and that the remainder documented other operations (e.g., binding loose documents into volumes, making-up storage enclosures and boxes, framing and glazing items for display, etc.). The index documents a range of challenges, from relatively minor physical support problems (e.g., loose sheets) to potentially more serious issues (e.g., torn, rotted folios; crude old repairs; documents gnawed by rats).
Repairing materials referenced in the pre-1975 repair cards include linen, parchment, hand-made paper, jaconet, flour paste, and silk gauze. Some cards included references to past “crude” repairs or “cobbled together” documents bound in the wrong order and subsequent actions taken to “take apart” the repair and to perform the necessary work “correctly”. References to items from all archival and library record sections of the HBCA for the period under study appear in the card index, with almost half of all operations recorded as having been carried out for items from Section B (Post Records).

Table 2 presents the names of individuals and companies that were observed in the pre-1975 repair cards, the number of cards documenting operations carried out in their name and the date range for the operations attributed to them as documented in the cards. All of the individuals listed, with the exception of J.L. Cuthbert, C.E. Gray, and Blades, East and Blades Ltd are known to have been in-house staff of the Archives Department at the time the repairs were completed. C.E. Gray was known to be a private printer, bookbinder and archives repairer in London, and Blades, East and Blades Ltd, a private printer and stationer, also located in London. A review of the data shown in Table 2 makes it clear that most of the in-house work was carried out between 1950 and 1964 and that it was completed by Frank Batchelor.

Nine cards from April 1950 made mention about how the work was carried out at the PRO by Frank Batchelor during the week ending April 21, 1950 and another 11 cards completed during the period January 26 – February 9, 1951 made reference to work having been completed by Batchelor during a ‘Repairs Class’. A review of March and April 1950 monthly reports and the annual report for 1950 confirmed that arrangements had been made between Alice Johnson and Roger Ellis, Deputy Keeper, PRO for Frank Batchelor to receive instruction in repair and
bookbinding methods at the PRO and that Batchelor indeed received instruction in this regard at the PRO over the course of the week ending April 21, 1950. xxiii This training had come at the suggestion of one Mr. Meekings and Mr. Palmer of the Repair Department of the PRO, with whom Frank Batchelor had met in late March 1950 for advice on cleaning a grant of arms on parchment. Meekings and Palmer had indicated that “subject to [Roger Ellis’] approval, they would be glad to advise [Batchelor] regarding any other documents in need of attention.” Ellis provided the necessary approval in a letter to Johnson dated 31 March 1950 an extract of which reads:

Since Mr. Batchelor is (as I understand) actively concerned with the repair of your Records, we shall be glad to demonstrate some of our methods to him. It would be convenient if Mr. Batchelor could attend on Monday 17 April and the days immediately following. 211

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Number of Completed Projects</th>
<th>Date Range of Completed Projects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Frank Batchelor</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>January 1950 – December 1964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwen Kemp</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>October 1951 – November 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret A.E. Nickson</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>March 1952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beryl Lemon</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>June 1953 – January 1956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blades, East, and Blades Ltd</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>December 1953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joan Craig</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>April 1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R. Collier</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>January 1968 – January 1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.L. Cuthbert of C.E. Gray</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>February 1974 – April 1974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.E. Gray</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>June 1961 – November 1974</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

Alice Johnson’s April 1950 monthly report on the Archives Department provides a report on the outcomes of the arrangement. It reads:

From 17th – 21st April inclusive Mr. Batchelor attended the Public Record Office and was given demonstrations and tuition

xxiii Information in this section is taken from HBCA/AM, 8900, A.102/2027, Memorandum, Archivist to Secretary, 28 April 1950; HBCA/AM, 8900, A.102/2027, Memorandum, Archivist to Secretary, 20 March 1950.
in repairing paper and parchment documents, maps, and books. He was also shown various methods of bookbinding. Besides the demonstrations and tuition, he was given much valuable advice as regards the best tools to use and samples of the necessary types of repair paper and material. He was also given the names of the suppliers of the various types of [repairing] paper etc. The following Company documents were treated by Mr. Batchelor under the supervision of the Public Record Office Staff:


2. Paper map belonging to H.M. Chittendens’s American Fur Trade of the Far West, (New York, 1935). Repaired and backed. Somewhat different from an ordinary repair as the map is on art paper.

3. Parchment grant of arms to William and Simon McGillivray, 1823. Further cleaning to that carried out last month. Slight repairs made to it.


