

# **INVENTORY DESCRIPTION**

**Great Britain. Colonial Office.**

**Original Correspondence : Canada (CO 42) :**  
**1760-1823**

MG 11 GREAT BRITAIN: Public Record Office, C.O. 42, Canada, Original  
C.O. 42 Correspondence & "Q" Series

Transcripts, 1763-1895. 1.5 m. Photocopies, 1842-1841. 15 cm. "Q" Series transcripts, 1760-1841. 43.5 m (also on 16 mm microfilm reels). Microfilm, 1700-1922. 724 reels, B-21 to B-76, B-121 to B-197, B-222 to B-232, B-253 to B-291, B-293 to B-464, B-473 to B-531, B-562 to B-657, B-741 to B-811, B-1940, B-2217 to B-2253, B-2856 to B-2861, B-2872 to B-2887, B-2948 to B-2956, B-3094 to B-3102, B-3241 to B-3265, B-3334, B-3336 to B-3373.

#### Finding Aids:

\* P.A.C. Reports for the years 1890-1893, 1896-1902, 1921, 1941-1945. These P.A.C. Reports contain calendars of the "Q" Series and are probably the most important finding aid for C.O. 42 up to the year 1841.

Finding Aid 90 - "British Records on Microfilm." This provides a list of reel numbers, with the volume numbers and volume titles to be found on each reel. It is the most important finding aid for C.O. 42 after the year 1842.

Other finding aids that are useful for all or part of C.O. 42 are Finding Aids 178 and 626; author index catalogue cards (also available on 16mm microfilm, reels C-11965 to C-11973); Parker's Guide; and Public Record Office indexes. These are described in more detail at the end of this inventory entry.

Colonial Office 42 which for Canada is the first of the six classes normally assigned to geographically defined collections, follows the usual system of arrangement for "colony" classes (see the MG 11 Introduction under Arrangement). The internal distribution of documents in C.O. 42 reflects the geo-political development of Canada in the five distinct units of records: volumes 1-88 relate primarily to Quebec, 1763-1791 (but include a small number of documents dated as early as 1700 and as late as 1808); volumes 89-315 concern Lower Canada, 1791-1840; volumes 316-476, Upper Canada, 1791-1841; volumes 477-661, Province of Canada, 1841-1866; volumes 662-1045, Dominion of Canada, 1867-1922. Most of the documents, save for the first dozen or so volumes which derive from the Board of Trade and its predecessors and successors, came under the purview of the Secretary of State responsible for the colonies.

Up to 1872-1873, C.O. 43 (q.v.) is the proper location for entry books of out-letters; after this date, researchers must rely upon the drafts of outgoing correspondence filed with C.O. 42 Documents. Further, part of the papers in the categories "Public Offices" and "Individuals", 1857-1868, will be found in C.O. 6. The entire class of C.O. 42 has been microfilmed. Oversize documents from volumes 172, 318, 352, 606, 611 and 883 were filmed separately on reel B-1940.

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The "Q" Series of transcripts prepared by the Public Archives of Canada before the creation of C.O. 42 by the Public Record Office derived principally from the old series formerly known as "Colonial Correspondence, Canada", and does not include the early volumes now forming part of C.O. 42 which came from the old series "Board of Trade, Canada" and "America and West Indies". Selections from these early volumes were eventually transcribed by the Public Archives of Canada, but do not form part of the "Q" Series. They are listed under the new Public Record Office designation of C.O. 42. On the other hand, the "Q" collection includes transcripts from some entry books which now form part of C.O. 43 as well as a few items now in C.O. 45 and War Office 1. By both design and accident therefore, the "Q" Series is to some degree a composite collection resulting from the early acquisition policies of the Public Archives of Canada and from the 1908-1910 reorganization of the Public Record Office's holdings. The "Q" Series is also available on 16 mm microfilm (reels C-10228 to C-10231, C-10760 to C-10778, C-11888 to C-11960; C-12588 to C-12601 and C-12617 to C-12635). The C.O. 42 transcripts are also available on 16mm microfilm (reels C-13604 to C-13606).

A feature of singular importance to the researcher is that the "Q" Series in its entirety does not include marginal comments in which may be found in the microfilmed copies of C.O. 42. The "Q" Series covers the period 1760-1841, most of the series has been calendared. A list of the calendars is provided below, and a table of equivalents for the "Q" and C.O. 42 may be found in Appendix 2 of the published Public Archives of Canada Inventory (1961) for Manuscript Group 11.

In addition to the "Q" Series and the transcripts of the early C.O. 42 volumes, the Public Archives of Canada transcribed or photocopied documents of special subject interest or which had not been copied previously. This material was selected mostly from documents dating between 1820 to 1895. Finally, in 1909, the Public Record Office transferred to the Public Archives of Canada a collection of duplicate despatches from Quebec, Lower Canada, Upper Canada, and Canada 1771-1847. These records, which were formerly located in MG 11, supplementary I, item 23, may now be found in Manuscript Group 40.

