



ALWAYS AN ADVENTURE:

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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The Glenbow Foundation

Since my first letter to Douglas Leechman at the National Museum in 1952, we had maintained a fairly regular correspondence. I had arranged for him to be a guest speaker at the Historical Society and Pauline and I entertained him while he was in Edmonton. Then, in the summer of 1955, he sent us a change of address postcard indicating that he had moved to Calgary, where he had become Director of Western Canadiana for the Glenbow Foundation.

The Glenbow had appeared on the scene in 1954, when it was established as a charitable foundation by Eric L. Harvie, a lawyer and oil man. Like philanthropists of old, such as Guggenheim, Carnegie, and Getty, Eric Harvie wanted to put his fortunes back into where he had obtained them. His personal interest was in collecting, so his foundation was geared towards western Canadian history and art. It did not start off as a museum, but as an agency for collecting and preserving the past.

I had already heard of Glenbow, for a few months earlier, George H. Gooderham, formerly Regional Director of Indian Agencies, had retired and joined that organization as its first employee. He had been Pauline's "big boss" and they always got along very well. I had met Gooderham and we, too, had become friends.

George was born on an Indian reserve in Saskatchewan and spent almost his entire life in the Indian service. He took over as Indian agent on the Blackfoot Reserve in 1920 when his father, the former agent, died suddenly of a heart attack. George was one of the "good guys." He was sincerely interested in the Indians and worked hard on their behalf. There were a number of times when he had to defy his own bosses when he believed that some intended action was detrimental to them. He liked the Blackfoot, visited their homes on a social basis, and had many lifelong friends among them. He was a natural candidate for the position of Inspector of Indian Agencies for Western Canada,

but his liberal views towards the treatment of Indians had alienated such people as Inspector W.M. Graham, and the promotion never came. Only in the latter years of his career was he placed in charge of Alberta reserves.

Not only did we like George, but he was so fond of Pauline that he used to call her his daughter, Indian-style. She gladly accepted this honour and over the years we spent a lot of time together. When George died in 1977, Pauline sat in the chapel as part of his family.

George's initial duties at Glenbow were to identify a large number of pictures taken by Arnold Lupson, an Englishman who had lived with the Sarcees and had married Chief Big Belly's widow. After that, George was a liaison between Glenbow and the Indian Department, and with the Indians themselves. He was a great guy.



Late in 1955, I received a request from Leechman, asking me if I would examine the Harry Pollard photographic collection to determine its historical and financial value. Pollard had moved to Calgary in 1899, and his collection of Indian and pioneer photographs was reputed to be comparable to the Ernest Brown collection of Edmonton, which the Alberta government had recently purchased for \$40,000.

During my Christmas holiday, I spent two days with Pollard but the results were somewhat disappointing. He proclaimed that he had 50,000 negatives, but any time a person visited him, he showed them only his prize pieces. These included Indian portraits taken by a predecessor, Alexander Ross, about 1886. Pollard started that way with me too, but when I asked to review the entire collection, he grudgingly agreed. It turned out there were 50,000 negatives all right, but 20,000 were studio portraits, mostly of routine customers, and another 3,000 were group shots of military graduating classes. There were 5,000 international views, beautiful stuff but not pertinent to Alberta, and another 10,000 commercial negatives which had a few interesting pieces but consisted mostly of flower shows, advertising shots, and window displays.

In the end, I estimated that the historical part of the collection consisted of about 10,000 negatives, not 50,000. But those 10,000 were wonderful pictures, for there was no doubt that Pollard was a first-rate photographer. I recommended to Glenbow that it try to acquire all the "oil photos, Klondike gold rush, early Lethbridge, early Calgary, a few Indians, historical portraits, some ranching, farming and irrigation."⁴⁶ I believed the entire collection was

inferior to the Ernest Brown collection, both in size and content, and accordingly was worth far less than the \$40,000 paid for that collection.

I think Glenbow offered Pollard \$10,000 and he became so angry that he sent them a bill for the two days I had spent with him. Pollard insisted that his collection was just as big and as important as Brown's, and he demanded the same amount the government had given to the Edmonton photographer. At one point he even threatened to destroy the collection, but in the end it was sold to the Alberta government. I was rather sorry, as I would liked to have seen it remain in Calgary.



As a result of this assignment, I was asked by Douglas Leechman if I would like to join the staff of the Glenbow Foundation. Next to my marriage, this was probably the most momentous decision of my career, and I agonized long and hard over the offer. I also sought the counsel of others. Pauline – bless her heart – said she'd go wherever I chose to go. She loved Edmonton and had lots of close friends there, but on the other hand, Calgary was halfway to the Blood Reserve. When I wrote to Jack Ewers, he replied, "I personally feel that it is a field you might do very well in – your interest in art and in history and ethnology might very well be combined in a museum career. Lord knows Alberta could use some new museums. And there is no doubt but what there is no end of fascinating material on Alberta history and Indians that could be used."⁴⁷

My father, on the other hand, was completely against the idea and could not understand how I could even consider it. Currently, I had a government job, with good pay, security, and medical and pension plans. Glenbow offered me a slight raise, no security, no medical plan, and no pension plan. In fact, leaving my job for a rich man's hobby seemed to my father to be an entirely foolhardy prospect. Besides that, I learned that there was going to be a division of duties within the Department of Economic Affairs, with advertising being split off from publicity, and there was more than a good chance that I would get a sizable raise and promotion within the year.

I did what I always did at decision time. I made a list of positive and negative factors on both sides. In the government job, the pluses were security, a good chance of promotion, good pay, and good working conditions. On the minus ... there weren't really any. For Glenbow, the minuses were lack of security, having to sell our house and move away from Edmonton, and going into an organization which could be terminated at the whim of its benefactor.

In the end, there was one big plus for Glenbow that won the day – spending my full time working in the field of western Canadian history. So I accepted.

Eric Harvie then announced he would not hire me unless the Alberta government agreed to let me go. If they were opposed, the deal would be off. A few days later, I was on tenterhooks when I learned that Hod Meech, president of Managers Limited, Harvie's umbrella company, was coming to see our deputy minister. I had worked well with Ralph Moore, but to me he was a typical senior civil servant and I wasn't sure how magnanimous he could be in this kind of situation. I found out later in the day that I had grossly underestimated him. When he called me into his office, the first thing he did was to congratulate me on being accepted by Glenbow. He made it clear that the rumoured promotion for me was true if I decided to stay, but he would do nothing to interfere with my ambitions. When I left, I was extremely grateful and relieved.

The next few weeks were a blur, as I arranged to start work in Calgary on April 1, 1956. We had our house to sell, but this proved to be no problem, as my mother and dad wanted it. Then I was off to Calgary, travelling around with real estate salesmen looking at houses. There was a good prospect in the Highwood district of northwest Calgary, so Pauline came down to give her opinion. The place was a nice little two-bedroom bungalow for \$8,000. We had almost decided on it when the salesman told us of another house a block away. It had three bedrooms and was available for \$12,000. A family had put a down payment on it but had been unable to meet the loan requirements and it was back on the market. We took one look at it and decided to buy it. The house was far too big for our purposes but we were always having visitors and hoped to have a family some day. It turned out to be a wise choice, as we were still living in the same house when I retired from Glenbow thirty-five years later.

After the farewell parties and good wishes, Pauline and I and a furniture van headed south for Calgary. I suppose I should have been homesick, leaving Edmonton for good for the first time, but it didn't turn out that way. I had Pauline with me, so my home was wherever she happened to be. I often said that I changed from being an Edmonton Eskimo football fan to a Calgary Stampeder supporter when we reached Red Deer. Not so with Pauline. Although she was a southern girl, she had loved Edmonton, her friends, her hockey and football teams, and was loath to give up any of them.

Fortunately for us, Irene and Gerald Tailfeathers had moved to Calgary some time earlier and we immediately picked up our old friendship. Gerald

was a draftsman for an oil company and lived only a couple of miles from us, so we were visiting back and forth all the time. Similarly, Bill and Sally Marsden were living in Calgary where Bill was running a Calgary studio for the government. He lived only three blocks from our new house, which was one of the reasons why we chose it. So four of our best friends had preceded us to Calgary.

Obviously, Glenbow was very new when I joined it in 1956. When oil was discovered at Leduc and Redwater in the late 1940s, Eric Harvie held a number of leaseholds which made him a wealthy man. His interest in collecting apparently came from his old hunting partner, Norman Luxton of Banff. Luxton had amassed a large collection of Indian artifacts, and in 1951 he decided to open a museum; Harvie became involved and ended up financing the deal. However, Harvie was known as a man who liked to have complete control over any business he was involved in, and in this deal, Luxton was running the museum. Harvie's solution was to establish his own Glenbow Foundation in 1954.



On my first day at work, I didn't know what to expect. Until this time, any business I had conducted concerning my employment had been at Harvie's business offices, Managers Limited, which were located in the Michael Building on 9th Avenue. However, I was instructed to show up for work at the Hull House, on 12th Avenue. On the morning of April 1st, I walked about a mile to the nearest bus stop (my old car had been sold for junk), went downtown, transferred to the Belt Line, and ended up in front of an old brick mansion. Inside, I was directed to Leechman's office which had once been the parlour. After some pleasantries and general discussions, Leechman reached into a filing cabinet and handed me a pile of manuscripts and photographs.

"Here," he said, "You are the archivist of the Foundation."

I knew the meaning of the word "archivist," but that's about all I knew. However, the prospect of looking after all the documents and photographs collected by Glenbow seemed like a thrilling one. Until that moment, I had no idea what my duties would be or what position I would hold. I was then directed to a tiny room in the back area of the second floor. This had been the maid's quarters in palmier days and now would be the archives.

The Hull House was a wonderful building. It had been constructed for merchant W.R. Hull in 1904 in relatively close proximity to the homes of Sir James Lougheed and Senator Pat Burns. It consisted of a three-storey mansion

on huge grounds, with a carriage house and greenhouses near the back of the lot. It had a number of ingenious features. For example, the chandeliers were equipped to use either electricity or natural gas. The house had a well in the basement (long since sealed up), and a vacuum system which was activated by plugging a hose into one of the many outlets along the baseboards. It had the finest hardwood on the floors, fabric wallpaper in many places (I believe it was Japanese), and fireplaces of marble imported from Italy. I was told that there was a secret compartment near one of the fireplaces but none of us could ever find it.