It is reasonable to expect that this training would have introduced Batchelor to the practices of the PRO. All of the noted repairs are documented in the card index of repairs and bookbinding and a quick examination by this author of one of the noted letters, B.90/c/159 – Letter to James Anderson, Esq. from Quebec 26 April 1854, consisting of “iron gall” brown ink on blue, wove paper sheets, found evidence of paper repairs of the type described in the Manual (1937) including fills, edges, patches and framing. Repairing materials observed included a cream, laid paper, and, silk gauze. In addition, the letter was observed to lie very flat and found to have quite a bit of rattle, possible evidence of sizing and pressing, the former process of which is documented in the associated repair card for this item dated 21 April 1950 and signed by A.F. Batchelor. It reads, “Repairing rat-eaten corners & sizing. Repairs carried out at P.R.O. week ending Apr 21 1950.” Curiously, Batchelor notes that one of the letters that he had taken to the
PRO that week as a sample of his previous work—B.49/c/1 “Substance of Letters Received at Cumberland House 27th Feb 1821”—was “[r]etained at PRO for x Ray.”

Reference to research inquiries about the noted McGillivray grant and Captain William Coats under the heading ‘Correspondence and Enquiries’ in the same report suggests that the Coats map and the McGillivray map treated by Batchelor at the PRO may have been identified as priorities for repair during activities associated with these operations. Batchelor summarized his experience in a report dated April 24, 1950. It emphasizes how he had been introduced to PRO processes, including seal repair and flat storage techniques for maps, and also includes a listing of supplies required to effect document repairs. It also mentions how Batchelor brought in examples of his previous work and how these samples “were favourably commented upon & many more recent and [expedier?] knacks were explained to me”. It also notes how the instruction “was done freely and only a charge of 6/. was made for materials used.” The final paragraph of Batchelor’s report also provides a clue as to Batchelor’s previous repairing and binding experience and how this recent experience had prepared him for his repairing tasks at the Archives Department. It reads, “With the previous knowledge I had and this week of special instruction I feel satisfied to undertake any repairs in this Dept.”

Supplies and samples listed at the end of the report include cartridge paper (for drying documents), two quires of repairing paper (hand-made rag), and two quires of glazed, toned cartridge paper (cream), all available from Spicer’s Ltd, four yards of Chiffon gauze from Combier Silks, and two quires of waxed tissue, from Waxed Paper Ltd. An annotation to the report indicates that a sample of the Chiffon gauze was ordered on April 25, 1950.

Alice Johnson and Arturo Reynolds both wrote Roger Ellis separate letters expressing their appreciation to him for allowing Frank Batchelor to view demonstrations at the PRO and for the
information that his staff provided Batchelor at the time. Both letters indicated that Batchelor would put the knowledge to good use in the Archives Department. The follow-through on this training opportunity suggests that there was interest within the Archives Department to have someone on its staff develop the necessary skills to undertake archive repairs following the practice of the PRO. Indications are that at this point in the repair history of the HBCA, the Archives Department may be seen to be actively supporting the development and implementation of an in-house repair service and that is was confident in the ability of the Archives Department staff person concerned with repairs at the time—Frank Batchelor—to carry out such work.

The Archives Department’s support for the development of Frank Batchelor’s knowledge and skills in document repair was further demonstrated in November 1950 when Johnson nominated Batchelor as a candidate to attend a “School for Repairers” then being arranged by the SoA. The nomination was in response to a letter sent out by the Society to its membership advising them of the Society’s hopes that a Repairers School could be set up in January 1951 at the LSPGA and asking members for candidate nominations. Members were informed that classes would be held on a weekly basis on Mondays, and that a full-time course could be arranged if there was suitable demand for an “intensive course”, students would be selected by the Society, fees for the school would be “nominal”, it was hoped that the instructor would be one Mr. Gilkes, formerly of the PRO, students would need to provide their own documents on which to work, and that successful candidates would receive a “Diploma or Certificate in repairs”. Confirmation of Batchelor’s admission to the school is described in the monthly Archives Department report for January 1951. It reads:

By an arrangement with the Society of Local Archivists, Mr. Batchelor has joined a class for instruction on repairs to paper documents. This instruction is given by Mr. Jelks of the Public Record Office at the London School of Printing, on Mondays from 3-5p.m. The course will last eight weeks. Mr. Batchelor has treated seven very badly damaged letters at this class. The letters
could not be handled without damage to them, and they have now been cleaned, sized and backed in such a way that their life has been prolonged indefinitely.\textsuperscript{226}

Batchelor attended the course at the LSPGA and passed the examination.\textsuperscript{227} Johnson also nominated other members of the Archives Department staff for admission to the course in the early 1950s including typists Gwen Kemp and Beryl Lemon. Kemp attended the 1951-52 course beginning in October 1951, and passed the examination held in February 1952.\textsuperscript{228} Lemon attended the 1953 repair classes “and was awarded a certificate of proficiency in repairs, after passing the examination held in July”.\textsuperscript{229} Joan Craig, Assistant Archivist, attended weekly classes of the 1965-66 course taught by J.J. New of the PRO beginning in October 1965 and ending in June 1966.\textsuperscript{230} Craig replaced Johnson as HBC Archivist upon Johnson’s retirement in 1968.