Researchers should note that complementary and duplicate material may be found in a variety of other Public Archives of Canada sources including: Record Group 7, Governor General's Office; Manuscript Group 8, Documents relatifs à la Nouvelle-France et au Québec; Manuscript Group 9, Provincial, Local and Territorial Records. Additional documents similar to those found in C.O. 42 may be located in C.O. 537, Original Correspondence, Supplementary (q.v.)

Finding aids for the various components of this class are of several types. David W. Parker, A Guide to the Documents in the Manuscript Room at the Public Archives of Canada (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1914), volume 1, pp. 99-161 gives an overview and brief description of each "Q" Series volume, noting the principal subjects and correspondents. An extensive author index card catalogue for the "Q" Series is available in the Public Archives of Canada's reference room, complementing the calendars published in the annual reports of

*Handwritten notes:*  
 H/W microfilm  
 CD  
 3626  
 1137  
 vol. 1  
 (Solved with  
 Layalst  
 Collection with  
 finding  
 aids)  
 113

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the Public Archives of Canada. The author index card catalogue is available on 16mm microfilm, reel numbers C-11965 to C-11973.

\* The calendars areas follows:

Quebec and Lower Canada:

Volumes 1-57	(1760-1800) P.A.C.	Report for 1890, pp. 1-325
58-84	(1791-1800)	1891 1-200
85-106	(1795-1807)	1892 153-285
107-124	(1807-1813)	1893 1-119
125-148	(1813-1818)	1896 1-252
149-167	(1818-1823)	1897 253-395
168-186	(1824-1828)	1898 297-580
187-200	(1828-1831)	1899 581-712
201-225	(1831-1835)	1900 715-912
226-241	(1836-1838)	1901 913-1042
242-242A	(1836-1837)	1902 1043-1075
242B-242C	(1837)	1941 3-8
243-246/1	(1838)	1902 1075-1109
246/2-266	(1838-1839)	1941 9-313
267-277	(1839-1840)	1942 3-186

Upper Canada:

278-290	(1791-1801)	1891 1-177
291-310	(1801-1807)	1892 286-399
311-317	(1808-1813)	1893 1-50
318-324	(1813-1818)	1896 1-79
325-334	(1818-1823)	1897 81-179
335-350	(1824-1828)	1898 181-329
351-358	(1829-1831)	1899 331-390
359-373	(1824-1832)	1943 3-76
374-388	(1832-1836)	1900 391-540
389-395	(1813-1836)	1901 541-601
396-402	(1837-1838)	1943 77-186
403-415/1	(1838-1839)	1933 3-154
415/2-431	(1839-1841)	1945 3-200

The Report for 1921, Appendix "D", includes a calendar for the early volumes of C.O. 42 which were not included as part of the "Q" Series. The pagination and arrangement of the calendars for the "Q" Series apply directly only to the transcripts. However, these calendars may be used as finding aids for C.O. 42 using the table of equivalents published as Appendix 2 of the Public Archives of Canada Inventory (1961) for Manuscript Group 11, and by searching for the documents using the dates of the material to locate the items on microfilm in the appropriate categories such as "Despatches", "Offices", "Individuals" and so forth. However, it must be remembered that not all the material in the "Q" Series is in C.O. 42 and not all the material in C.O. 42 is in the "Q" Series.

MG 1  
C.O. 42 GREAT BRITAIN: Public Record Office, C.O. 42, Canada Original  
Correspondence & "Q" series

Finding Aid 626 provides a calendar to C.O. 42, volumes 477-502 (1841 to 1842) and a subject index to volumes 411-476 (1832 to 1841).

For the period 1843-1922, Finding Aid 90 is the major guide. It lists the volume numbers and volume titles on each reel of microfilm. In addition, there is usually a summary of contents at the end (occasionally at the beginning) of each volume. Unfortunately there is no quick way of identifying authors or subjects in this part of C.O. 42.

A primary breakdown of the class C.O. 42 may be found in the "Comprehensive List of Colonial Office Records" (1950), prepared by the Public Record Office and copied for the Public Archives of Canada on microfilm reel B-893. Contemporary registers, abstracts and indexes for the period 1815 to 1922 are available on microfilm, but must be used with caution in view of the numerous vagaries of classification and arrangement which have accumulated over the years. The contemporary finding aids include C.O. 335, Register of Correspondence (q.v.), volumes 1-31 (1850-1922); C.O. 694, Colonies, General, Register of Secret Correspondence (q.v.), volumes 1-4 (1865-1898); and C.O. 714, Indexes to Correspondence (q.v.), volumes 30-35 (1815-1857). These indexes and registers are not restricted exclusively to C.O. 42, but apply also to other classes, especially C.O. 43. It should be noted that these are not indexes in the modern sense of that term. They are more like registers than indexes, and they do not provide a list of references to specific authors and subjects.

Finding Aid 178 consists of two chronologically organized lists of despatches from the Colonial Office to the Governor General and Lieutenant-Governor of Upper and Lower Canada for the period 1784-1841. The Finding Aid includes many references to despatches found in the "Q" Series.