libraries were expected to use classification numbers which they could understand only to the extent that DDC *Additions, Notes and Decisions* Spring 1971 rather skimpily explained them. Does Dewey 18 thus suggest that library classification, like library cataloging, has ceased to be a cottage industry with a classifier in every library? Has library classification, instead, become a manufacturing monopoly requiring intelligent and imaginative classifiers at the factories but only skilled technicians to install the ready-made product in individual libraries?—*Paul S. Dunkin, Professor Emeritus, Rutgers University*

Gilroy, Marion, and Rothstein, Samuel, eds. ***As We Remember It: Interviews with Pioneering Librarians of British Columbia.*** Vancouver: University of British Columbia, School of Librarianship, 1970. 163p.

"I was on the library staff, in Hamilton [Ontario]. Well, I was the third part of the librarian. There were three of us taken on as one person, and we had to work one week in three and stay by the other two weeks in case somebody had a headache or was away. We supplied in turn. We got five dollars a week for this . . . every week we worked."

This is Muriel Ffoulkes speaking of her first library position, back in 1915 or 1916, when librarianship in Canada was still very young, back when the first library school in Toronto opened its doors, "not under the auspices of the University, of course. Mr. Carson was the Inspector of Public Libraries. He started this school, and I was one of four sent down from the Hamilton library. And it was there that I met Lillian H. Smith. . . ." Thus Muriel Ffoulkes remembers, and recounts her memories to Marion Gilroy and to posterity in this charming record of the pioneering days of librarianship in British Columbia and in Canada.

No scholarly history this. The interviews are printed just as they were taped, for "The interviews recorded here by and large stand quite well by themselves, and it has not been felt that an extensive editorial commentary was needed." The result has all the casual frankness ("Muriel Page, a librarian from Toronto, was chosen." "You know her?" "Yes, I seem to remember her. She was an awful pest."); all the warm emotion ("Essae May Culver was head of the whole state library programme, and she was a splendid person."); and, unfortunately, some of the infuriating vagueness (" . . . our headquarters were in Vernon, but they had a rather sticky situation there, too, and I think if we had just had a little longer there, we could have fixed it up.") of an after dinner conversation.

Certainly no scholarly history; but, on the other hand, no dull, heavily documented compendium of minutiae in the apparent tradition of Canada's only other type of substantial library history, the doctoral dissertation. *As We Remember It* begins with the initial and excellent premise that the living history of much of our library development lies largely untapped within the memories of our retired librarians; and, under the able direction of Professors Gilroy and Rothstein, the attractively formatted, paper-backed volume proceeds in a series of interviews to strip-mine this precious lode.

The technique is not an unhappy one, for, once the reader acclimatizes himself to the vernacular repetition of "quite" and "well" and "you see"—a repetition which might well pass unnoticed in the dappled flow of conversation but which can jar when cast into the more lasting mould of print—the nuances of informal discussion come through remarkably well. This reviewer knew none of the interviewees personally, yet, helped by the photograph of each included in the volume, he began to form a picture of the protagonists. Dr. Helen Stewart, the dynamic, precise intellectual, with enormous personal charm and drive; Margaret Clay, perhaps more legalistic and traditional as a librarian, but also with the drive and personal dedication which must have been a *sine qua non* of those early days in the development of Canadian libraries; Charles Morison, the only man in the quartet, much more "virile" and extroverted than the historical stereotype of the male librarian would have us believe and not narrowly and exclusively a "librarian" at all; and the chatty, opinionated, wholly likeable Mrs. Muriel Ffoulkes. Such individualists are the

raw data of history; and, if at times their reminiscences provide clues rather than answers, the quality of their responses to perhaps not always inspired leads is an overall strength rather than a weakness in this type of "history."

Until very recently the number of substantial Canadian library histories could be counted on the fingers of one hand excluding the thumb, and the valid synthesis could be counted on the thumb. Indeed, even that synthesis, Antonio Drolet's *Les Bibliothèques Canadiennes, 1604–1960* (Montreal: Cercle du Livre de France, 1965) has been published only in French and is, perhaps for that reason, little known outside of Quebec. Moreover, Drolet's pioneer venture, courageous though it was, suffered severely from the lack of specific histories upon which to draw; and in this respect served merely to underscore the sad state of Canadian historiography. *As We Remember It* forms, therefore, an important addition to the source materials of library history, and one may now hope that Dr. Rothstein, recently freed from overriding administrative demands, will find the time and the incentive to produce a scholarly interpretation which would add perspective to the data, preserved with such foresight in these engaging memoirs.

"Try to remember, and if you remember, follow, follow, follow. . . ."—*J. P. Wilkinson, Professor, School of Library Science, University of Toronto*

Andriot, John L., ed. ***Guide to U.S. Government Serials & Periodicals.*** McLean, Virginia, Documents Index, 1971. 4 volumes in 3. Paper. $60.00. LC No. 75-7027.

"As a general rule, the public documents have been a despised class of books." The statement is Melvil Dewey's, spoken in 1877. Later he added, "A few United States documents are regarded as valuable. Specialists have learned that they contain much which is of the utmost importance to them, and which they can obtain nowhere else." Today not only specialists but anybody dealing in the commodity called information, values the content of government publications. As far as their unstandardized, whimsical, erratic, multifarious and unpredictable form is concerned they are, if not despised, at least tacitly frowned upon by most users and librarians alike. Only one aspect of Dewey's statement lost its validity. Today few government publications would be identified as books. Compounding the problems of their handling, a frightfully high percentage of them is issued in serial form.

Andriot's *Guide* is a courageous and quite successful effort to lighten two kinds of headache of the library world: government documents and serials. It must be made clear at the outset that the *Guide* is a directory and not an index. It provides bibliographic control of federally published serials and periodicals by several listings: (a) An alphabetic list of U.S. government agencies, commissions, and committees, with a brief history of each, (b) a classified list of Superintendent of Documents numbers with the names of agencies they represent, (c) classified list of current agencies (in existence on January 1, 1971) with annotated entries of their serial publications, (d) classified list of abolished agencies with their annotated publications and discontinued SuDocs numbers, (e) agency and title indexes. The *Guide* is in its seventh edition. Since its first publication in 1962, numerous, substantial changes attest to the responsiveness of its editor to specific information problems connected with government serials. What are some of these problems, and to what extent are they helped by the *Guide*?

1) Federal government agencies, with their frequent reorganizational changes present a tangled pattern. The maze is carried over into the classification scheme of federal publications, which mirrors the agencies' organizational structure. The *Guide* lists and briefly describes 2,216 agencies in the authority file of volume 1. Especially useful are lists of House and Senate committees and special presidential commissions. Unfortunately, the lack of a subject approach limits the value of this section. (The *Government Organization Manual* provides comparable directory information in conjunction with a subject index.) [For instance, somebody interested in agencies with an environmental concern will find only three listings. The "Agency index" in volume 4 will lead him to an additional seven, which still do not