Even outside there was an original innovation in the watering system. The yard was surrounded by a fence made of iron tubular railings set between sandstone pillars. The bottom railing was in fact a water pipe and had outlets for watering the lawn. And in the garden at the back was a huge archway which I was told was actually a pair of mammoth tusks.

When I joined Glenbow, I brought the staff complement at Hull House up to eight. Besides Leechman and Gooderham, there was Nina Napier, the librarian; Eleanor Ediger, in charge of the art collection; D.T. Smith, business manager; and secretaries Dorothy Wardle and Hazel Boswell. There also were four groundsmen and maintenance staff. Working away from the building on a part-time contract basis were Margaret and Isobel Loggie in the Peace River area, John Laurie and Philip Godsell in Calgary, and perhaps a few others. In addition, Dr. Marie Wormington of Denver had been conducting archaeological surveys on behalf of Glenbow.

The layout of Hull House put Leechman and his secretary on the main floor, with Gooderham occupying a study near the rear, and with a few paintings decorating the walls. On the second floor were more offices, the archives – such as it was – and Eleanor Ediger's office. On the upper floor was the library, and in the basement was the art storage area.

My immediate task was to set up a filing and cataloguing system. There were no archives in Alberta, and the only collection I had ever seen was in the Montana Historical Society in Helena. I got permission to revisit Montana and to make a trip to Regina to see what they were doing there. After extensive study and considerable reading, I concluded that the system devised by Lucile M. Kane at the Minnesota Historical Society was the best on the continent so I adapted it for our own use. It proved to be quite effective in handling a small volume of papers, but twenty years later it had to be discarded when Glenbow's collections became too large to organize on the basis of topic and Cutter numbers.

At Regina, I learned about proper storage boxes, acid-free folders, and the importance of temperature and humidity controls. Some of these were little more than a dream in the old Hull House, but they made me aware of the requirements in handling documents.

From the beginning, I realized that incoming documents had to be properly documented. As soon as they arrived, I recorded the date, source, size, and other pertinent data. Anyone who examines the old handwritten accession book I started in 1956 will note that the first few acquisitions show no date and no source. These were the documents handed to me on my arrival. I never could find out where they came from.

The cataloguing of photographs was a different matter. I checked Helena and Regina, read the few pieces of literature available on the subject, and even examined commercial studios for systems, but none satisfied me. I then devised a temporary system for recording new collections but waited until many months later, when I was able to travel to archives in Winnipeg, St. Paul, Chicago, Toronto, Ottawa, and other centres to examine their systems.

I observed that some archives filed their photographs subject-wise and made cross-entry cards, but to my mind this didn't work. For example, at one archives I looked in a folder entitled "Farming" and found a few items, but there were other farming pictures filed under the names of individual farmers. In some cases these were cross-entered but in most cases they weren't. In another archives, prints were made instead of cross-entry cards. This meant that if there was a picture with ten identified people in a group, then ten prints were made and filed under their names. I found most of these systems were awkward and unworkable for larger collections.

Finally, I pulled together all of my notes and, based partly on the system used in Minnesota, I devised our own system. This divided collections into two groups – prints with no negatives, and collections with negatives. There was a further division on the basis of the size of negatives which made storage and retrieval much easier. Within each of these categories, collections were simply filed consecutively in the order received. With negatives, a print was made and mounted on a small card with the identification and other information on the back. Then cross-entry cards were made on the basis of Library of Congress headings.

The system worked. In fact, it was copied by a few other institutions, and over the years the archives received many compliments on the accessibility of its photographic collections.



During the first few weeks at Glenbow it seemed as though we were riding on a roller coaster. New staff were coming in thick and fast. By June, O.S. Longman, former deputy minister of agriculture, and his assistants, were working on agricultural history in Edmonton; Nick Wickenden, a university student, was studying steamboats; Eleanor Luxton was working at High River; and William Rodney was studying the life of John George “Kootenai” Brown. Meanwhile, Dick Forbis had joined the staff a month after me and set up an Archaeology Department out back in the carriage house.

Besides setting up the archives, my activities during 1956 included being Eric Harvie’s speech writer. As soon as I joined the staff, I was put to work interviewing oil pioneers and writing a speech which Harvie used during a tribute to the oil industry. No sooner was that out of the way than I began research into the history of the Calgary Highlanders, of which Harvie was honorary colonel. This resulted in a speech Harvie gave at the retirement of Lt. Col. Mark Tennant.

By comparison with later years, the tools for archival and research work were archaic. Old Underwood manual typewriters were the standard, and I also had a small portable I had picked up at an auction sale. This was useful when travelling. Wet paper and thermal copying machines were just coming on the market. I experimented with a Thermofax machine but found it to be useless because of the temporary nature of the copies. I then tried two wet copiers, Contoura–Constat and Cormack. They were messy and the copies tended to turn brown because of the chemicals, but at least they did make copies. We stayed with a Contoura Scout for a couple of years until dry copiers came on the market.

Tape recorders were not yet in general use, but we did have a Webcor wire recorder, which was better than nothing. A few years later, any wire copies we had were transferred to tape. As for microfilms, they were readily available but Eric Harvie was opposed to having them in the archives. He wanted originals, not copies. I quietly collected everything available on microfilm but a couple of years passed before I could get permission to buy a microfilm reader.

As archivist, I was anxious to get out in the field and start collecting, and in this I was encouraged by both Leechman and Harvie. At first, I used leads which I had brought with me. But the biggest early project was one which involved the old Indian Department records. As soon as I arrived at Glenbow, I told Leechman and Gooderham about the rich collection of correspondence at the Blood Indian Agency and suggested that the same kind of documents

might exist in other agencies and should be preserved. This set in motion a series of events which ultimately involved Indian Affairs Branch in Ottawa and the Public Archives of Canada.

Leechman wrote to W. Kaye Lamb, the Dominion Archivist, and suggested that Glenbow salvage all historical records in the various Indian agencies and provide a list to the Public Archives. Lamb could then select those documents to go to Ottawa and the rest would stay at Glenbow. While we were waiting, Gooderham and I toured all the major agencies, making an inventory and in some instances borrowing the records in hope that something would be resolved.

At the end of 1956, I sent a memo to Jack Herbert, our director of research, complaining that negotiations had stalled and that in my opinion the Indian Department records were “the most valuable material that could ever be obtained by the Archives of the Foundation.”⁴⁸ As a minimum, I recommended that 131 letter-books, 140 diaries, 64 treaty paysheets to 1900, 66 Shannon files to 1900, 45 ration issue and account books, 16 bundles of loose files, and 16 files of vouchers be salvaged.

My suggestion was to obtain permission to pick up this material, with Glenbow keeping on deposit what it wanted and sending the rest to the Public Archives. Also, Glenbow could request microfilms of anything in Ottawa and Public Archives could do the same for the records in Calgary. It was asking for a lot, I know, but in view of the fact that Glenbow would be incurring a considerable expense performing a service that the Public Archives couldn't do, it was worth a try.

When Lamb demurred, Jack Herbert suggested that the situation be reversed: the good stuff would go to Ottawa and microfilms given to Glenbow, and the discards would stay with Glenbow. Lamb felt that this was a workable arrangement and suggested it be handled on a trial basis.

All these discussions had been taking place without the involvement of the Indian Affairs Branch – deliberately – as both sides believed that its director, Col. H.M. Jones, could throw a monkey wrench into the whole thing. Lamb was sympathetic to Glenbow and told us that the Indian Affairs Branch was one of his biggest problems. Officials refused to turn their old headquarters records over to the archives and insisted that there was nothing in the field offices worth saving. When Lamb finally approached Colonel Jones, sure enough, the bureaucrat was ready to screw up everything. In his own lofty manner, Jones informed Lamb that his department and not the Public Archives would decide what would happen to its papers. Then, after a bit of sabre rattling, he

approved a pilot program, reserving the right to call the records into Indian Affairs Branch rather than the Public Archives if he so wished.

When Lamb passed the news to us, he added a statement that at last gave Glenbow some leeway. He stated, "I may say that if we find that certain of the records of interest from your point of view are not required in Ottawa, the Indian Affairs Branch would have no objection to our placing them in your custody."⁴⁹

The matter dragged along for another several months, but it got a shot in the arm in November 1957, when Jack Herbert had a call from a friend of his, Doug Light in Battleford. Doug had been visiting a federal government office when he saw the caretaker piling a bunch of records in the back yard, ready for burning. When he learned that these were old Indian Agency records, he salvaged what he could and then asked Herbert what to do with them. Jack told him to put them in boxes and ship them to us.

With some pleasure, we used this incident to show Lamb just what was happening to Indian Department field records. We sorted the documents, sent the list to the Public Archives, and asked them what they wanted. These were shipped and the rest we kept.

However, it wasn't until the spring of 1960 that the matter was resolved, and not entirely to my satisfaction. By this time, Colonel Jones could no longer deny that there were valuable records in the field, but instead of giving us or Public Archives a free hand, he decided to send a pair of bureaucrats from Central Registry to collect anything important, and to destroy the rest.

I immediately wrote to Jones, expressing my concern "that there may be a tendency to consider the administrative rather than the historical importance of some of these documents." I asked him if the men could set aside anything they didn't want and to let us take anything we wanted before any destruction took place. Jones agreed, stating that his two agents, P.F. O'Donnell and A.A. Goulet, would inform me after every inspection.

The men arrived in June 1960, but the program soon turned sour. At the Sarcee Agency, we were given only a couple of days to pick out the leftovers and were amazed at some of the things they left. There were death registers, ration lists, and other items that could be very important to the history of the tribe. I was travelling a few days behind the Indian Affairs men (at their request) so I never saw them.

My next trip, immediately after picking up the Sarcee records, was to the Blood Reserve. I knew these documents well, as I had prowled through the Indian Office in Cardston and an attic full of records at the farm headquarters.

When I got to the reserve, I met my brother-in-law, Horace, who was in charge of the farm headquarters.

"I've come to pick up the Indian Department records," I told him.

"Sure," he said, "but there's practically nothing left. We burned two truckloads of papers a couple of days ago."

My worst fears were realized. Send a couple of bureaucrats out from Ottawa and you're sure to have a disaster. Horace said that the two men picked up some old records in town, then came out to the farm headquarters, selected a few random files, and ordered the destruction of the rest. They stayed at the scene until two truckloads of papers were piled on the ground and burned.

