

## THE CBC RADIO DRAMA PROJECT AND ITS BACKGROUND

by Howard Fink

Radio drama for me, as for many people who were growing up just after the War, was, quite simply, my introduction to theatre: the classics, Renaissance drama, and modern and contemporary plays, including European and Canadian. It is rare that one gets the opportunity to re-examine a major formative influence later in one's life, rarer still to find that in this objective light its value holds up. I have had that happy experience with CBC radio drama. I have also had an experience of a completely different kind, in attempting to trace the materials of this influential phenomenon: one which, as regards the history of Canadian theatre in general, has been shared in some measure by many: it was almost impossible to study the achievement of CBC radio drama as a whole, or even at first to locate the vast majority of the plays created and produced. Of course this is partly owing to the particular nature of theatre, the original form of which, unlike a novel or a book of verse, is a live performance, which remains rather in the memories than in the bookcases of its audience. More particularly, the CBC has always considered itself a production organization rather than a repository of culture, and quite rightly so. It has, in fact, been discouraged from archival activities by the government, which considers the Public Archives of Canada as a more appropriate institution for that role. Of course such well-known figures as Robertson Davies, George Ryga and James Reaney are well represented in print. But of the estimated seven thousand original scripts produced by the CBC in the first fifteen years of its history, the most influential period, only just over a hundred were published, and many of these are now out of print. I should like to comment further on this a little later. First, however, I would like to attempt to describe in some detail the history of CBC radio drama, and to make some comments on its nature, and on its influence on Canadian theatre in general. Finally, I'll describe the progress of my present project, and add some information about the state of CBC archives.

If one tries to define it, radio drama seems to be either a tributary of traditional theatre, or an eccentric offshoot of radio documentary; its place and role are relatively obscure. This is especially true if considered from the perspective of the 1970's, when radio has been replaced by television as the medium of popular entertainment. Neil Compton in 1968 was already calling CBC radio "a kind of middle-brow Canadian magazine", catering to minority intellectual tastes. And in particular radio drama, "once our pride and joy", as Myron Galloway has termed it, has shrunk to a kind of impressive if eccentric and relatively unpublicized dramatic phenomenon, from the gargantuan entertainment feast of the past. Even if one thinks back to the 1940's and early 1950's, when the drama series CBC Stage and CBC Wednesday Night plays were the major entertainment of the thousands of Canadians who now watch All in the Family, the relations between radio drama and the legitimate stage were often vague in the minds of many, even those whose job it was to review radio plays. In one sense, radio drama was a poor cousin of live stage, importing the techniques of the theatre for use within the stringent limitations of a purely aural medium. Esse W. Ljungh must have been only the best-known of those Canadian director-producers who came to radio from the stage - he got his drama training in Sweden. In the U.S. the most impressive figure of this kind was, of course, Orson Welles, whose famous Mercury Theatre staged their plays first before a live theatre audience, then put them on the air. The methods of Andrew Allan, among others, owed something to Welles' techniques. Esse Ljungh himself had sets

constructed in his studios, and had his actors memorize their lines, before holding proper rehearsals.

Upon investigation, however, this first impression of radio drama as a limited offshoot of legitimate theatre is proven wrong; to begin with, there was, effectively, no live professional theatre in Canada in the 'thirties', when the CBC Drama Department was born. A major factor was cultural; Neil Compton talks about it in his essay, "Broadcasting and Canadian Culture":

The new media have often been accused of battenning parasitically upon the creative energy of real art, vulgarizing its themes, and seducing its practitioners with fame and money. This may be so in societies with a deeply-rooted traditional culture but it has not been so in Canada. With its small, dispersed population and puritan, philistine outlook, English Canada in particular had virtually no serious professional tradition of music or theatre at the time that the C.B.C. was established.

In other words CBC drama wasn't a tributary of legitimate theatre, because the Canadian culture hadn't thrown up any such institution. Arthur Phelps had been aware of this problem very early on, and realized soon after the creation of the CBC, that far from stealing from "live theatre", the CBC itself might provide a solution to the cultural problem, by creating an autonomous dramatic institution and tradition in Canada. Professor Phelps in a 1938 essay on Canadian drama expresses it in familiar terms:

We have as yet no drama fit to demand and find an inevitable audience...; we are still psychologically on the one hand a colony ... and on the other a parasitic appendage to the U.S.A.... I believe Radio Drama will develop its own subject matter and theme ... I think our Canadian public is offering increasingly sensitive and sympathetic audiences for dramatic expression that is worthy. I believe that National Radio is going to contribute more and more to this end.