As noted in Chapter 2, instruction for these courses was provided by current and former repairers of the PRO and the methods taught were the methods of the PRO. All classes attended by Archives Department staff members were taken at the LSPGA and the subjects studied included paper, parchment and seal repair. Monthly and annual reports and repair cards dating from the time indicate that Archives Department personnel carried out direct interventions on dozens of individual HBC records or ‘pieces’ at these classes. A review of the documentation found that repair and other processes were employed including cleaning, backing, filling, sizing, pressing, and framing. Materials commonly referenced include hand-made paper and chiffon gauze. Other training provided may have focused on the establishment of a repairing room, as evidenced by a handout from the 1965-66 course which lists materials (e.g., silk, paper, paste) and equipment (e.g., knives, bowls, presses) required to outfit a small repairing room.\textsuperscript{xxiv}

\textsuperscript{xxiv} Information in this section is taken from HBCA/AM, RG20/2/175, Stock, samples, repair room, [1969]-1974.
A report written for the BRA on work carried out by the Archives Department for the period 1949-1955 includes a description of the noted training and the Department’s expectation of the staff members who took the training. It also describes the scale of the records that could be treated in-house. It reads:

…. At present time the Department employs an Archivist, Assistant Archivist, two trained typists who are able to give valuable assistance in searching, preparing records for microfilming, etc., and one member of staff who is responsible for operating our ‘Microfile’ Camera and for checking the reels. The three last mentioned members of staff have each taken the Repairs Course given at the London School of Printing under the auspices of the Society of Local Archivists, which was inaugurated in 1951, and we are therefore able to use their services to repair many of our documents.

Repair and Make-up

As indicated above we have been able, since 1951, to undertake our own repairs. Although our equipment is limited, and does not permit us to deal with very large documents, we have repaired a considerable number of items, including several maps. The documents on which these repairs have been carried out have usually been made of paper as we have very few parchments amongst our records….231

A review of a description of the Assistant Archivist duties from November 1963 found that while the Archives Department carried out in-house archive repairs, normally such work fell to Frank Batchelor, and yet it is clear from the description that he was not relied upon to repair all types of records, as is revealed by the following extract from the noted description:

REPAIRS, BINDING, ETC.

Items which are valuable or special in any way or oversize are sent either to the Public Record Office (large maps or parchment or vellum documents) or to Mr C.E. Gray…. Other items needing repair or rebinding are handed out to Mr Batchelor. All items should be examined after repair. Instructions should be
given for making portfolios (for maps, oversize items, etc.), manila cases (mostly for paper-covered library books) or any other special containers required. Selecting and handing out to Mr Batchelor those library accessions which are to be covered with polythene covers. Ordering materials for repair. Some are obtained by Mr Batchelor.232

This information indicates that by 1963 the types of repairs that could be carried out in-house appear to have been limited by the size, material and condition of the records in addition to the experience of the repairer and the value of the items needing attention. In addition, making repairs part of the responsibilities of an archivist appears to have been be in keeping with PRO practice described by Hilary Jenkinson in the Manual (1922,1937).

A search for pay records was able to find records of wages of only one of the noted staff members, Beryl Lemon. Pay records indicate that upon being appointed to the Archives Department in December 1952, Lemon drew an annual salary of £188.10 and that in her final year (1955) drew an annual salary including a bonus of £351.233 By comparison, Leveson Gower’s annual salary at the time of his retirement was £600, excluding the £500 grant given to him by the Board as an expression of its appreciation for his past service.xxv