As it happened, I had been working on these files a few weeks earlier. I had made a list of those I hoped to preserve and when I checked what was left I found that over half of them had gone up in smoke. As it was, they left behind some excellent correspondence files from the early part of the twentieth century. Thank God these survived, as they have been a boon to historians. But I am equally distressed at what they destroyed, especially as Glenbow supposedly had a deal with Indian Affairs.

At the time, I was told that the Central Registry people had picked up all the old records from the office in Cardston, but I later discovered they had taken only the letter-books. There were several dozen treaty paysheets and interest payment books dating back to the 1880s which were left behind, and these too were destroyed. Apparently these men said that the paysheets were all duplicated in Ottawa, but this was a lie. The ones in the field office were working copies, with all sorts of side notations, while the copies the agents sent to Ottawa were clean.

A few days later, I went to the Peigan Reserve. Here is what I say in my diary: "We saw [Harold] Woodsworth [the Indian Agent] and I picked up what few records he was willing to part with. I feel certain that there was more allotted to us by the Central Registry boys but Harold would not part with them."⁵⁰ All I got was a voucher book for 1896–1914 and a ration issue book for 1883–95. I knew there was a pile of stuff in the attic next door to the office but Woodsworth wouldn't let me near it. In the end, the Peigans were the losers, for an edict came from Ottawa and the files were destroyed.

My next trip was to the Blackfoot Reserve, where I was not surprised to find just a handful of papers. Again, the Ottawa crew had taken the letter-books, but I knew that almost everything else had been destroyed by a zealous Indian agent some years earlier. Similarly, Hobbema did not have much to offer, and I was told that everything was gone from the Edmonton Indian

Agency long before we started our campaign. My final trip was to Saddle Lake, where a few good records had survived.

I suppose I should be satisfied with the final results. There is no doubt in my mind that if Glenbow had not started the ball rolling in 1956, that nothing would have survived. By and large the Indian agents didn't care, and in some cases it was only by accident that the records had survived as long as they did. I am sure that when the administrative structure of Indian Affairs changed and agents were moved into nearby cities, the final destruction would have quietly taken place. So at least the letter-books survived in Ottawa, and these, now on microfilm, are a rich source of history, particularly for Native people.

There is one sad footnote. During a trip to Winnipeg in 1960, Gooderham stopped off at the Indian office to visit with Ralph Ragan, who was regional supervisor for Manitoba. During the course of conversation, Gooderham asked if any of the old Inspectorate files had survived. In the late nineteenth century and well into the 1930s, the headquarters for the prairie division of Indian Affairs was in Regina, and later in Winnipeg. Ragan said there had been a fire in Winnipeg "four or five years ago" and that most of the records had been destroyed. However, those that survived were in the basement of the federal building. Gooderham inspected these and, among other things, he found annuity payment books back to the 1870s. He then telephoned the regional supervisor in Regina and learned that they had a bunch of old files and letter-books in their basement.

For some reason, Gooderham never mentioned these to me. He simply wrote to the Public Archives, informing them that these files existed, and left it at that. Gooderham had been, after all, a career civil servant, and I think he expected that something would be done by Ottawa. I suppose he thought that if he told me, I'd raise a big fuss as I had been doing with the Alberta records. And he would have been right. As it is, I can find no record of the Winnipeg and Regina inspectorate files ever reaching Ottawa. I have no idea what became of them.



During the early years, the staff was encouraged to undertake research projects, and I was no exception. Because of the enjoyment I got from interviewing Joe Potts and writing a long biography of his father, I decided that I liked the biographical approach, so I looked around for someone else to consider. Soon after, I attended a meeting of the Indian Association of Alberta and on one of the breaks, I sat with Frank Medicine Shield, a member of the Blackfoot

tribe. When we started talking about history, I told him I was curious about something.

“Why is it,” I asked him, “that the Blackfoot consider Crowfoot to be such a hero? From what I can understand, he helped the Mounted Police, convinced the other chiefs to sign Treaty Seven, and sided with the government during the Riel Rebellion. He sounds like a toady who did everything he could to please the white people.”

Medicine Shield glared at me for a moment, then his look softened. “Dempsey,” he said, “if you weren’t such a good friend, I’d beat the hell out of you for what you just said. I don’t know about that other stuff but Crowfoot was the greatest chief we ever had.”

Thoroughly confused, I decided there and then to study the life of Crowfoot to determine how a man could do virtually everything the white men wanted and yet be a hero to his own people. With the blessing of Glenbow I toured the Blackfoot, Blood, and Peigan reserves over the next several months looking for stories about the chief. I spoke to a woman who had lived in Crowfoot’s lodge and had been eighteen years old when he died. I spoke to his grandson, Joe, and to people like One Gun who remembered the chief. And when the opportunity arose, I examined the Indian Department and Mounted Police records in Ottawa, and other documents around the country. I also wrote to Lucien and Jane Hanks, who had done research on the Blackfoot reserve in the 1938–41 period, and was grateful when they loaned me some of their field notes.

By the time I was ready to write my story, I had the answer to my question. In fact, the answer not only told me about Crowfoot but addressed the whole question of Indian-white relations. It was perfectly true that Crowfoot had done all the things that writers had given him credit for, but they had completely misunderstood his motives. Crowfoot never did anything for the white man; everything he did was for his own people. It just happened that their goals were the same, so the white man, looking at the situation from the lofty perch of superiority that seemed to go with his race, said, “Aha, Crowfoot did this because he was our friend.” Actually, he did it because it was in the best interests of his people.

He welcomed the Mounted Police in 1874 because the chiefs had lost control of their bands and the whisky traders were killing his people by the score. The traders were like grey wolves following a herd of buffalo, picking off the weaker ones as they lagged behind. And there was nothing the chiefs could do. Then in 1877, Crowfoot had signed the treaty because he could see the buffalo herds disappearing and had the foresight to realize that the Blackfoot would

need the white man's help to survive in the future. And he stayed out of the Riel rebellion because he had paid a visit to Winnipeg a few months earlier and knew there were thousands of white people at the other end of the railway line who could utterly destroy the Blackfoot in a matter of days. Crowfoot may have sympathized with the rebels, and was aware that his adopted son Poundmaker had been drawn into the fray, but he also realized the rebels would be defeated by a numerically superior army. And he did not want to see the same fate befall his own people.

Other facets of Crowfoot's life were revealed to me as I continued my research, and they indicated that he wasn't all that friendly with the white man. He was opposed to the Canadian Pacific Railway passing through his lands. He was strongly against the introduction of ranching, and he made no effort to become a farmer. And when the Mounted Police tried to arrest one of his councillors, he strongly resisted them to a point just short of violence.

This was my first lesson in Indian-white perceptions. I became aware of how people often drew conclusions based upon their own experiences, without realizing that someone from a different culture may have an entirely viewpoint. It wasn't always a cultural difference; sometimes it was based on a person's biases, or his superiority complex. But the end result – particularly where Indians and whites were concerned – was that two people could be talking to each other without each person really understanding what the other meant.

I came to the conclusion that in the latter part of the nineteenth century most Indians did not understand the significance of the treaties or the allocation of reserves. And when it came to religion, the first converts really accepted Christianity in addition to their own beliefs, not in place of them. Also, when they encountered something they did not understand, they were usually too polite to say anything. As a result, the person speaking to them assumed they were fully aware of any consequences of the discussion. Time and time again, I could find rational explanations for seemingly divergent actions when I placed each side of a question into its own cultural milieu.

I finished the Crowfoot manuscript in 1958 and, full of hope, I sent it off to several publishers. That's when I learned of the state of Canadian publishing. In most cases, without even reviewing the manuscript, the publishers said there was no market for Canadian history, especially western Canadian. The University of Toronto Press said that my work was not academic enough for them and that I should go to a commercial publisher. The closest I got to a bite was from Macmillan of Canada, which said if I would cut it by two-thirds and turn it into a children's book, they might be willing to take a look at it.

Instead, I put it on the shelf and turned my attention to other things. It looked as though my book publishing career was over before it had started.



The first few years at Glenbow were exciting and fun. We were like the big family that Eric Harvie wanted us to be and most of us got along pretty well together. I stayed clear of Godsell and Eleanor Luxton, but worked quite closely with the other researchers. I saw Harvie quite often and was a frequent guest for lunch at his special dining room at the Michael Building. I was very impressed with that dining room. It had a large table with a sheep's head centre-piece denoting his role of honorary colonel of the Calgary Highlanders, while around the room were some of Harvie's favourite paintings and sculptures. In particular, I remember a pair of porcelain swans by Hans Achtziger and some miniature British military figures.

There was usually a business reason for the meeting, but Harvie was always the gracious host, talking about his interests and drawing others into his conversation. I soon learned, however, not to take the meetings too seriously, as Harvie had a tendency to dream out loud. One time he talked about moving the Luxton Museum outside the Banff gates, and setting up a huge park which would have Indian villages from the various culture areas of Canada. He told me to follow it up, and I had put quite a bit of work into it before I discovered that he hadn't been serious. After a while, I learned to send him a confirming memo after I got back to the office, asking for more direction. If I didn't get an answer, I knew that Harvie had only been chatting.

In our day-to-day work at Hull House we had to adjust to the way that Harvie wanted things done. For example, he was entirely opposed to putting nails in the walls for any reason. Paintings were hung from wires suspended from picture rails and anything else had to lean against the wall or simply be placed elsewhere. Neglecting this edict was one of the reasons why Vera Burns was fired from the Foundation. Mind you, with those beautiful walls, many of them covered with imported rice paper, I can understand Harvie's feelings.

There were other rules that had to be followed. One was that only letter-size paper could be used, and if a memorandum was written that took less than half a page, then the paper was cut in half and the blank part used at a later date. Of course, what happened was that the paper was cut in half and the unused part thrown in the garbage. I also had a problem in that initially, Harvie's people would not let me order legal-size file folders and storage boxes. When I explained that many of our collections had legal-size documents in them, I

was told to fold them over so they would fit. This would be highly detrimental to the documents, so I demurred until I finally got my way.

Harvie also directed that every desk had to be completely cleared off at the end of the day. As a former journalist accustomed to a mess of paper I found this very difficult, but as time went on I became very thankful, for I was forced to organize my material and my mind so that a clear desk became the norm at quitting time. This practice continued long after Harvie was no longer involved. Another Harvie rule was that nothing should ever extend beyond the edge of a table or desk. A file folder could not stick out into an aisle and nothing could be laid on a table that was larger than the table itself. On one occasion, Harvie came into a room where file folders were sticking out from a number of desks. As he walked by, he simply knocked the folders to the floor and the files scattered everywhere. He didn't say a word; he didn't need to.

