Edward Sapir's Correspondence: An Alphabetical and Chronological Inventory, 1910-1925. *Louise Dallaire*, ed. Ottawa, Ontario: National Museum of Man Mercury Series, Canadian Ethnology Service Paper Number 97, 1984. xxi + 278 pp. gratis (paper).

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From 1910 to 1925, Edward Sapir was director of the Anthropology Section of the Geological Survey of Canada (later the Museum of Man in Ottawa). In this capacity, he not only directed the work of the museum as administrator and animator, but also engaged in his own far-reaching and original research into the theory and methodology of anthropology and linguistics. His research placed him at the forefront of the development of these two fields, not only in Canada and the United States, but also throughout the world. In 1925, he resigned this directorship and took a position at the University of Chicago as professor of anthropology.

During Sapir's fifteen years as director of the Anthropology Section of the Geological Survey of Canada, his scholarly output was prodigious. Article after article, monograph after monograph, and review after review poured forth from his pen, each more theoretically advanced than the preceding piece of work, and each breaking new ground and laying down new precepts for the development of the two sciences in which he had chosen to work. During this time, he also wrote and published his only scholarly book, *Language* (Sapir 1921), a work so well-written that even today it has the fresh insights of new discovery on practically every page. Sapir also wrote an equally prodigious amount of poetry during the period from 1917 to 1924, including his only other book, *Dreams and Gibes* (Sapir 1917), a short collection of wry, subtle poems which deals with things as diverse as monks in Ottawa and the music of Debussy. Much of Sapir's poetry was published in the myriad "little magazines" that grew out of the Edwardian era of sensibility and delicate feelings, with outward icons like princesses held captive in towers symbolizing the inward turmoil of free spirits confronting the gritty reality of existence. More of Sapir's verse remains unpublished, making up about two-thirds of his more than 400 existing poems.

During his directorship of the Anthropology Section of the Geological Survey of Canada, Sapir's official correspondence was equally as prodigious. This correspondence is still on file at the National Museum of Man in Ottawa, and was recently put on microfiche. The work under review is an inventory of this correspondence, including letters to and from Sapir. Every letter in the file is catalogued under the name of the correspondent, with an indication of author of the letter (either Sapir or the correspondent, with the occasional inclusion of letters from third

parties), the date of the letter, and the number of pages. Correspondents are listed alphabetically throughout the work, with indications of their addresses and professional connections, if known, the years covered by the correspondence, and the total number of pages in the correspondence. In effect, this listing gives a fairly complete picture of the people who were writing to Sapir and to whom Sapir was writing during the period from 1910 to 1925, at least in any kind of official capacity. Although there are some personal comments in the letters in the files, Sapir's private correspondence is not to be found; those letters were written at home, as were the vast majority of his poems (see Note 1). For example, the current inventory has no letters either to or from Sapir's most famous correspondent, Ruth Benedict.

As the title of the volume indicates, this is only an inventory; a listing of the letters in the file. Since there are no summaries of the contents of the letters, one can only guess what they were about. In the introduction, the editor of the inventory, Louise Dallaire, remarks that to have included summaries would have made the work so bulky that publication would have been impossible. However, since all of the letters are now on microfiche, any interested researcher can have access to the original letters after locating them in the file. Researchers should also have their eyes checked before doing this, especially if they are interested in Sapir's correspondence with Franz Boas. Boas surely had the worst handwriting of any twentieth century anthropologist, and perhaps any nineteenth century one as well. Trying to get through his letters is a challenge that will daunt even the most scholarly of scholars. This is complicated by the fact that Boas, as any German of that period, seemed to be writing in that particular nineteenth century German handwriting know as "Faktur," even when writing English.

Although one cannot learn the contents of Sapir's letters from this work, one can see the diversity and extent of his correspondence with various figures of his world and time. For example, the aforementioned correspondence with Boas extends for the whole period from 1910 to 1925, and includes 609 pages. Sapir's correspondence with Kroeber is dated from 1911 to 1924, and includes 478 pages. Other long-term correspondence reads like a list of the leading anthropologists and linguists in North America, including such diverse figures as Marius Barbeau with 520 pages (this, presumably, while Barbeau was on his numerous field trips), Robert Lowie with 401 pages, William Mechling with 503 pages, Paul Radin with 632 pages (probably chiding Radin for being tardy with reports), Frank Speck with 508 pages, and James Teit with 592 pages.

Other figures with whom Sapir corresponded to a greater or lesser degree constitute a veritable who's who of some of the most illustrious linguists of the day, including Leonard Bloomfield, Otto

Jespersen, Antoine Meillet, J. Vendrys, and C.C. Uhlenbeck. Anthropologists on this list include A.A. Goldenweiser, Melville Herskovits, and Clark Wissler. In addition to professional linguists and anthropologists, Sapir wrote to some well-known figures in arts and literature, including Stephen Leacock, Clarence Day, C.K. Ogden, and Duncan Scott. There is even an interchange with Gilbert Murray, the great scholar of Greek at Oxford, and with W. Radloff of the Museum of Peter the Great in St. Petersburg. The oft-repeated comment that Sapir was isolated from men of science during his years in Ottawa (Mandelbaum 1949:viii) is belied by the extent of this correspondence. Sapir seems to have received and written letters to literally every important figure in his field at the time.

As a last observation, there is a file of some twenty pages of correspondence from 1921 to 1925 with the *Double Dealer*, a little magazine located in New Orleans. What, one wonders, could this have all been about? I believe the answer must be that Sapir was trying to get a second volume of poems published during this period. Correspondence with Madge Macbeth, an Ottawa writer (Sapir 1922), indicates that Sapir was also in touch with B.K. Sandwell, who later became the editor of *Saturday Night*, about the possible publication of a volume of poetry. Nevertheless, Sapir failed on two counts: he never published a second volume of poetry, and shortly after his move to Chicago, he ceased writing poetry altogether.

In sum, this is an extremely useful work for those who are interested in Edward Sapir as a scholar, linguist, anthropologist, and poet. It is meticulously edited and well-printed. The editor is to be commended for a job well done.

Note 1. Sapir's secretary was Eileen Bleakney, who later married Diamond Jenness, Sapir's successor as director of the Anthropology Section of the Geological Survey of Canada. Bleakney still lives in Ottawa, and I have been told by her son, Stuart Jenness, that she remembers typing an occasional poem for Sapir.

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