A review of RG20/2/32 – Bookbinding and Repairs – Orders for Material found copies of orders, quotes, and receipts dating from 1946 through 1955 which provide evidence to support the contention that the Archives Department had the capacity to carry out archives repairs in-house starting around 1950. All of these records are associated with the procurement of binding and repair materials such as millboard, chiffon silk gauze, and handmade repair paper. The records show that orders placed over this period resulted in the procurement of at least 12 quires of handmade repair paper, 32 yards of chiffon silk gauze, six quires of cartridge paper, six quires of wax

paper and 31 yards of linen. HBC staff members whose names appear in these records include
R.A. Reynolds, Alice McGrath (Alice Johnson) and A.F. Batchelor. Table 3 presents content
extracted from three orders placed by the HBC for repairing supplies in the early to mid-1950s.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th>Goods &amp; services ordered</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Order date/receipt date</th>
<th>Purchaser</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blades, East &amp; Blades</td>
<td>24 sheets of 22 x30” W.S.H. Cartridge paper &amp; delivery to Archives Department</td>
<td>£1.8s.6d</td>
<td>Ordered 28 February 1952, received [n.d.]</td>
<td>R.A. Reynolds, Secretary, HBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.W. Russell &amp; Son</td>
<td>2 quires Hand-made Paper @ 17/6d per quire and delivery to Archives Department</td>
<td>£1.16s.4d</td>
<td>Ordered 16 September 1954, received 22 September 1954</td>
<td>R.A. Reynolds, Secretary, HBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.W. Russell &amp; Son</td>
<td>4 yards chiffon all silk gauze, 40” wide, @ 9/9d per yard” and “2 quires wax paper 4 sheets of 22 x30” and delivery to Archives Department</td>
<td>£2.4s</td>
<td>Ordered 9 March 1955, received 15 March 1955</td>
<td>R.A. Reynolds, Secretary, HBC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3

Vendors mentioned in the records include Gardiner & Co., Straker Bros. Ltd., Combier Silks Ltd.,
material and at least one of the noted suppliers (Combier) is documented in Batchelor’s report on
his week at the PRO Repairs Department in April 1950.

A review of the card index record of repairs and the monthly and annual reports on the activities
of the Archives Department found that fewer than two dozen repair projects are documented as
having been carried out by members of the Archives Department between the time of Frank
Batchelor’s resignation in December 1964 and the shipment of the HBCA to Winnipeg in Fall 1974. Further analysis revealed that none of these treatments is documented as having been

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xxvi Information in this section is taken from HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/32, Bookbinding and repairs – orders for material, 1946-1955.

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carried out post-1969. In addition, a review of the list of Archives Department repair and bookbinding projects compiled c.1957-1974\textsuperscript{xxvii} found documentation showing that the Archives Department sent some 250 items out to C.E. Gray for attention during the time period 1965-1974 and that more than half of this material had been sent out in 1974. Further consideration of the items listed determined that most of the material sent out prior to 1974 was imprint material and that most of the material sent out post-1973 were records in the form of maps and plans, bound volumes, and prints on paper. The following account by Shirlee Anne Smith provides insight into the decision-making process that led to the noted materials being sent to C.E. Gray in 1974. It is taken from an email dated June 14, 2004 which she wrote to \textit{this} author in response to questions that I had posed about the repairs. It reads,

\ldots I had those documents/paintings restored \ldots. The documents (were there not some maps), in particular, were to my untrained conservation eyes, almost beyond redemption, and I was concerned about shipping them in that condition. My thinking was also governed by the fact that the documents belonged to the Company and that it was responsible for the restoration. I also knew that conservation facilities in Manitoba, at least in the foreseeable future, were unavailable \ldots.\textsuperscript{234}

The HBC spent thousands of pounds sterling on outsourced repair and bookbinding services and supplies during the period under study and approximately £1,600 for C.E. Gray's services in 1973-74 alone.\textsuperscript{xxviii} Whether C.E. Gray’s archive repairs c.1957-1974 were carried out in keeping with PRO practice is undetermined as the documentation appearing in the repair cards and in the files of the Archives Department lacks detail, and, due to a lack of time, none of the repaired records was examined during the search. However, given that one or more members of the Archives Department had taken the LSGPA course during this time period, it is reasonable to

\footnotesize{$^{\text{xxvii}}$ Information in this section is taken from HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/29, Documents and books, repaired, rebound or bound, 1957-1974.}

\footnotesize{$^{\text{xxviii}}$ Information in this section is taken from HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/118, Miscellaneous correspondence and notes on the Archives Department, 1939-1949; HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/29, Bookbinding and repairs, 1957-1974; HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/31, Bookbinding and repairs – general correspondence, 1937-1957, and HBCA/AM, 11897, RG20/2/32, Bookbinding and repairs – orders for material, 1946-1955.}
expect that C.E. Gray’s work might have been subject to scrutiny by one or more of these members, any one of whom could have brought work that did not meet the standard of the PRO to the attention of the Archivist. This said, a different approach might have been employed for library materials as is suggested in the following extract from notes written by Johnson after having a conversation with C.E. Gray about bindings for library books. It reads:

It is not practical to save the existing leather covers. Coats-of-arms, spine titles, [or] any other parts of the covers at present on our Library Books, which we wish to be preserved are best mounted inside the fly-leaf. It would be very expensive to incorporate them in the new binding and if the binding were removed again at a later date anything of the old binding incorporated in it would be liable to damage. It is, therefore, better in every way to have such parts mounted inside the fly-leaf. Mr Gray pointed out that the gilt may be slightly impaired in the removal process.235

A 1972 summary of the operations of the Archives Department makes note of some of the same observations about the repair history of the Archives Department that are documented in this chapter. It also appears to confirm that by June 1972, the in-house repair operation of the Archives Department had been decommissioned. The following extract from the summary appears under the sub-heading ‘Repair’ along with other operations under the heading CLASSIFICATION PROCEDURE. It reads,

Work of repairing and rebinding ‘the most important and oldest Books and Documents’ in the Archives was undertaken between 1928 and 1931 by A.W. Bylerley [sic] (ex Public Record Office).* Repair work was resumed in 1949 by F.B. [sic] Batchelor until his retirement in 1964, and a little repair work has also been undertaken by other members of staff while attending repair courses at the London School of Printing. Since 1964 necessary repair work has been undertaken by C.E. Gray of Barnes, S.W. 13, who regularly does binding and rebinding of Library books and periodicals.

Accommodation set aside for repair work has now been assumed for classification. Repair tools and materials are stored in Room C (cupboard with sliding doors) and Room D [of the
Since 1949 all repair work on archives has been recorded on cards which are arranged according to classification reference (Room B, window ledge).

*No details of this work yet traced.\footnote{\textsuperscript{236}}

\subsection*{3.3 Conclusion}

Indications are that repairs and other treatments have been carried out on HBCA materials since the 1920s when the HBC recognized the historical value of the HBCA and began to organize its records for publication. The first documented repairs appear to have been carried out by A.W. Byerley, formerly of the PRO, over a three-year period beginning in April 1928. While it is undetermined exactly which records received Byerley’s attention it appears that the work was carried out on some of the oldest material in the archives and that the repairs were carried out in the Archives Department. In addition, it is reasonable to expect that these records were identified as priorities during the re-organization of the archives and publication efforts c.1920-31. A scan by this author of 17\textsuperscript{th} and 18\textsuperscript{th} century volumes found over 100 volumes bearing evidence of having been the subject of a principled approach to repairs, but none containing or associated with any repairer’s note, conservation record or other form of documentation. Further research in the HBCA may yet confirm which records were the subject of Byerley’s attention and whether Byerley carried out his work in accordance with PRO practice. Regardless, following Byerley’s departure from the HBC in 1931 came a twenty-year period of near total dependence of the HBC on the private repairs policy of the PRO. This dependence resulted in several dozen maps and volumes from the HBCA being repaired and/or made-up at the PRO by repairers and binders of the Repairs Department. A review of the physical evidence of some of this work found that the materials and techniques used appear to have been applied in keeping with PRO practice, as described by Hilary Jenkinson in 1922 and 1937.
The HBC was able to perform some recovery actions for records damaged by mould and water while located at Hexton Manor during the Second World War. These actions included air dry and surface cleaning operations, and condition and environmental monitoring most of which were performed at Hexton by T.A. Mayhew. Mayhew is also known to have applied thymol powder to numerous mould-affected items at the Archives Department in the late 1940s. How Mayhew may have come to learn about these materials and techniques is undetermined, however, it is conceivable that he may have learned about them by reading the appropriate sections of the Manual, Minogue’s “The Repair of Archival Documents” (1943), or perhaps other publications including bulletins on the subject put out by the Technical Section of the British Records Association, copies of which were known to have been part of the Archives Library or in the files of the Archives Department at the time.