He had a habit of prowling the offices and work areas at night or on weekends. If anything was amiss, we heard about it the following day from one of his people. One person who got caught up in this was an artist/naturalist named Terry Walton. He got a dead porcupine and decided to mount it. He knew there was a rule that no unapproved personal work was to be done at Glenbow but he did not think that Harvie would be around on the weekend. But just to be sure, he hid his work in the women's bathroom, believing that Harvie's sensitivities would keep him out of that forbidden area. But Walton was wrong. Harvie came in during the weekend and included the women's washroom in his tour of inspection. Walton wasn't fired but he was sure read the riot act.

Some of these requirements may have been mere Harvie foibles but most of them were based on good solid logic and business practices. But whether we liked them or not, we had to put up with them.

Harvie did take a personal interest in his staff. He wanted to meet Pauline soon after our arrival, and when he learned that I didn't have a car, he arranged for Glenbow to loan me the necessary funds and to deduct it from my payroll. And near Christmas 1956, he invited Pauline and me to visit him at his ranch, just east of Cochrane. It had been a very open winter and both of us were impressed when we saw farmers still harvesting in mid-winter.

The ranch house was big and homey, but what really attracted us was the view. Standing beside the house, we had a clear vista of the Bow River valley clear to the Rocky Mountains. It was the most breathtaking view we had ever seen.

After a very enjoyable afternoon, we were just about ready to leave when a strange car pulled into the yard. The driver looked at Pauline and

me – obviously a couple of city folk – and then at Harvie, who looked like a hired hand.

“Can you tell me who owns this place?” he asked.

Without even the hint of a smile, our host said, “It’s a man named Eric Harvie.”

“They tell me there’s an old stone quarry down by the river,” responded the stranger. “Do you think he’d let me drive down to see it?”

“I don’t think so,” said Harvie, “but you can check with his office in town.”

The man drove away without ever suspecting that he had just talked to the owner, and to one of the richest men in Alberta.



During the summer of 1956, D.T. Smith, Glenbow’s business manager, had to resign because of ill health. In fact, he was sick when I arrived so I hardly knew him. He was replaced in August by Jack D. Herbert, formerly Director of the Historic Sites Branch for the province of Saskatchewan. He was given the title of Director of Research, so all of a sudden Glenbow had two directors. I don’t know if this was by accident or design but it had all the earmarks of a “divide and conquer” strategy that never left one person in charge. When Leechman departed in 1957, Clifford P. Wilson was hired to jointly run the Foundation with Herbert. Cliff had been long time editor of *Beaver* magazine for the Hudson’s Bay Company. Later, when Herbert resigned in 1959, the leadership was split between Wilson and Eric McGreer. But I guess we all knew there was only one boss – Eric Harvie.

Although Smith had been a business manager, Jack was brought in to take charge of the rapidly expanding group of researchers. He was a young Turk when he joined the organization and had the idea that he was going to reform it overnight. I think he looked upon Leechman as an old fuddy-duddy and was inclined to ride roughshod over him. And instead of fighting back, Leechman tended to draw into himself and took on the role of senior statesman. During this time, I had a twinge of panic when Jack announced that he was going to professionalize Glenbow and that all department heads would have to be university graduates. He told me I should consider my position of archivist as “temporary” until his master plan was drawn up and implemented. When I started at Glenbow, I had been offered a two-year contract but I had refused. My philosophy was that if Glenbow didn’t want me, I wouldn’t want to stay around. Naive, perhaps, but it made perfect sense to me at the time.

But contract or no contract, Jack had overlooked a couple of points. First, Eric Harvie showed a decided dislike for anyone flaunting his university degrees and tended to judge people on the basis of their performance, rather than their academic credentials. And second, I had developed a good working relationship with Eric Harvie and he made it clear that he had confidence in both me and my work. In any case, Jack soon learned that Glenbow could not be run like a government department or a profit-making business as Eric Harvie was too personally engrossed in every aspect of its operation. Nothing was too small or insignificant for him to be involved.

If Jack had been given a free rein, perhaps he would have turned Glenbow into a professional organization a decade or two before it really happened, and I might have been out on the street. But it didn't happen, and pretty soon Jack learned that he had to do things Harvie's way if he was going to survive.

In spite of my initial jitters, Jack and I got along well. In my view, he was Glenbow's finest director in the years when it was still a foundation, and would rank second or third in the overall history of Glenbow. He had a keen mind, good administrative talents, and could instill fierce loyalty among his staff. We became good friends over the years, and when he later became Director of the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, he wanted to hire me as the assistant director. It was an attractive offer but the museum was too far from the Blackfoot and too close to the Manitoba winters.

Although Harvie did not consider Glenbow to be a museum in the usual sense of the word, he did have the propensity to be a packrat. I remember once he called the staff together and told us to go out and "collect like a bunch of drunken sailors." But at this time we had no curators of artifacts, except perhaps Eleanor Ediger's responsibility for paintings and sculptures. But Harvie couldn't resist the temptation to accept the offer when friends asked him to install an exhibition for the opening of the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium in the summer of 1957. I think that Jack and I were the only two who had had any experience in mounting displays, so much of the task fell to us. I remember that Jack, Eleanor, and I worked into the wee hours of the morning getting everything in place for Glenbow's first show. When it was opened, the press treated us kindly, commenting favourably on the books, documents, Indian dioramas, argillite carvings, paintings, and the artifacts from Dick Forbis' archaeological excavations.



By 1958, the growth of Glenbow in the previous two years had created a situation whereby we had a lot of inexperienced people going their own way without too much direction. When Jack suggested adding three new researchers – Tom Petty, Bill Jacobson, and Everett Baker – he also recommended that Glenbow hold its first staff training program. When this was approved, the Banff School of Fine Arts was chosen as the location.

Each of us department heads was instructed to give a talk, outlining the scope and procedures of our operations. In addition, I was asked to introduce my friend Jim MacGregor, who agreed to be guest speaker at the windup banquet.

On Sunday, April 27th, George Gooderham and I shared a car to Morley, where we stopped to pick up John Laurie, who had been staying with his protegee, Eddie Hunter. In Banff, we were housed at the school, where I shared a room with Pat McCloy. He had succeeded Nina Napier as our librarian. Eric Harvie and the Managers Limited staff stayed downtown at the Mount Royal Hotel.

The meeting started next morning with a welcome from Eric Harvie, after which Jack Herbert explained that the staff needed to be more familiar with the workings and objectives of the Foundation. I led off the staff discussions with a review of my department. “Although the archives have been operating for a relatively short time,” I said, “we have already gathered the nucleus of a very fine collection. We have priceless documents, records and photographs which would be an asset to any archival institution. At the present time we have approximately 40,000 pages of documents, 60,000 photographs or negatives, and over 100 microfilms.”⁵¹ I bragged about some of the particularly important pieces, and went on to tell how to collect, document, store, and provide access to archival materials. One of the things that bothered me, which I expressed at the meeting, was that too many of our field workers were content to borrow a document, make a typed copy of it, and return the original. “With a little more effort,” I told them, “we should be able to obtain the original documents.” This criticism was aimed primarily at the Loggie sisters, who seldom collected anything original, and Eleanor Luxton, whose High River material consisted mostly of typed copies.

In the afternoon, Dick Forbis, Bill Marsden, Cliff Wilson, and Eleanor Ediger all spoke about their particular areas of expertise. Of these talks, Eleanor’s was the most notable, for it got her into hot water from which she never fully recovered. When describing the art department, she commented,

“We have a large collection of buffalo paintings by Frederick Verner, T. Mower Martin, Paul Kane, and others. These we refer to as our Bloody Bison collection.” Everyone roared with laughter – except Eric Harvie. He had collected each and every one of those paintings and after the conference, word seeped back that he had been extremely angry about her comments. Perhaps this was why she never gained the same level of independence or responsibility as other department heads.

Next day Pat McCloy spoke and then a panel was held to discuss problems experienced by field workers. It turned out that their greatest difficulties stemmed from the fact that few people had ever heard of the Glenbow Foundation and were therefore suspicious of it. But this wasn’t new, for we faced this problem constantly in Calgary. Glenbow had no public face and Eric Harvie had no desire to put us in the limelight.

We had three guest speakers during the conference – Saskatchewan archivist Lewis H. Thomas, University of Alberta librarian Bruce Peel, and Jim MacGregor.

That was the conference, at least on the surface, but what went on behind the scenes was equally interesting. On the last night, a number of us were invited to Leechman’s room for drinks but pretty soon we were just sitting around while he dominated the gathering, telling one story after another. Then I noticed that the crowd was starting to thin out; a few of the staff had planned a strategy whereby one person at a time slipped away. Leechman never noticed. He kept on and on until there were only a couple of us left, and when he awakened to the fact that his audience had deserted him he was obviously embarrassed. He said something about going to bed, so the rest of us left. I thought it was pretty sad.

When I got outside, I learned that the others had gone to Jim Fish’s room at the Mount Royal. Jim was part of Harvie’s managerial staff. I joined them and we had a roaringly good time until about 3 a.m. when the night clerk pounded on the door. “Keep the noise down,” he said. “The people next door are complaining!” His comments were greeted with whoops and laughter until Jim Fish said, “Do you know who’s next door? Eric Harvie.”

That put a damper on the party right away. By the time I got out on Banff Avenue with Andy Russell, everything was dark and quiet. We walked back to the school and it too was in darkness. I had no idea where the rest of the party had gone, so I went to bed. Next morning I learned they had broken into the swimming pool at the Upper Hot Springs and had gone skinny dipping. There were well-founded rumours of other happenings, and afterwards, when

the story got around, more than one wife wanted to know what her husband had been doing that night. I never did get an accurate count of who had been in the pool but I have a good idea.

I understand that the rumours of the debauch also got back to Eric Harvie. In any case, that was the first and last all-staff conference ever held at Banff by the Glenbow Foundation.

I mentioned Bill Marsden being at the conference. He was still with the Alberta government when Pauline and I got to Calgary, but it was clear that his government job was going nowhere. We needed a photographer at Glenbow so arrangements were made to hire Bill and to have use of the government darkroom. This worked pretty well for a while until Bill finally went into private industry. While he was with us, he arranged to film the Blackfoot Sun Dance, and once we went on a photo tour and succeeded in getting portraits of a number of Bloods, including Jim Shot Both Sides, Rides at the Door, and Bobtail Chief.