There was in addition, and in a sense more crucially, a financial problem as well. The fact is that it was in practical terms because of a lack of money that there was hardly any professional theatre in the late 'thirties. The Dominion Drama Festival, while central to Canadian theatre activities, dealt with amateur organizations without any real financial backing. The lack of professional theatre meant no regular market for scripts, and so, no professional dramatists in Canada. It is clear then that the CBC was simply the major and almost the only outlet for professional actors, playwrights and musicians in the late 'thirties and the 'forties, because it had a budget, an organization and facilities, and an audience of growing sophistication. Because of this combination of circumstances good professional theatre, traditional and contemporary, was in some measure the gift of CBC Drama to this country. W.S. Milne, who wrote the Drama reviews for the University of Toronto Quarterly "Letters in Canada" in the 'thirties, recognized the circumstances as early as 1937 - and their effects:

As to quality ... much of the best dramatic writing has been done for the radio, a fact which seems curious but is explicable when one remembers that there is a

commercial market for radio scripts.

The War played its part in events. As the struggle became more serious, and more and more of the country's manpower and resources were turned to the 'war effort', the amateur groups folded, and even the Dominion Drama Festival was no longer active by 1940. On the other hand, radio in general came into its own during the War (and not in Canada alone, one recalls), as the primary medium for propaganda, news and entertainment. Radio drama shared the spotlight; on some levels, especially on war themes of various kinds, the function of entertainment blended with those of news and propaganda, and CBC has always been strong on documentary techniques. What this meant was that, alone among the outlets for drama during the War, radio, having this essential function, was assured of finances and personnel, as well as an audience. It was therefore a forcing-house for all the new young dramatic talents, including the playwrights, who had the opportunity to experiment and mature in the radio medium; the quality of the scripts (according to "Letters in Canada") was improving all the time. When Andrew Allan returned to Toronto in 1943 to head the CBC Drama Department and to create the Stage series, all the elements were present for the kind of achievement which forces us to recognize radio drama as a unique form in its own right, and an original contribution to our culture.

This achievement matured in the post-war years. Despite the fact that after the war the normal activities of the traditional theatre resumed, there remained the previous problems: often amateur status and a lack of funds. Meanwhile, radio drama was calling on all the major Canadian dramatic talents, and its production was increasing at such a rate that "Letters in Canada" despaired of doing any more than sampling the new radio scripts. Vincent Tovell, who took over from Milne as Drama reviewer for "Letters in Canada" in 1946, made it clear in his first article that he considered CBC radio drama to be the active centre of all Canadian dramatic activities, and that it was creating impressive achievements of international standard:

For perfectly obvious reasons it is to the radio producers that most Canadian dramatists turn for recognition and opportunities. Through that medium they find a responsive national, even international audience. In the field of radio drama Canadian directors, actors, musicians and writers have earned international honours, and the CBC's annual series ... which is produced by Mr. Andrew Allan, the Stages 44, 45, 46 and 47, has placed such script-writers as Len Peterson, Lister Sinclair, Fletcher Markle and Tommy Tweed in the forefront of their profession. The best of their work, which has pointed to new directions in thought and technique for radio writing, merits publication and serious consideration.

Tovell's admiration for CBC radio drama is even higher and more explicit in 1947; while he points out that there is almost no original stage-drama being stimulated by the legitimate theatre, Tovell repeats that "Canadian radio-drama, however, is professional, and in the studios of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation many of our best playwrights, musicians, directors and actors ... do important work." Of Andrew Allan's contribution he says, "Before long the national workshop which he founded (in Toronto) became the apex of our theatre structure in Canada, the goal and best outlet for talent ..." Pointing out that in 1947 alone the CBC produced 112 original plays and 29 adaptations from the classics, he concludes that "... the Stage series has become what is in fact our only approximation to a National Theatre in Canada ..."