A major shift toward developing the ability to carry out archives repair in-house truly began in the early 1950s when the Archives Department established an in-house repair workshop and a card index of repair and bookbinding, and sent three members of its staff out for training in archives repair. This shift occurred primarily because Alice Johnson, Archivist, found that sending material out to the PRO could be inconvenient, and expensive. It was felt that completing such work in-house would save on costs and time. The noted staff members, Frank Batchelor, Gwen Kemp, and Beryl Lemon were each exposed to instruction on document repair provided by former or current workmen of the Repairs Department of the PRO. Batchelor received two bouts of instruction, one during a week of demonstrations and supervised practice at the PRO in April 1950 and another in 1951 during the SoA’s inaugural “School for Repairers” course at the LSPGA. Batchelor’s instruction at the PRO was provided by staff of the Repair Department and focused on repair of volumes, paper and parchment. This training included a review of work
already completed by him at the Archives Department. Upon completion of this week of instruction, Batchelor felt confident that he would be able to take on repairs of all kinds within the Archives Department. Batchelor’s skills were further augmented during his attendance at the “School for Repairers”, where the focus was on paper, parchment and seal repair. Kemp and Lemon also attended the course at the LSPGA, Kemp in 1951-52 and Lemon in 1953. All three individuals passed the examination and received a certificate in Proficiency in Repair. Other staff members who took this course included Joan Craig, Assistant Archivist, in 1965-66 and possibly R. Collier, an assistant in the Archives Department in the late 1960s. None of these staff members appear to have been hired specifically for their repairing skills: Batchelor was an assistant who carried out a variety of tasks including microfilm camera operations, Kemp and Lemon were typists, Craig was an assistant archivist, and Collier as noted, was an assistant. The wages of these staff members were largely undetermined during the exercise but consideration of Lemon’s final annual salary of £351 in 1954 in comparison with Alice Johnson’s starting wage as Archivist of £550 per annum in 1950 may be instructive. Collectively, these individuals carried out physical repairs and other treatments on approximately 800 items from the HBCA in the Archives Department during the period 1950-1970 with the vast majority carried out by Frank Batchelor during the period 1950-1964. Materials and supplies recommended during these training opportunities were purchased by the Archives Department and applied in these operations. The HBC spent thousands of British pounds on such material, and over £1,600 in 1973-74 alone. It is reasonable to expect that the materials and techniques used in these treatments were applied in accordance with the practice of the PRO as taught during the noted training and in the manner described in the Manual. In addition, it is reasonable to expect that items came up for repairs during the course of regular Archives Department operations including cataloguing and classification, research and reference, transcription, and microfilming. Repairs and bookbinding were handed out to private contractors during this time including Blades, East and Blades and
C.E. Gray, the latter of which carried out repairs and bookbinding operations for hundreds of records and library books from the HBCA during the period 1957-1974. Many records were the subject of repairs in the year leading up to the transfer of the HBCA to Winnipeg in 1974, due to the Keeper’s concerns about their condition and the lack of conservators in that city.
Chapter 4

Conclusion

Until the HBC recognized the historical value of its older records in 1919 and its responsibility to care for them and to share the information contained in them, and began to organize them in the 1920s to facilitate research and transcription work, ‘repair’ appears not to have figured as a prominent measure in the history of their survival. Their survival to this point appears to have been primarily dependent upon storage measures, the survival of the HBC itself, and the HBC’s commitment to keeping the records for business and legal purposes. The HBC to this point, like officials responsible for the public records in Britain prior to 1838 and record keeping entities outside the U.K. central government prior to archival developments of the early 20th century, was simply not in the business of operating an archives service, and because of this, its records did not come up as priorities for repair.

I suspect that the HBC first came to recognize ‘repair’ as a preservation measure during work associated with the organization of the HBCA and the research and publication work led by Schooling c.1920-1926 and Doughty c. 1928-1930. Individuals involved in these projects including Leveson Gower and other assistants necessarily handled many records and during this work it would likely have been very difficult for them to overlook the state of repair of the records that they were handling. I suspect that enough damage was observed to prompt the HBC to hire A.W. Byerley in 1928 to repair “[a]ll the most important and oldest Books and Documents”xxix in the HBCA.

xxix Information in this section is taken from HBCA/AM 11897, RG20/2/18, Memorandum, Leveson Gower to Brooks, 15 July 1931.
The HBC’s employment of A.W. Byerley, an experienced bookbinder and former Superintendent of repairs and bookbinding at the PRO, and the repairs he carried out for the HBC—although undocumented—from April 1928 through May 1931, are indicators of the HBC’s early ability to carry out ‘repairs’. Given Byerley’s background I suspect that his methods were applied in keeping with the methods of the PRO, as described by Hilary Jenkinson in the *Manual* (1922). The findings of a 2006 scan by *this* author of many of the oldest records in the HBCA appear to bear this out. HBC was not alone in its reliance upon PRO experience in ‘repair’; from the 1920s through the 1950s, many record keeping entities outside central government in Britain took advantage of the PRO’s policy of ‘private repairs’. However, as Byerley was no longer an employee of the PRO at the time of his employment with the HBC, it may not be entirely correct to say, as Smith (1938) suggests, that his services were provided as a result of the advisory services policy of the PRO.