As for Jack Herbert, he fought the wars in favour of professionalization as long as he could, but finally left in the spring of 1959 to join the Historic Sites Branch in Ottawa. I was sorry to see him go, as our ideas always seemed to be on the same wavelength. Eric McGreer, who was the administrator, took over many of Jack's duties. He was a different type altogether. He was simply an administrator and nothing more. He had no vision and no understanding of what we were trying to do. With him, the Glenbow became so bogged down in petty details that at last Eric Harvie decided that he had to go, and he went.

Meanwhile, I found there could be nothing more rewarding or exciting than to be an archivist in Alberta in the 1950s and early 1960s. It was an untapped field, and rather than running into resistance from people wanting to preserve their old records, I more frequently encountered the problem of families and businesses wondering aloud why anyone would want all that old junk. Apathy, rather than acquisitiveness, was my usual dilemma.



Very early in my career, while still living in Edmonton, I showed a great interest in photographs as a means of viewing and preserving history. This continued at Glenbow when I set out on an organized campaign to obtain photographic collections. Soon I was touring photographic studios, buying their old back files. Studios like Atterton's in Cardston, Cameron's in Lacombe, and R.A. Bird's and Cadman's in Calgary – the latter holding the Bill Oliver negatives – were added to the collections. But two of the biggest and most important

collections came from Edmonton. These were the McDermid Studio collection and the *Edmonton Bulletin* collection. I don't recall exactly how we made contact with McDermid's but I knew them well as the studio right next door to the Edmonton Journal building in the downtown area. At my first contact, I was shown hundreds of negatives that were stored in the basement, many of them within inches of a huge old furnace. In some instances, the jackets were so brittle that they crumbled at the touch, and with a few negatives, the emulsion had lifted from the acetate. Later, we found that some of these weren't acetate negatives at all; they were nitrate films and highly combustible. Two of the active ingredients in such films are nitric acid and glycerine. It doesn't take much imagination to figure out what they can become!

However, the McDermid negatives were in remarkably good condition. We found that over the years, the studio had done a lot of work for the *Journal*, so there were plenty of news pictures as well as studio work. After that first visit, I made repeated trips to the studio over the years, picking up more and more of their back files until the whole collection became one of our best resources.

The *Edmonton Bulletin* collection was another story. I, of course, knew about it when I worked there. The studio was at the Bulletin Printers, in a separate building from the newspaper, so I thought there was a chance that the negatives might have been left behind when everything else closed. Sure enough, when I checked, there were the complete files from 1948 to 1951, giving a good cross-section of social and economic life in western Canada in the post-war era. The building was owned by Max Bell so I spoke to Mr. Harvie, he spoke to Max Bell, and a few weeks later I picked up the collection, filing cabinets and all. I was sad some years later when Glenbow, in its wisdom, donated the whole collection to the Provincial Archives (or the Edmonton archives), as it contained a lot of material that wasn't local in nature and could have been profitably used by people coming to Glenbow. It's nice to share, but not at the expense of your own holdings.

Another major collection which arrived about the same time was the Lomen Brothers collection from Nome, Alaska. Harvie bought this from Shorey's Bookstore in Seattle, and it proved to be a gold mine of views of Eskimos, mining towns, and northern events at the turn of the century.

I also began borrowing pictures wherever I could find them and having copies made. Many were from other museums, private collections, and a goodly number borrowed from Indians who were friends of mine. Our researchers also helped considerably as they brought in their share of photos from pioneer families and a host of other sources. Within a short time we had

a major archives of photographs that fitted nicely into the cataloguing system that I had developed.

During the first year or two I began a crusade looking for old newspaper files to microfilm, and found some excellent ones in places like Fort Macleod and Pincher Creek. This became the nucleus of what proved to be a large newspaper collection on microfilm. Later, I got the co-operation of the Legislative Library in Edmonton to microfilm some of their holdings of rural weekly newspapers. But the big surprise came when I visited the Manitoba Legislative Library. I had been told that they held many nineteenth-century newspapers from western Canada from a time when Winnipeg was the main business centre of the West. When I asked to microfilm such newspapers as the *Calgary Tribune* and the *Medicine Hat Times*, I was told by the librarian, Marjorie Morley, that these and other non-Manitoba newspapers were extraneous to their holdings. If we would microfilm them and give them a copy, we could have the originals! I was quite excited for two reasons: it is always nice to have an original rather than a copy, and I had been having a hard time convincing Harvie that we should be collecting newspapers. He didn't like microfilms so this became an ideal chance to sell him on the whole idea. And it worked, so that over the years we amassed quite a collection of old newspapers.

My one disappointment was the *Calgary Herald*. When I approached them, they told me they already had a Toronto firm microfilming their back issues. When I asked if we could get the originals as well as a set of microfilms, they agreed. Imagine my surprise and disgust when they started to arrive. The Toronto firm, Preston Microfilms Ltd., had done no advance work to get the newspapers organized in chronological order and the microfilming itself was the shoddiest work I have ever seen, before or since. Many pages were overexposed, underexposed, or had uneven exposure so that a page was light at the top and so dark at the bottom to be almost unreadable. I was further disappointed when we got those originals that they hadn't already destroyed. I found they had taken the bound copies, chopped off the binding with a paper cutter, then microfilmed the loose pages. These were tossed helter-skelter back into the outer cover, and that's what we got. Later examination also revealed that they had missed some volumes, and Glenbow still has a few originals but has never microfilmed them. The later years of the *Calgary Herald*s were okay as I don't think they were done by Preston. From time to time I have hinted that Glenbow should redo the entire early years as these are heavily used, but this has not been a high priority item.

During this time, there seemed to be manuscript collections galore that were just there for the asking. At first I used my old government contacts to find archival material, but then leads started to come from George Gooderham, the Harvie organization, and people who simply dropped by for a visit. These visitors formed an impressive list. Before long I was having coffee (or tea, in my case) with the likes of historians George Stanley, Grant MacEwan, Dr. A.O. MacRae, Kerry Wood, and Montana historian Merrill Burlingame; and local personalities like Benton Mackid, Colonel Macleod's son Norman, lawyer J.E.A. Macleod, Ken Coppick, and naturalist Andy Russell. Then there were the politicians and international figures Harvie paraded through the place. During the late 1950s I recall such personages as Viscount Montgomery and his entourage. In my diary for September 30, 1957, I comment, "M.J. Coldwell was in with George Gooderham and [Lester B.] Mike Pearson with Mr. Harvie. I had a chat with both of them. Not too impressed with the latter, although he knew more about Archives than Coldwell."

As for Indian visitors, there was no end to them. Some came to see me because of the Indian Association or because we were friends, and others came to see George Gooderham and dropped by to chat with me. In the late 1950s these included such people as Joe Crowfoot, One Gun, Ben Calf Robe, and Frank Medicine Shield.

As a result of the various leads, I spent a lot of time travelling to cities and rural parts of the province. Often my trips were a mixture of Glenbow business, Historical Society meetings, and Indian Association matters. To me, they all seemed to blend perfectly and to the advantage of everyone.



One of the great things about being the archivist for Glenbow in the 1950s and early 1960s was that I was pretty well given a free hand. Because I wasn't costing Glenbow much money to buy things, and because archival items weren't as sexy as paintings and rare books, Eric Harvie tended to leave me alone when it came to day-to-day gifts and acquisitions. It was only when I wanted to buy something or travel that I ran into problems, as permission was required to do just about everything. On the organizational side, there were no other archives in Alberta and those across Canada were mostly all government agencies that did not seem to be too open to innovative ideas. That meant I pretty well had to start from scratch, and this was fine with me.

However, whenever there was a chance to learn more about archival science, I was anxious to go. In 1959, the Public Archives of Canada in association

with Carleton University put on a five-week archives training course in Ottawa and I received permission to attend. The course itself was the first of its kind ever offered in Canada and had an impressive student enrolment. The only problem was that it was really a training session on how the Public Archives did things. The theory seemed to be that there were only two ways to run an archives – the Public Archives way or the wrong way. This became a running joke among the students, but I will say we all learned a lot about archives, both from the teachers and from our fellow students. I had a chance to meet some of the best archivists in Canada – Hart Bowsfield of Manitoba, Allan Turner of Saskatchewan, and Andre Vachon of Quebec, among the students, and W. Kay Lamb, Bernard Weilbrenner, Kay Storey, and others on the staff. Hart, Allen, Andre, and I hung around together, which was convenient as Andre had a car. One of his goals, he said, was to learn English, so he had plenty of chances. However, during many an evening while sitting in a beer parlour he would suddenly proclaim that he couldn't take any more English and to speak to him only in French. As Hart was fully bilingual, he took on those duties for the rest of the night.

That course, together with my travels to other institutions, gave me a good idea of what was happening – and what was not happening – in the archival field. I found there was plenty of room for innovation as long as one followed the basic principles of archival science. The most important of these were the proper documentation of collections, and their care under the most optimal conditions available.

Over the years, I found that collecting required a combination of salesmanship, sincerity, and knowledge. This was particularly true in the early years when no one had ever heard of the Glenbow Foundation. As a result, I name-dropped shamelessly to give my request some credibility. Sometimes I invoked the names of friends in the Historical Society, sometimes the Indian Association, and sometimes people at Glenbow – whatever worked. I also found that a bit of advance research also helped so I could talk about a family or company with some modicum of intelligence. Contacts came from Glenbow staff, from friends, from newspaper reports and obituaries, and as a result of the multitude of speeches I made to service clubs, local groups, and anyone else who would listen to me. As a result, the collections began to flow into the Archives and more and more time was needed to process and catalogue them.

On one occasion, I was instructed to contact Mrs. Lillian Graham, the only surviving daughter of missionary John McDougall. I believe the original contact had been made through Eric Harvie. In any case, I found her living in

the old family home in the eastern part of downtown Calgary, a section of the city that was destined for destruction under an urban renewal program. She was living by herself in this big old house with only a Dutchman as a boarder. I found her to be a very interesting lady, but one who had strong opinions and did not seem to get along with her relatives, particularly those from the David McDougall side of the family. I don't recall the exact arrangements with Glenbow, but I went to see her to obtain a collection of artifacts, photographs, and documents that she possessed. There were some fine items – a “silk” buffalo robe, the knife scabbard her grandfather had been wearing when he died in a storm in the 1870s, an unpublished manuscript, and a quantity of Indian and missionary material.