The most significant phenomenon in this period, apart from the achievements in radio drama itself, is the growing frequency with which the radio dramatists were adapting their plays for the stage, and even beginning to write original material for stage production. Examples are mentioned in the reviews from 1946 on, and show the beginnings of the major contribution of radio drama in the creation of a live theatre tradition in Canada. John Coulter, Robertson Davies, Elsie Park Gowan, Len Peterson, Lister Sinclair, and Andrew Allan himself were among those engaged in this early expansion of theatrical activities from radio drama onto the stage. Of course there was the parallel contribution of the CBC to the stock of Canadian acting talent: Lorne Greene, Lloyd Bochner, William Shatner, Bernie Braden, Alan King, Kate Reid, Barbara Chilcott and Christopher Plummer are only the most familiar of those CBC actors who found their way onto the boards during the first exciting period of new live theatre in the 'fifties. It is no surprise that the major locale for this birth of live drama was Toronto, the scene of the Stage series.

It might be useful to an understanding of these achievements of CBC radio drama to suggest some of the unique qualities of the radio drama medium, for many of the plays written for radio, and the techniques developed in producing them, grew out of the form and the exigencies of this medium. While one can recognize basic 'dramatic' aspects shared with traditional theatre, such as character, suspense and dialogue, equally important are the techniques which grew out of the aural form of radio: the imaginative mimesis of reality through words and sound effects; the significant silence; the rapid cutting from scene to scene or the overlay or blending of scene with scene; combined with music of a very specific expressive kind; all of which bore some relation to current innovative cinematic techniques, but often with different goals, and with the greater freedom from visual reality of the sound medium which made these techniques radio's alone. As for the pregnant silence, one should recall that Harold Pinter practically began his writing career writing radio plays for the BBC, and his typical later techniques - heavy on dialogue and carefully timed expressive silence rather than action, for example - in part resulted from his radio experience.

While radio drama productions in the 1940's, despite these innovations, were in many ways live extensions of legitimate theatre, the progress of radio drama on the technical side at the beginning of the next decade was marked by the gradual waning of traditional dramatic methods and the growth of the electronic techniques of the radio medium. This process was accentuated and given a new direction by the coming of tape in the early 1950's. The first revolution of the communications medium, which was really a challenge to old linear forms of reality, came (pace MacLuhan) not with television but with the freedom and experimentation of radio drama, accentuated by the use of tape. The 1940's-style live production of a radio play, with electronic hook-ups to mix voices, background sound and music, for instantaneous broadcast to a live audience, the unique mark of the vintage Stage productions, gave way to the taping of plays in individual segments, for subsequent lab mixing and editing. While tape was a natural and inevitable technical development in radio (as it was again in T.V.), and the instrument for many exciting experiments, what was lost was the sense of dramatic immediacy achieved by "live" producers like Andrew Allan and Esse Ljungh, to be replaced by ever-more-complex experiments in electronics and sound - the experiments of Gerald Newman in the late fifties and early sixties are the epitome of this development: the removal of music, the use of multiplex recording and stereo rebroadcast. John Reeves' Kunstkopf experiments are a further development in this direction. And paralleling this replacement of linear "reality" with taped multi-level surrealism in technique, came the breakdown of a linear representation of dramatic reality in the script, and a parallel de-

emphasis on theme, perhaps on developing argument, to be replaced by surrealism, multiple points of view, and poetic ritual structures. John Reeves' radio dramas are, again, on the leading edge of this "ritual" development in Canada; but one must mention in this connection the influence of Dylan Thomas' Under Milk Wood, a "radio play" as he called it, written in the early 1950's - the last ambitious thing Thomas did before his death. The structure of this play is almost completely ritualistic, and its affinities are (not surprisingly, given Thomas' major work) closer to lyrical poetry than to drama.

With hindsight it seems a good as well as an inevitable process for radio drama to have developed in this way; good because the technical aural experiments were freeing radio from its hybrid dramatic sources, and giving it the opportunity to make a franker, more flexible, and fuller exploitation of its medium; inevitable because the direction of these experiments was to fulfil more modern expectations and conceptions: we live in a world the textures of which are mechanical, electronic and surrealistic, not really human any more; and the new radio drama was one of the first instruments to express this new world clearly. What was lost, as I've said, was the dramatic theatrical achievement of early radio; yet perhaps not lost, as I have argued, simply handed back to the traditional stage.