Repair does not appear to have figured as a regularized operation of the Archives Department between the time of Byerley’s retirement from the HBC in May 1931 and the establishment of a repairing workshop at the Archives Department in March 1950. Although this time period encompasses the development and implementation of the classification scheme and preservation measures proposed by Jenkinson *et al.* in the early 1930s, the carrying out of transcription work for the HBRS, and the first nineteen years of operation of the HBC’s archives service, no repairing workshop was established and relatively few items were repaired. The lack of repairing work during this time may be attributed to a variety of circumstances including the general lack of repairers at the time, the effect of the worldwide economic depression on the HBC’s hiring practices, and the effect of WWII on the human and technical resources of the Archives Department and on the availability of the HBCA. In addition, the three-year waiting list and moratorium on private repairs at the PRO by 1947 may also have had an effect.
During the time period 1931-50, the Archives Department had approximately two dozen maps and volumes from the HBCA repaired at the PRO. The maps appear to have been identified as priorities as a result of researcher queries and exhibition related circumstances while the volumes appear to have been identified as priorities as a result of the response to the discovery of water-damaged volumes at Hexton Manor. However, indications are that some treatments had been carried out at the Archives Department by assistants to the Archivist in the 1940s and early 1950s and although it is not clear whether these assistants had specialized knowledge, these treatments could have been influenced by the processes described in published resources then found in the Archives Library including Jenkinson’s *Manual* (1922, 1937) and Minogue’s *The Preservation of Archival Documents* (1943).

The Archives Department developed, maintained and demonstrated an ability to carry out principled document repairs *in-house* from 1950 through the 1960s. The history of this effort is particularly associated with the establishment and use of a repairing workshop and documentation system at the Archives Department, the training of at least four members of the Archives Department staff in repairing techniques at the PRO and at the LSPGA and with the repairs carried out by these employees on nearly 1000 items from the HBCA. Given the instruction that these employees received, it is reasonable to expect that they carried out these repairs in accordance with the repairing principles and practices of the PRO, as described by Hilary Jenkinson in the *Manual* (1937) and in accordance with the principles described by Roger Ellis in *The Principles of Archive Repair* (1951). It is also reasonable to expect that the noted items had been identified and selected as priorities for repair during routine archive operations; however, regularized repair operations at the Archives Department during this time appear to have occurred during the period 1950-1964.
The majority of documented repairs at the Archives Department in the 1950s and 60s were carried out by Frank Batchelor, which is consistent with a similar finding by Simmons in 2007. Relatively few treatments are documented as having been carried out in-house after Batchelor’s resignation in December 1964 and all documented repairs after January 1969 appear to have been carried out off-site by the contractor, C.E. Gray. The sharp decline in repairing activity at the Archives Department after Batchelor’s resignation is curious because at no time afterward was the Archives Department without at least one employee on staff who had taken the course at the LSPGA. The takeover of the repairing workshop for processing and the storage of the repairing tools and materials in the cupboards of the archives extension at Beaver House by June 1972 effectively marked the end of the Archives Department’s repairing operation. The contracting out of repair work to C.E. Gray in 1973-74 is indicative of the continuing need for repairs and given that some of the items that were sent to C.E. Gray were maps, possibly an indication of the current and past capacity (skills, equipment, workspace) of the Archives Department.

Many record keeping entities outside central government in England in the 20th century established repairing workshops as part of their archive operations, sent employees to be trained in document repair at institutions such as the PRO and the LSPGA, and repaired records in keeping with the practice of the PRO. In consequence, the application of the PRO repairing methods remained the norm of practice in many archives across England for much of the 20th century. This state of affairs was due in part to the reticence of officials like Jenkinson and Ellis to accept what they considered untried and untested processes and partly because archive conservation in Britain did not really emerge until after the international response to the 1966 Florence Flood. Although the period under study encompassed the emergence of the ‘Chemical Revolution’ (Baynes-Cope 1988, 185) in the 1950s, the effect of the 1966 Florence Flood on the development of the conservation profession, the emergence of some formal training and
education programs in repair and conservation beginning in the early 1970s, and the publication of British Standard 4971 – Part 1 (1973), these developments appear to have had little if any effect on archive repair developments at the Archives Department.