I struck up a friendship with Mrs. Graham and used to visit her from time to time. We had some wonderful chats together but for some reason I never tried to interview her. I believe I just looked upon her as a friend. In the 1970s, she was admitted to a nursing home and one day she asked me if I would stop at the house and pick up some clothes she had left in the basement. The Dutchman let me in, and while I was downstairs I began prowling around. There seemed to be nothing of interest until I opened a cardboard box and found it full of docketts – letters folded into little packets. When I opened a few of them, I was surprised to find files of correspondence of Richard Hardisty while he had been chief factor of Fort Edmonton during the 1860s to 1880s. I was absolutely flabbergasted, as Mrs. Graham had assured me that she had given me everything of value. She was permanently in the nursing home and the old house was destined for demolition, so these papers were just waiting to be destroyed. I put them in the trunk of my car, picked up Mrs. Graham's clothes, and immediately went to see her. I told her I'd been poking around in the basement and explained what I had found.

At first she was puzzled, as she could not recall having any such papers. And then it came to her. When she had married Fred Graham many years earlier, it had been his second marriage. His first wife had been a daughter of Richard Hardisty and when she died he had inherited the papers. He had brought them along when he married Lillian and when he died she had inherited them. She was glad that I had found them and was quite pleased to give them to Glenbow. Isn't it amazing how one little incident can have such far-reaching consequences? If Mrs. Graham and I had not become friends, if she had not asked me to get her clothes, if I had not been so nosy – the papers would have been lost.

I was very sad about Mrs. Graham's last days. She had invested her money in an annuity that was supposed to assure her a private room in the nursing home for the rest of her life. However, when I went up to visit her one day, she wasn't there. When I enquired, I learned that she was in a public ward and was distraught with grief. She was a lonely woman but also a very private one. That is when I learned that her money had been used up and she was now in a basic ward provided by government welfare. I was shocked. I immediately took the problem to Eric Harvie and he said if I would find out the difference in cost between the public ward and the private room, he would personally make up the difference. I started to make arrangements but the whole experience had been such a shock that Mrs. Graham died before the change could be made. As I noted in my diary on October 23, 1973, "She was 89 and a very lonely woman."

The search for archival material led me into a number of interesting situations. One day I heard that Atterton Studios was closing down in Cardston. When I went there I learned the building was going to be torn down and managed to get a small collection of negatives from the old man. As we were talking, I noticed a trapdoor in the ceiling and asked him if there was anything in the attic. He said he hadn't been up there for years but if I wanted to look, I could go right ahead. I got a ladder and when I pushed the ceiling lid aside the attic looked like the usual dusty area of joists and rafters. But then I noticed something sitting on one of the rafters, and when I checked, I found it was a pile of glass plate negatives. There were quite a bunch of them perched on the rafters and when I brought them down Atterton recalled that they had belonged to his predecessor, a man named Arthur Hensen, and had been up there for thirty years. There were some very good studio portraits of settlers, Chinese merchants, and local farmers, but the real prize was a previously unknown portrait of plainsman John George "Kootenai" Brown.

Another interesting adventure occurred early in 1961 when I had a call from a man working in the Legal Department at City Hall. He told me that he was looking out his window and below him he could see an old City building being cleaned out before being demolished. He said that workmen were carrying out piles of old records and files. I rushed down there and, sure enough, there was a low one-storey building abutting the east side of City Hall and it was being abandoned. By the door was a large garbage truck loaded to the top with file boxes and file folders. I grabbed the first box I could find and saw it contained old correspondence from the turn of the century. The garbage men were just about ready to drive away but when I begged for a chance to climb into the box and go through the pile, they said they'd stop for coffee and then

they'd have to leave. I climbed into the back of the truck and feverishly went through the pile, tossing onto the ground anything that looked promising. I had gone through most of the pile before they got back but I knew there was some I had missed. Shortly afterwards another truck arrived but by this time I had had a chance to go into the building to see what was left. Most of it was recent tax files but on one shelf I found some wonderful material that dated back to 1884.

Somehow W.R. Castell, the City Librarian, learned that I had taken the files; he said they were the property of the City and inferred to the local newspapers that I had illegally taken them. Perhaps I had, who's to say? But I responded by saying that if Mr. Castell wanted the records back he should contact me and give some assurances that they would not be destroyed. I never heard from him and so we kept the papers for many years until the City established its own archives, at which time they were returned to them.

Another time I was told by one of our researchers, Bill Jacobson, that there were some old records in the PFRA (Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Act) office in Vauxhall. When we went there, we found that when the PFRA had been formed as a federal agency, it had taken over the private business papers of Canadian Wheatlands, Grand Forks Cattle Company, Southern Alberta Land Company, and Canada Land & Irrigation Company. This collection of some fifty boxes was now collecting dust in the basement, but when I asked the manager if he would donate them to Glenbow, he was unsure if these were now federal records. I tried to convince him that when they took over the private companies, their papers were just physical assets, like chairs and filing cabinets. He suggested that he write to headquarters but I dissuaded him, as I knew the papers would either be destroyed or shipped off to the East. He told me he'd think about it, and we left it at that. This happened in the spring of 1961. When I didn't hear back, I assumed we had lost out. However, two years later I got a phone call from this same manager. He said he was retiring at the end of the week and if we wanted the papers to come and get them the next day. His idea was that he was leaving anyway so he wouldn't get into trouble if he was wrong.

There was only one problem. By this time we had a new director, an ex-military colonel named Benny Greene. To him, a word from Eric Harvie, even a passing one, was like an order from his commanding general: it was not to be questioned but to be obeyed. Earlier, Harvie had indicated that some important visitors would be coming to the Foundation and he didn't want anyone leaving town during the month. We all knew when the visitors would

be arriving, but to Colonel Greene, an order was an order. When I sought permission to make the pickup, I was refused.

If I didn't go, we would lose the collection, so next morning I rented a truck and left at dawn. I got to Vauxhall at noon, loaded up the truck, got a receipt, and arrived back in the city in the early evening. Next morning I learned that Greene had been suspicious about me and had phoned the Archives off and on all day. My secretary and others did a wonderful job in stalling him, saying I was out of the office, at a meeting, etc. At one stage he asked point blank if I had left town and my secretary said she just didn't know. Next morning I was summoned to Greene's office and he went up one side of me and down the other, threatening to go to Eric Harvie and having me fired. I don't know if he ever tried but I never heard anything more about it. I have a feeling that if he did raise the question and Harvie learned what I had collected, he would have been on my side. At least I'd like to think so. And a chewing out was a small price to pay for such a valuable collection.

Then there were the Canadian Pacific Railway records. In 1961 I went to Montreal for a meeting of the Archives Section of the Canadian Historical Association and was elected vice-chairman. While in the city I took a letter of introduction from Eric Harvie for Fred V. Stone, vice-chairman of the CPR, and was taken on a tour of their Montreal facilities. In the bowels of the old building I saw a shredding machine working full days destroying CPR documents. And in a private vault I saw ten feet of personal papers of Sir Edward Shaughnessy. I was told they were scheduled for destruction because none of the family wanted them and they were not CPR records. I also saw a good collection of letter books dating back to the 1880s. I wrote in my diary for June 9th, "The whole picture does not look encouraging in finding out just what they have in the way of records and what steps are being taken to preserve them. I feel our best contribution would be to find a way to encourage them to establish a proper records management program, particularly as it affects pre-1900 records." Perhaps this had some effect, for a few years later an archives department was created under the leadership of CPR publicity manager and railway historian Omer Lavallee.

When I went to see the librarian, he showed me some of original tickets used on the first transcontinental run of the CPR in 1885. There were three sets, each having first class, coach, and tourist tickets, all properly stamped. On an off chance, I asked him if we could have one of the sets, and he gave them to me on the spot. I continued to go through the scanty files and whenever

I found a duplicate booklet or other item, he freely gave it to me. I really appreciated his generosity.

Another positive feature that came out of the trip was that I got permission from headquarters to look through the files in Calgary to see if I could find any duplicate material of value. Pat McCloy and I went to the Natural Resources Building and went through filing cabinets of immigration literature where we found a quantity of CPR pamphlets in various foreign languages that had been used to entice settlers. A number of them were completely unknown so Pat was very pleased.

We kept in touch with the CPR in Calgary, letting them know we were interested in their old records. One official who seemed particularly sympathetic informed us that they would be moving out of their old downtown quarters and into a building constructed a little farther east for Marathon Realty, one of their branches. We looked over the material and found 1½ tons of large ledger books containing records of all their land sales since the 1880s. The man was willing to turn them over to us and I drafted a formal letter which was signed by both parties.

A short time later, he said there were more records which Marathon was planning to discard. They were located in a repair shed on the railway right-of-way. When I went there, I found an old wooden building with the ground floor used for motor repairs; there was enough grease around that the whole place could have gone up in smoke in an instant. Upstairs were shelves loaded with files from their old Colonization Branch. I spent the next several days going through records of irrigation projects, farm lands promotions, and other valuable material relating to the settlement of the West. I divided the files into two piles, one for us to keep and the other to discard. When I was finished, some CPR officials looked them over and gave us most of what I had put aside. The only exception was a nice pile of records relating to land sales and town plans for southeastern British Columbia, around Cranbrook. I learned that there was some litigation in progress and these documents would be kept by Marathon. We were pleased to get the rest of it; I tried to keep track of the Cranbrook material and traced it to the new Marathon office but I eventually lost sight of it.

Some years later, a couple of lawyers came to the Archives and demanded to know why we were in possession of CPR records, implying that these had been illegally taken from their Calgary offices. They were very hard-nosed and officious, but when I produced the agreement signed by one of their top

officials (since retired), their faces fell. They asked for a copy and said they'd be back but we never saw them again.



Three years later, I was in Winnipeg looking for some Metis material when I phoned a woman who worked for the Canada Northwest Land Company. I recalled that they had been the agents for land sales for the CPR so I asked her if they had anything. She said there were some old records in the vault but that the office was going to be closing down. I went in and saw her boss and, as a result, I picked up a number of old plans and legal agreements. Among them was a document that I like to call a Bill of Sale for Calgary. In 1884, in order to subdivide and sell the land on Section 16, which became the downtown part of Calgary, the CPR “sold” the property to its subsidiary, the Canada Northwest Land Company, and we got the document. By the time we were finished, I was quite pleased with the amount of material we got from the CPR. Not only that, but we seemed to have established good relations with them and over the years Sheilagh Jameson, Doug Cass, and others were able to add to our CPR holdings.