To go back, the last stages of the progress of vintage radio drama were rapid and sad, but again inevitable. In the mid-fifties, when the maturity and value of radio drama were generally established, it was overtaken by upstart television. It is history how this new medium gobbled up its parent - writers, producers, actors, musicians, audience and all. Andrew Allan himself held back for two years, but also finally moved to television. One of the ironies of this development is that television - having created its own drama department and series, drafted many of the best radio drama talents, and weaned the audience back to a more traditional visual dramatic approach - proceeded over the next ten or so years to phase out traditional drama almost completely. One cannot really blame the CBC for this, because this phasing-out was a continent-wide phenomenon; and in Canada it coincided with, and must have been partly due to, the coming-of-age of the live professional theatre which, as we have seen, was in many ways spawned by radio itself. One should note that Stratford, which used, and still uses, many actors and directors from the CBC drama roster, and which was the first nationally successful professional stage company in Canada, was established in 1953. And of course the Canada Council, created in 1957, at last provided the financial backing for live theatre which had been a CBC monopoly for some twenty years.

If one wants to conceive of CBC drama between the mid-thirties and the sixties as the seed-bed of live professional Canadian theatre, then it has fulfilled its role. If, on the other hand, one also responds to the infinite possibilities of a really new medium, then it was unfortunate, to say the least, that radio drama was overtaken so soon by the development I have mentioned above. What remains is a strong influence in every area of Canadian drama, live and on T.V., and, one suspects, in musical composition as well. And in the area of technical experiment, the surreal techniques developed by radio drama have found their way into every aspect of radio today, from the zoomy morning shows to the intercutting and mixing, the space-sounds, of such programmes as Ideas .

In the past few years, television has again discovered traditional drama. Not only are many television shows being done before live audiences, but the trend of sadly drooping ratings for T.V. serial shows has been reversed recently by three very popular programmes, All in the Family, Maude, and Sanford and Son, the techniques

of which are a departure from the usual boring formulae of the T.V. series; in fact they are a return to the traditional theatre and its dramatic conventions - all three are played to the hilt as live drama, and for live audiences, not cans of applause. There is, moreover, a revival of T.V. drama, in its mix of original and classical plays very much like the Stage series, resulting from the CBC's lucky acquisition of John Hirsch as Director of T.V. Drama. As for the traditions of radio drama and its specifically aural techniques, there has been a revival of interest in old radio serials; but there can be no return to the specific conditions which produced the CBC drama of the 'forties and 'fifties. The history of vintage "live" radio drama - superseded by tape, T.V., and Canada Council-subsidized legitimate theatre - is a closed chapter in the book of Canadian drama. Hopefully, the CBC Radio Drama Project will make it possible for that chapter to get written.

I have been working for several years on a project to recuperate the drama scripts produced by CBC during the period from the 1930's to 1961, to make them available to researchers, and hopefully to have some of the most significant ones published, along with an analytical and historical background. The project as it was conceived falls into several stages. The first of these, the necessary preliminary to the whole project, is the location and acquisition of the scripts. In the first instance these are to be found in various CBC locations. The second is the indexing of the scripts and their shelving in the Concordia University Library: paralleling this work is the task of the preparation of a complete Bibliography of all scripts produced by the CBC Drama Department. The information for this Bibliography exists mainly in CBC records, including regional Drama Department indexes, programme logs and schedules, pay sheets, and other records, as well as parallel documents in the CBC Programme Archives, Reference Library, Central (Document) Registries in regional locations, and the Historical (Archival) Sections in the three Head office locations. The list of actual scripts will then be collated with this Bibliography, in preparation for the searching-out of scripts no longer in CBC possession.

The third stage of the project will be the sifting of scripts to describe and evaluate them for purposes of editorial preparation of an anthology or anthologies to be offered for publication: the same precise information and evaluations of scripts will provide a basis for the proposed historical and critical analyses to follow. This information will be augmented not only by traditional background research but also by the use of primary CBC supporting documents, the surviving correspondence files and other records relating to the CBC Drama Department, in its various locations, which are also to be acquired for the Concordia Library. These documents, like the scripts themselves, and the Bibliography, will eventually become available to scholars generally, not only in the field of Theatre, but Canadianists, and those in Literature, Sociology and History, for example. I have been encouraging my colleagues in these disciplines to join me on a Committee to investigate the further implications of these acquisitions for their own purposes: but, of course the primary emphasis remains the contribution to Canadian theatre and its history.