In regard to Holmes’ question in 2008 about the possible influence of the Manual on other core functions of the Archives Department, there is little to no evidence to suggest that the Archives Department consulted the Manual for guidance on repairing methods. This said, given that the HBC had copies of the Manual in its Archives Library and knowing that the text remained influential in Britain for much of the 20th century, it is highly probable that the section on repairs was read by some employees of the Archives Department. However, at the end of the day, it seems clear that the HBC’s use of the PRO’s private repairs service and the provision of training of Archives Department employees in repair, either at the PRO, or at the LSPGA, indicates that while the PRO certainly had a very direct effect on the repairing practice of the Archives Department, Jenkinson’s was more indirect, in that his influence was very much contained to the PRO itself.

One limitation of the study is that the assertions made about whether repairs were carried out in keeping with PRO practice are to a large extent based upon consideration of the repairer’s background and/or training and of the documentation contained in the treatment records of the Archives Department. Further study, notably of evidence of repairs carried out by A.W. Byerley and Frank Batchelor, is highly encouraged to provide a more precise finding about the noted repairs.

The thesis, however, raises several issues which merit further study. For one, it has not been determined with certainty which records were the subject of A.W. Byerley’s attention, nor which
records were sent to the PRO to be repaired prior to 1945. In addition, further research might reveal how well extant historic repairs of the Archives Department are holding up and whether records treated during this time period pose any challenges to the long-term access of the records. In addition, examination of the treated records may provide further indication about the capacity of the Archives Department for certain kinds of repairs. For example, were treatments of oversize maps beyond its capabilities? And if so, why? Lastly, further research may reveal answers as to why so few items appear to have been repaired in-house during the period 1965-74 as compared to the period 1950-64.

In conclusion, I assert that the HBC’s commitment to developing and operating an archives service in accordance with recommended archive administrative principles and practices had a positive effect on the ability of the Archives Department to carry out document repairs.
Appendix A
Research Ethics Board (REB) Approval

February 10, 2006

Robert S. Ridgen
Master’s Student
Dept. of Art
Queen’s University

GREB Ref # GART-006-06

Dear Mr. Ridgen:

The General Research Ethics Board (GREB) has given expedited approval to your proposal entitled “An Historical Study of the Hudson’s Bay Company’s Management of Document Repair Work, 1931-1974”. In accordance with the Tri-Council Guidelines (article D.1.6) and Senate Terms of Reference (article G), your project has been approved for one year. At the end of each year, GREB will ask if your project has been completed and if not, what changes have occurred or will occur in the next year.

You are reminded of your obligation to advise the GREB of any adverse event(s) that occur during this approval period (details available on our webpage www.qsra.ca/rg/research/protocol/forms.html/Adverse). An adverse event includes, but is not limited to, a complaint, a change or unexpected event that alters the level of risk for the researcher or participants or situation that requires a substantial change in approach to a participant(s). You are also advised that any adverse events must be reported to the GREB within 48 hours.

You are also reminded that all changes that might affect human participants must be approved by the GREB. Examples of required approvals are: changes in study procedures or implementations of new aspects into the study procedures that affect human subjects. These changes must be sent to Linda Frid at the Office of Research Services or fridl@post.queensu.ca prior to implementation. Ms. Frid will seek the approval of the GREB reviewer(s) who originally assessed your application.

On behalf of the General Research Ethics Board, I wish you continued success in your research.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Stevenson
Professor and Chair
General Research Ethics Board

Cc: Prof. John O’Neill, Faculty Supervisor
Appendix B

Interview Schedule

1. By what methods were HBC documents repaired for the period under study?

2. When was each method adopted by the HBC and under whose influence or at whose suggestion? Was a method adopted as a result of the archivist’s reading of the literature on the subject of document repair work, such as Jenkinson’s *Manual*, or correspondence with other institutions, or training in the procedure in some other agency?

3. If a method was discontinued, when was it discontinued and for what reasons?

4. Are there any records in the office files of the HBC Archives Department concerning either the adoption or the abandonment of any method? Are there published articles on the restoration work?

5. Was the repair work done by HBC Archives Department staff members or sent out to be done commercially?

6. In your opinion, what is the present state of preservation of the repaired documents, principally paper strengthening methods such as silking? To your knowledge, was any re-restoration necessary? If so, what method and after what period of time? Was re-restoration accomplished with ease or with difficulty?
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53 Ibid.


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69 Roper, “Public Record Office,” 163.

70 Smith, “Manuscript Repair,” 2.

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73 Ibid, 31.

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