We were not so lucky with the Alberta Provincial Police records. Earlier we'd had Don Tannas working for us and in 1961 he was with the provincial government on their historic sign program. One day he noticed a load of papers being taken from one of the vaults in the basement of the Legislative Building and upon examination he saw they were headquarters and detachment records of the Alberta Provincial Police that operated from 1916 to 1931. There were daily diaries from the detachments, correspondence, wanted posters, and other important files. He tried to convince the Attorney General's Department that these were historical documents and tried to prevent their destruction but he was chewed out by one of the bureaucrats. Don told me about it and I phoned the deputy minister. I was assured that these had been nothing but personal case files and had already been destroyed. It was a lie that they were confidential case files but true that they had been destroyed – about five truckloads full.

Similarly, when Doug Light and I were on a field collecting trip to Saskatchewan in 1963, I learned from our interpreter, Wilfred Chocan, that the old Fort Pitt trading post business had been moved to Onion Lake after the 1885 Riel Rebellion and that the widow of the last store manager, a woman named Mrs. Al Blower, was living in the old residence. When we visited her, she gave Wilfred a warm welcome and announced that she had just returned from her first visit to Hawaii. When I asked her about the old Hudson's Bay

Company records from Fort Pitt and Onion Lake, she said that a pile of old papers had been stored for years in a back room in her house. However, when she decided to go to Hawaii, she was afraid these might be a fire trap, so she had taken them out in the yard and burned them. These records had sat there for decades and we missed them only by a couple of weeks. That was really heartbreaking.

One of the strangest situations I ever encountered concerned the papers of Joseph F. Dion, a Metis schoolteacher who lived near the Kehewin Reserve. In 1960, while gathering information for a history of the Indian Association, I was told that Joe had been one of the group's first organizers. When I visited him in his log home, I was very impressed with the man. Not only did he tell me a lot about the early years of the Association, but he showed me a series of articles he had written for the *Bonnyville Tribune* on the history of the Cree Indians. I also learned that he was extremely knowledgeable about Cree material culture so I asked him if he would be interested in doing some contract work for Glenbow. When he agreed, I applied to Glenbow for approval and when it came, I wrote to him to arrange the details. But it never happened, for just after I had written to him, I learned that he had died of a heart attack.

A month later I had business in Edmonton, so I continued on to Kehewin, where I saw Joe's widow and arranged to buy all of his manuscripts and papers. These included the early drafts of some of his published articles and a number of others that were as yet unpublished. It proved to be an important collection of papers.

The story might have ended there, but now we jump to 1976, when I was appointed to the Alberta Indian Treaties Commemorative Program, organized by the Alberta government to provide funds for marking the anniversaries of Treaty Six in 1876 and Treaty Seven in 1877. A good chunk of money was earmarked for publications and I suggested that Glenbow should publish a history written by Joe Dion. When I got approval, I got legal copyright releases from Dion's two daughters, then gathered Dion's writings together and published them in 1979 as *My Tribe the Crees*.

There's more. A few years later I received notice that Glenbow and I were being sued for infringement of copyright. The editor of the *Bonnyville Tribune* claimed that he, not Joe Dion, had written the articles that we had published. He said that Dion would visit him at his newspaper, tell him stories, and the editor would write them and publish them under Dion's byline. I pointed out that this was ridiculous, as we not only had first and second drafts of some of these articles in Dion's own handwriting, but we also had letters from the

editor to me in which he stated clearly that Dion had done the writing. I showed these to our lawyer and he spoke to the editor's lawyer, but the editor was adamant and wouldn't back down, not even in the face of this evidence. The matter went all the way through examination for discovery and other legal processes until it finally came before a judge in Edmonton. I was supposed to have been there, but my plane was grounded by fog in Calgary and I missed it. Our lawyer later told us that the judge took one look at the evidence then bawled out the editor's lawyer for letting it go that far. The lawyer explained that his client wouldn't back down, so the judge hauled the man up in front of him and read the riot act to him. I knew from the beginning I had all the documentation on my side but it is still very unsettling going through weeks of legal proceedings.

There was one other time in my career that I was threatened with a lawsuit, and it was just as specious. In 1988, while attending the opening of Glenbow's Olympic exhibition, *The Spirit Sings*, I was served with papers suing me for defamation. Here are parts of the press report:

Buff Parry has filed a statement of claim in Court of Queen's Bench in Edmonton, alleging he was defamed in a letter Dempsey sent to the governor general's office. Parry said after the June 25, 1985, letter he was refused funds for research into origins of Cree Indian writing.

Dempsey ... advised the governor general, whose office controls the funds, that the writing form was invented by a Methodist missionary named James Evans, not the Cree. Dempsey recommended against supporting Parry's search for an inscribed tablet, that Parry says the explorer LaVerendrye buried in southern Alberta. Parry said finding the tablet would prove that the Indians, not the missionary Evans, invented their own writing form.⁵²

I was absolutely furious when I got the news. My report to the governor general's office had been sent in complete confidence, but they had passed a copy of it along to Parry. I have done scores of assessments of funding requests for many agencies but this was the first time my report had actually gone to the person that I was recommending against. I got on the phone and burned up the wires to Ottawa, but in typical civil servant fashion they denied ever sending

my report. When I asked them how else he could have obtained it, they had the temerity to suggest that I might have sent it! I screamed as much as I could, but it was to a stone wall of bureaucracy that said deny, deny, deny, so there was nothing I could do.

As for the request for funds, I had plenty of evidence to support my position. I had copies of James Evans' notes while he was labouring in Ontario, showing his experiments with different symbols for his syllabics. When he moved to Norway House, in Manitoba, he perfected these and introduced them to the Cree. And as far as LaVerendrye was concerned, this was completely inaccurate, as that explorer never got any closer to southern Alberta than the Black Hills of South Dakota. Contrary to popular mythology, he never did see the Canadian Rockies.

As it turned out, the situation was all sound and no fury. After a year, Parry had failed to pursue the case and it was abandoned.

At Glenbow, our search for Canadiana took us to many homes and businesses, but one of the strangest incidents occurred right in Hull House. George Gooderham and I were discussing aviation when one of our caretakers overheard us. He said he had some old pictures in his trunk and we could have them if we wanted them. It turned out that he had once worked for Alexander Graham Bell at Baddeck, Nova Scotia, at the time when experiments were taking place with the Silver Dart and other aircraft. The caretaker had obtained proof pictures showing some of these experiments and some aquatic ones showing their use of hydrofoils.

Then there were times when our searches created some unusual situations. For example, I was quite interested in the history of the Social Credit party, which had been in power in Alberta since 1935. I managed to find some excellent collections, including the papers of Bert Nichols, whom I had worked with at the government. This led me to search for an anti-Social Credit newspaper called *The Rebel*. I traced it down to a man named J.J. Zubick who was still living in Calgary and was an ardent Conservative. I got to know him fairly well, but I must admit I was surprised in 1959 when he said he was a member of the Conservative nominating committee and asked me to be a candidate for Calgary North in the next provincial election. I was flattered but I was too heavily involved in other matters to give it serious thought.

I was never that interested in politics but I did like public speaking. When television first came to Calgary, everything was live; there was no taping of shows. In 1960, CFCN-TV invited the Foundation to appear in a weekly series to tell what we were doing and to talk about western history. I was surprised

when Eric Harvie agreed, and we started our first show in December with a round table discussion including our president, George Crawford, Moncrieff Williamson, and me. The first show was a real laugh. The interviewer was obviously very inexperienced and so were we. He started off by asking Crawford a question but didn't follow it up. In the ensuing silence, Crawford didn't seem to know what to do so he kept talking, and talking, and talking. I could see that he had a tiger by the tail and couldn't shake it loose. Finally the interviewer got into the act but by then our part of the program was over. Crawford saw the humour of the situation but said he'd leave the rest of the series to us. I appeared in January 1961 and had a nice fifteen-minute talk about archives. Just as in my public speaking, I wasn't the least bit nervous and over the years I had dozens of other interviews, some lasting as much as an hour. And as long as I had something to say, I didn't mind talking.



When Dick Forbis joined Glenbow a month after me, we became very good friends and colleagues. I had already shown an interest in archaeology and earlier in the year I had my first paper published on the subject; through the help of Jack Ewers, the *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences* had published my "Stone 'Medicine Wheels' – Memorials to Blackfoot War Chiefs."⁵³ Dick and I travelled to the Blood and Blackfoot reserves to look at tepee rings and other sites that seemed to have archaeological interest. Then in 1960, I accompanied Dick and his crew on a three-day trip into the Porcupine Hills to look for a site mentioned by explorer Peter Fidler and to search for possible Kootenay Indian sites. I had great fun camping out with the crew and became quite enthusiastic about archaeological work.

Dick and I had also discussed a site on the Blackfoot Reserve that had been mentioned by an artist named Edmund Morris. We went out there one day with Dad, and I arranged for One Gun to take us to the site. He told us the history of this fortified village which was located beside the banks of the Bow, saying it had been built by strangers who had come from the south; he called them Earth Lodge People. Dick believed they were Crows while I thought they might be Hidatsa. In any case, Dick thought the site was worthy of study, so we worked together to get approval from the tribal council and eventually Glenbow did a full archaeological excavation of the site.

There were a couple of unexpected sidelights. One was Dick's insistence that the entire non-professional crew be Blackfoot, under a Blackfoot supervisor. When he decided to hire Matthew Melting Tallow for the job, George

Gooderham was entirely opposed to it. As former Indian agent for the reserve, Gooderham considered Matt to be unreliable and difficult. In my mind, that meant Matt thought for himself and would not do everything he was told to do by the Indian agent. So Dick hired Matt and he proved to be excellent. And not only was he reliable, but on many mornings he got up early and rounded up the crew himself, rather than waiting for them to come in to work. Of course, I was prejudiced as I always liked Matt and I believe I had suggested him in the first place.