The tasks seemed in theory to be fairly straightforward and simple: not so in practice: as I have said, of the estimated seven thousand original Canadian plays and an equal number of other scripts (between 1930 and 1961), not many more than a hundred have ever been published, and a number of those published are no longer available. Those in CBC possession were scattered in what was called "Dormant Storage", really attics and basements, or in production files, in seven or eight different cities. The scripts were rarely in any order (with some notable Toronto exceptions), and there were neither indexes nor even inventories of the vast majority of them. The CBC had never had the finances or manpower, nor firm internal

or governmental regulations, to properly deal with them, and retention and collection of scripts had been on an informal basis: whatever a producer considered worth saving went into his departmental files, and these were periodically cleaned out. While supporting files were dealt with more formally, and were until the early 1960's regularly and carefully collected and indexed in the regional Central Registries, the "retention" policies concerning these materials made no provision for their actual permanent retention, and such materials were often disposed of after a decent interval. The CBC Programme Archives was not regularly collecting scripts until the end of 1961 (hence my closing date), but even here the policy has not been to retain complete records of programme contents, but rather a rigorous selection policy (not more than 20% of all programmes). And the emphasis here is on tapes and other audio records, while scripts are considered ancillary materials only: the relative difficulty of studying a script from magnetic tape is too obvious to need elaboration. The CBC Historical Section was established even later, and its main focus and responsibility have always been to preserve a record of the administrative history of the Corporation. While there have been several (unsuccessful) attempts to organize a system of transfer of scripts to the Public Archives there has simply never been a CBC policy to preserve programme contents with any satisfactory completeness.

That is not to say that most of the scripts have disappeared; through concern, the acquisitive instinct, inertia and sheer luck (perhaps in that order) many of the scripts and supporting documents were willy-nilly retained, in the manner described above. Both Central Registries and the Toronto Programme Archives had dozens of boxes of scripts. For a time there was a policy of microfilming scripts, and a collection of over 140 rolls of film, representing some five times that number of scripts, is held in Toronto. Unfortunately, these scripts themselves were disposed of, though some of the original Canadian ones were given to the McMaster University Mills Library, where they remain with only a rudimentary inventory, almost useless for retrieval purposes. In addition, some authors with private collections donated them to the Public Archives. In this way were preserved - though unindexed - an estimated 500 scripts from the vintage years, by Andrew Allan, Merrill Dennison, Joseph Schull, John Drainie and (mainly) Tommy Tweed.

The problem of access for the prospective researcher was rendered more formidable because of the nature of the usual agreement between playwrights and the CBC, which bought only broadcast rights to a script, and therefore felt itself completely restrained from divulging script contents; this, together with the traditional CBC policy on secrecy of documents, had prevented the CBC from allowing researchers to work with its files, and it had never allowed any files out of its possession (with the exception of the McMaster gift of scripts, which were about to be destroyed in any case). It was the very rare scholar who got to study CBC copies of scripts, and when the Pagé-Legris team decided to repatriate the French-language radio literature of Québec (they have now published that handsome Bibliography, the Répertoire des oeuvres de la littérature radiophonique québécoise, 1930-1970, and are proceeding to publish several critical anthologies of the scripts), they had to microfilm every script before they could begin to deal with the materials. Pat Biggins (whose Director luckily was Professor Gerald Newman, former Executive Producer of Drama for CBC Vancouver) worked on her Annotated Bibliography of CBC Vancouver Radio-Drama Scripts, 1939-45, in a basement storage room with which I had also become acquainted: not only did the water pipes drip down on scripts and scholar, but the room was also a general storage area for old papers, furniture, typewriters and supplies, including several drums of reproductive fluid, which was so corrosive that one could work for only an hour at a time before retreating. I know of several highly-qualified and motivated researchers who were not even so

lucky as the Pagés or Pat Biggins, and who got not a glimpse of CBC materials.

This was the situation when I stumbled upon it and began my work in 1973. I should say, to begin, that what follows is as often in rhetorical order as it is in strict chronological order. With Canada Council help, I first did a series of regional feasibility studies, to discover both the extent and locations of scripts and supporting documents and the information concerning administrative structures and policies necessary to the project. The CBC was not only amenable, but encouraging, and Robert Weaver, Head of Radio Arts, opened to me from the beginning access to personnel and records across the country. The nature and extent of the scripts gradually became clearer, as did the possible sources for background information and for the complete Bibliography, which emerged as the first necessity. It also became clear that, both for my own work and for the sake of rescuing the scripts and other records, it would be necessary to convince CBC, my own University Library, and the union representing the playwrights, ACTRA, to allow the surviving documents to be transferred to the Library, there to be indexed and shelved. Again, it was clear that the sheer bulk of the work, and its specialized nature in the first phases, necessitated the help of library-professionals, hence further Canada Council support. Finally, it also seemed obvious that the most efficient method of recording, sorting and retrieving the thousands of Bibliography entries was by the use from the very beginning of a computer.

In the meantime I was pursuing the information necessary to the critical and historical aspects of the project. I began to interview the people, actors, "producers" (meaning producer-directors), playwrights and technical and administrative staff, who had been involved in the work of radio drama in the period under discussion. Many of those interviews were taped, others recorded in the old-fashioned way. A collection of articles and books (not very many en masse) began to grow, and latterly, a biographical list of radio drama personnel. To this collection has more recently been added primary materials, including correspondence, gleaned from various CBC locations. To be perfectly frank, however, this part of the work is presently secondary to the job of collecting and indexing the scripts, and preparing the Bibliography, for the following reasons:

That work suddenly became crucial when I discovered last year that the situation concerning the CBC materials had deteriorated, owing to several circumstances. First, despite a Head Office directive to destroy nothing, the possibility arose that the surviving collection at CBC Vancouver would be lost in the move to a new building, from premises they had occupied for some thirty or thirty-five years. In the event, I went to Vancouver before the move, and packed and shipped the scripts to Montreal: and this was prior to any agreement. The second factor was the decision last year to re-organize CBC Central Records in the regional locations. Involved in this was the disposal in the usual manner of older files. In this way, the complete records of CBC activities to the mid-'sixties, including the Drama Departments, disappeared from Vancouver and Winnipeg between May and December of 1975. Of course, when this was discovered, steps were taken to protect the remaining records, and I shall detail these in a moment. Sufficient to remark here that it became crucial to conclude an agreement with the CBC as soon as possible. I will not detail the six months of effort involved in signing an Agreement satisfactory to all parties for the acquisition of scripts; the Agreement was concluded last September. Canada Council funds were released, the Esse W. Ljungh Radio Drama Archive was established, and for the first time CBC documents were allowed out of the Corporation. In the meantime two research assistants with specific expertise were hired, one to work on the scripts in Montreal, one on the secondary information,



including especially bibliographic information on drama broadcasts, at various CBC locations in Toronto. This past winter I have been working in all regional Drama Departments: Toronto, Winnipeg, Calgary, Vancouver, Halifax, St. John's, Newfoundland, and of course in Montreal itself, to collect and ship scripts, as well as to ascertain what secondary records still existed, and to interview radio drama and administrative personnel: I have also visited Head Office in Ottawa for interviews and materials, especially from the Historical Section, which is developing a valuable collection of documents on all phases of CBC history, and the history of radio in general.

I should point out that the documents being collected, covered by the Agreement, span a period from the beginnings not only to 1961 (the closing date of my project) but also at least to 1970, and include all serious CBC drama, not simply original Canadian scripts; and that the Bibliography will be likewise complete. It is fairly clear that the classical and contemporary non-Canadian dramas in the CBC series, as well as the adaptations, many of them done by the same authors who were writing the original scripts, provide a crucial context for the understanding of the original Canadian materials, as well as vital documents for researchers in other disciplines, such as sociology and history: it is the whole body of materials broadcast which represents the influence of CBC radio drama on Canadian culture. These decisions illustrate one continuing minor theme in the project, to try to anticipate the further uses of the materials, beyond the specifically-defined scope of my project, and to respond to these possibilities by extending the scope of materials to be acquired as well as by re-defining the methods by which they should be handled and indexed. We have been in close consultation with the Library on this matter. In addition, the inter-disciplinary Committee will make valuable suggestions, and hopefully more suggestions will issue from this Conference.