An amusing incident occurred one day while I was visiting the site. We got talking and Matt mentioned that there was a stone effigy nearby that marked the sleeping place of Napi, the mythical trickster-creator of the Blackfoot Indians. He rounded up One Gun and we drove to a spot just south of the grain elevator at Crowfoot Siding. One Gun searched around in the grass for a while and finally found the site. It consisted of a human figure made of stones laid out on the ground in outline form. The figure had a head, body, arms, legs, and a penis so long that it defied description. This was in keeping with the legends of Napi and his ability to extend his penis to any length. Even the rainbow was known in Blackfoot as “Napi’s penis.”

Virtually all the interviews I had conducted in the past had been with Dad as my interpreter, and there are some strict rules of protocol within the Blackfoot community regarding father-in-law and son-in-law relations. One of them is that the subject of sex is never discussed when they are together. So it came as quite a surprise to me when a bunch of ribald remarks were tossed back and forth by these Blackfoot as we looked at the Napi effigy. Finally, One Gun reached into the centre of the figure, picked up a stone the size of a tennis ball, and as he handed it to me he said with a laugh, “Here. I am giving you Napi’s belly button.” I treasured that moment and I still have that “belly button” in my possession.

Dick and I were involved in a number of archaeologically related projects. We went together to the Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump north of the Peigan Reserve and I gave him a copy of a letter I had received from Boyd Wetlaufer, who had done some work at the site years earlier. This letter proved to be the only “report” ever produced for that dig. I also went to the Peigan Reserve and got some of their traditions relating to the site. Another place we visited was the site of Rocky Mountain House, and after some searching in farmers’ fields we located some good prospects. Dick later excavated the site and I prepared a historical report which was published along with the findings of the dig.

Dick stayed with Glenbow until 1963, when Eric Harvie gave the whole Archaeology Department to the new University of Calgary and Dick went along as a professor. I'm sure he wished that the program had stayed at Glenbow, for he loved field work and did not really enjoy teaching. But he inspired a lot of people with his publications, teachings, and excavations and was appropriately called the "father of archaeology in Alberta."

While at Glenbow, Dick married Marge Chown, one of our secretaries. They bought a house in Bowness, on the banks of the Bow River, and this became quite a gathering place. They liked to mix their friends for social events, so there were academics from the university, artist friends of Marge's, pals from Glenbow, a few of the social elite from Bowness, and just plain friends. We always had a wonderful time at their place, where conversation flowed freely. Marge was *very* English and Dick was a Montana boy so they made an interesting couple. Dick later took out Canadian citizenship and Pauline was very proud when he asked her to be his sponsor.



Although I seemed to have my fingers in a lot of pies, I was still archivist at Glenbow. In 1960, when Cliff Wilson resigned as director of the Foundation, I was given the first of the many "temporary" duties that came my way over the next few years. I was informed in April that I was now "temporarily" in charge of the research program, the museum collections, and the photographic department. That meant that besides the Archives, all the field workers and researchers had to report to me, and the hodge-podge museum collections were now under my tender care. The only areas not reporting to me were the Library, Art Department, Archaeology, and Administration.

This came at a time when I was up to my eyeballs in archival work. For example, I had been working with an old pioneer named John McHugh to write his reminiscences. George Gooderham had brought him in one day and I learned that he was a member of an old ranching family that had owned the H2 Ranch. John, or J.O. McHugh, had been considered to be the poor relative in the family and had been virtually ignored all his life. He had worked for the railway, I believe, and was now living in a small room in the downtown area. As he spoke, I thought he had an interesting story to tell, so I suggested he write out his reminiscences. This was in the days before the popularity of tape recorders. McHugh admitted that he had time on his hands but he couldn't afford the paper and pencils needed to do the work. I happily supplied these and a few days later he returned with his first stories. They were fascinating

but because of his limited education his spelling and grammar were poor and he asked me to “fix them up” for him. So I edited his writings, got my secretary to type them up, and gave them back for him to check. He made corrections where needed and a final draft was prepared. This was the beginning of an association that lasted for several months, with us supplying the materials, him doing the writing, and us producing the finished product. By the time he finished, we had a book-length manuscript of stories of the ranch and detailed descriptions of Calgary at the turn of the century. He called the finished product “The Adventures of H2 Jack.” We bound up a couple of copies of the manuscript and gave one to him. The beauty of all this is that when he showed it to his nieces and nephews (he had no children) they began to see him in a new light and he was no longer their poor uncle. For the last few years of his life I think he was very happy as the manuscript helped to strengthen his ties with his family.

Here is a brief description of a couple of typical weeks for me at Glenbow. First, *Calgary Herald* columnist Ken Liddell and I waited on the mayor, Harry Hays, to urge him to establish a City of Calgary Archives and Historic Sites Committee. This was on January 19, 1960. At the time I was encouraged by the response we got from the mayor for an archives, but nothing came of it at the time. I then started on a program to collect the records of the Great West Saddlery from its various branches across the west, and then drove to Nanton to get the papers of George Coote, a former MP and member of the “Ginger Group.” This was followed by a quick trip to Edmonton to pick up some papers of Norman B. James, one of the “original” Social Credit MLAs of 1935, and the papers of John J. Bowlen, a former lieutenant-governor. All this happened within a few weeks and doesn’t include the time taken up helping such researchers as Grant MacEwan, Robin Harvie and the ladies from Glendale who were writing a local history, Iris Fleming of the *Globe & Mail*, lawyer Webster McDonald, cartoonist Stu Cameron, Rev. J. Ernest Nix, Kerry Wood, and a host of others.

A little later, Cliff Wilson announced his resignation just as I was leaving for an extended trip to the East. I stopped in Winnipeg to pack and ship the early newspapers that the Manitoba Library had agreed to give us, then to Toronto to discuss a possible Glenbow publishing program in co-operation with the University of Toronto Press. Nothing came of that. The next day saw me in Ottawa, where I arranged to microfilm the early paysheets for the western Indian reserves.

But my main objective in Ottawa was to see the Commissioner of the RCMP, C.W. Harvison, about their early papers. Dominion Archivist W. Kaye Lamb had told me earlier that he had had absolutely no luck in getting the police to transfer any of their records to the Public Archives. I contacted Eric Harvie about it and an arrangement was made for me to follow it up. On arrival at the headquarters, I was taken to a storage area in the basement and left to myself. As I wrote in my diary, "I began the mammoth task of trying to study and roughly list about 125 linear feet of old records which are in absolutely no order. The idea is to make the RCMP aware of the historical value of these records and induce them to appoint someone to look after them and make them available for research, or to turn them over to the Public Archives."⁵⁴

I spent two days in the basement, prepared a rough inventory, and then went for my meeting with the Commissioner. His aide told me we had ten minutes but the visit lasted for almost an hour. Harvison looked over my list and wondered aloud what all the secrecy was about, and stated that these records should be in the Archives. He advised me that the only reason the police had denied access to them and refused to transfer them was that they didn't know what was in them, and it wasn't a high enough priority for anyone to take the time to find out. But now that he had my inventory, he said he would see what he could do. I passed the information along to Lamb and negotiations were opened that finally resulted in the transfer of the records I saw, and many others, to the Archives. As one who made good use of these records over the years, I was very pleased with the results.

I had just returned from Ottawa when I learned that Eric Harvie had launched a new idea to make his senior staff and family more interested in what was going on at Glenbow. He called them all together and told them they each had a thousand dollars to spend on something for the Foundation and they would get together in six months to have "show and tell." Immediately two people came to see me. To George Crawford, president of the Foundation, I suggested that he commission a dozen historical paintings from Gerald Tailfeathers. When he agreed, I had the task of coordinating the whole thing. And to Jim Fish, treasurer of the Foundation, I suggested microfilming a collection of theses. Again, when this was approved I had to prepare lists, contact universities to borrow the documents, and have the microfilming done.

Part of our regular routine at Glenbow was to hold weekly meetings of department heads, with either George Crawford or Eric Harvie presiding. These were quite valuable as they kept everyone up to date on what was happening

and gave the staff some idea of Eric Harvie's current thinking. In addition, I began holding a meeting every three weeks of our research staff, bringing them in from Edmonton, Lethbridge, or wherever they happened to be working. Here again, we had a good exchange of ideas. In light of all the extra work I was able to promote Sheilagh Jameson from her research position to that of assistant archivist. She was a good person to work with and I always admired her diligence and ability to deal with the public. One thing I insisted on from the beginning was that regardless of how private we might be at the Foundation, we still had an obligation to the public, and that meant treating people in a friendly manner, making them welcome, and doing whatever we could to assist them in their research. Sheilagh was a natural for this kind of approach and between us we established a pattern that persisted over the years and gave us a very favourable reputation among researchers and the general public. On the Library side, no one could beat Pat McCloy for working well with the public.

During the summer of 1960 I tried my best to put our museum collections in order. As I mentioned in my diary in late August, "Still working hard in trying to get things organized in the Museums Dept. I've had to start at the bottom and work right through the whole thing, including setting up a filing and accessioning system."⁵⁵ During my travels I had met Bill Fleming, who was curator of the museum in Fort Macleod. I was quite impressed with him so in the fall I had a meeting with the Glenbow executive committee – George Crawford, Hod Meech, and Jim Fish – to talk about the whole museum mess. I suggested that Fleming be hired by the Foundation but, as I said in my diary, "I did not get too far with that idea."⁵⁶ When this recommendation was turned down I asked to be relieved of any museum duties as I could not give that work the attention it deserved and so the whole problem was turned over to our administrator, Claude Humphreys. He was not a museum person but a good business head. He soon found he could not cope with the problem either, and at the end of the year he recommended that the Foundation follow up on my suggestion of hiring Bill Fleming as our museum curator. This time it was approved, but in the interim the whole mess was tossed back in my lap. Once Bill joined the staff I was finally able to get out of the day-to-day problems of that department, and none too soon, for later in 1961 Eric Harvie bought an entire ghost town from a carnival operator and we were suddenly into museum work in a big way.

That's the way things worked during the early years of Glenbow. If a person was willing to work, they could find themselves involved in just about

any aspect of the organization. Yet there were two cardinal rules that had to be followed. The first was the recognition that there was only one boss – Eric Harvie. He owned the Foundation and, in effect, he owned us. Anyone who didn't accept this fact had a short-lived career with Glenbow. Jack Herbert found this out and so did art director Moncrieff Williamson. The second rule was that the staff collected western Canadian material and Eric Harvie collected whatever he wanted. Another one of our directors, Jim Garner, got that one wrong and he suffered for it.