To return to the work of collecting and indexing scripts, and gathering bibliographic information. After an evaluation of various computer possibilities (including the MARC format), it was finally decided to use the Sir George Williams computer, and to generate a programme and a format specifically designed for the project. The same format, incorporating a maximum of twenty-five separate items of information, is being used for the scripts in Montreal and the Bibliography in Toronto, which will allow duplicate traces of entries, to be reconciled by the computer itself. Information is transferred directly onto computer sheets for card punching, without the need for the more traditional intermediate stages. We are almost half-way through this recording work, and the sorted computer print-outs are efficient tools for checking and correcting.

More recently, I am working with the Library and the CBC on three other aspects of the Agreement: first, an extension of the final date of the scripts to be collected from 1970 to 1973, with the arrangement that scripts from succeeding years are to be forwarded on a continuing basis to the Library, with a two-year time-lag. The scripts in question, like those already acquired, are by preference production copies annotated by the producer, and in addition, where possible, the authors' own typescript. The Library, for its part, has undertaken to handle and shelve all the post-1961 scripts so as to make them available for scholarship on the same basis as the earlier collection. Second, we are concluding an agreement to extend the contract concerning scripts to the surviving relevant background correspondence and other documents, for housing in the Concordia Library Esse Ljungh Archive. Though this has involved rather more difficult copyright complications, the acquisition of these complementary background materials will not only save them from imminent destruction, but will provide invaluable information about the scripts

themselves, and complete the record, so to speak.

Finally, and in connection with the above, we are arranging the official transfer to the Concordia Library of all the CBC files belonging to the late J. Frank Willis, who, together with Andrew Allan (whose files are in the Public Archives), and Esse W. Ljungh himself, helped form the potent triumvirate of CBC producer-directors who created and directed the Drama Department activities in those vintage years. The Willis materials include all the scripts which he produced for the Drama Department, as well as the scripts of documentaries and other programmes which he produced for CBC, and in addition his correspondence files and notes for this work. These have been arranged by his former assistant, Grace Athersich, with the relevant background materials attached to the appropriate scripts, and the collection as a whole provides a comprehensive record of J. Frank Willis' major activities in the CBC. These materials are recognized as a discrete entity, and rather than being dispersed in the Ljungh Archive, they will be housed as a separate if related collection.

Since last March, we have signed the Supplementary Agreement with CBC for scripts and ancillary documents on a continuing basis, and we have begun to collect these documents. We have completed the acquisition of CBC scripts from across Canada, their indexing (to 1962) and their deposit in the Radio Drama Archives, where they are accessible. We have gone on to complete our collection of scripts by contacting other Canadian Archives, as well as playwrights and producers. We have also ascertained the CBC play-holdings in other archives. The work of editing the Bibliography is well in hand, and the typescript should be ready by next autumn, 1977. When finished, it will be a complete list of all CRBC and CBC drama, broadcast from 1932 to 1961, together with a union list of all known copies of scripts, tapes, discs and microfilms in major Canadian collections, as well as in the BBC and Radio France Archives. The Canada Council has supported this work for several years, with research funds totalling some seventy thousand dollars. As far as publication is concerned, there is now an agreement with a major University Press for consideration of the project as a whole: the Bibliography, several hundred collected plays, and an historical and critical volume.

My last word will be about an unforeseen product of my work, though an inevitable one, given the difficulties experienced. I have presented a report to the CBC about the state of its Archives and other document-retention departments, and its policies with regard to the treatment of its records, especially the contents of its programmes, together with some modest if heartfelt recommendations concerning possible changes, the major one being the necessity to recognize and to act on the fact that the contents of its broadcasts comprise a unique and important contribution to and influence on Canadian culture, so that they should be preserved as completely as possible. I am happy to report that CBC is very conscious of its responsibility in this area, and that, happily, it soon may no longer be necessary for a student of CBC programmes to take the tortuous route which has been my own experience and that of other researchers in the past.