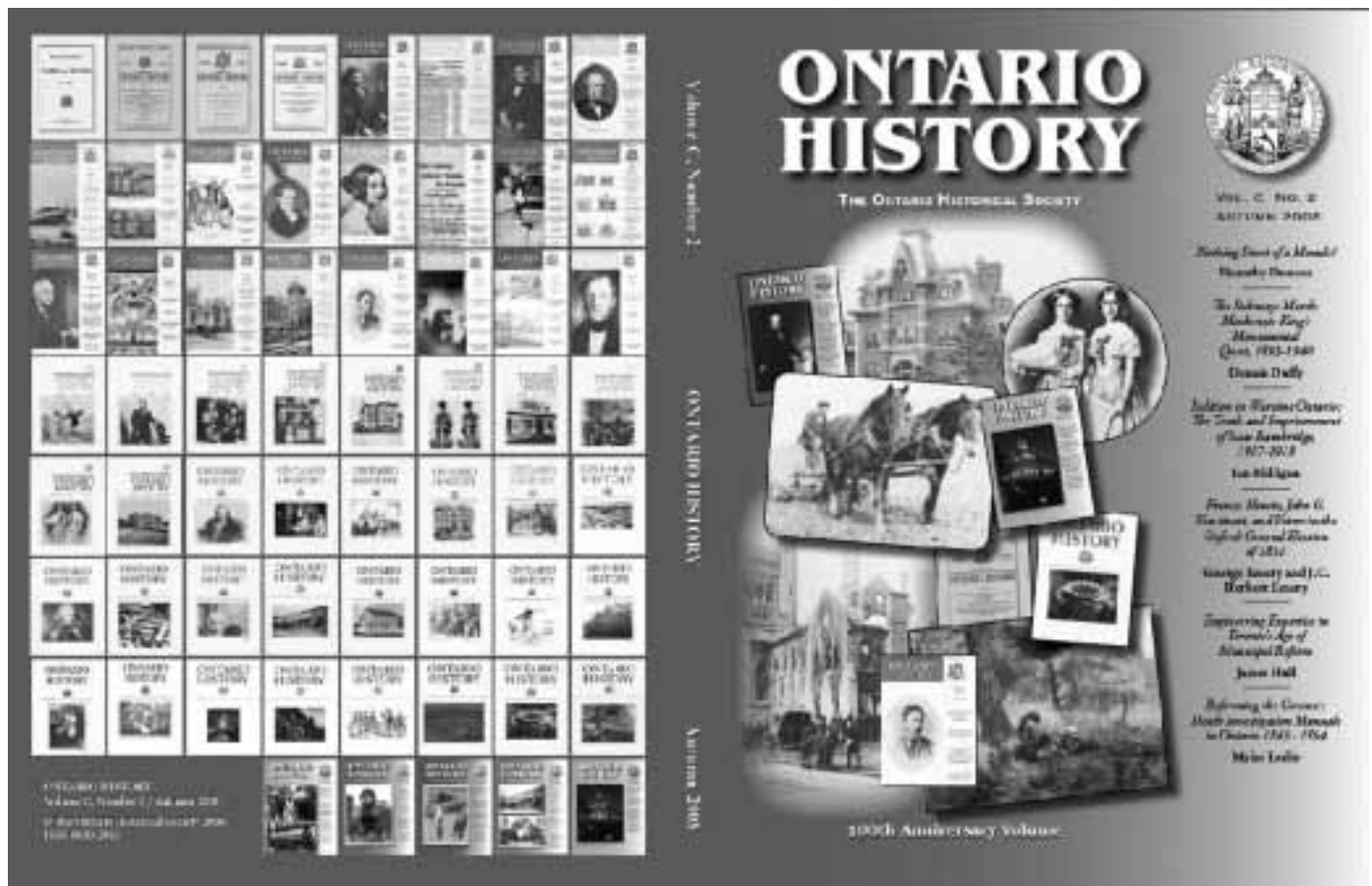


THE ONTARIO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ONTARIO HISTORY

Three years ago, The Ontario Historical Society (OHS) celebrated a landmark anniversary by publishing the 100th volume of its scholarly journal *Ontario History*. Begun in 1899 under the title *Papers and Records*, the journal's original mandate sought to publish and preserve rare documentary sources, encourage historical writing about the province, and stimulate interest in Ontario's history. For the past 113 years, the publication has seen its share of ups and downs, but has remained a constant force for historical preservation, education and interpretation; a flagship of the OHS.

The OHS was founded in 1888 when eight local historical societies banded together to achieve their goals of heritage preservation on a provincial level. Ten years later, on April 1, 1899, the Ontario legislature passed *An Act to Incorporate The Ontario Historical Society*. This Act not only confirmed the Society as a legal not-for-profit organization in Ontario, it also gave the OHS the unique power to incorporate other non-profit heritage organizations operating in the province. Since then, over 340 historical organizations have incorporated through affiliation with the OHS. The OHS continues to service these affiliated societies, and recently has experienced unprecedented growth, incorporating 57 not-for-profits since March 2007. In addition to its power to incorporate historical societies,



The front and back cover of the 100th anniversary volume of *Ontario History* (Vol. C, No. 2, Autumn 2008), featuring a selection of the many hundreds of covers produced over the years. This was the 100th volume printed since 1899, the year in which the OHS launched a pamphlet that became the foundation for one of the oldest historical journals in Canada.

Le frontispice et couverture arrière du volume 100^e anniversaire de *Ontario History* (vol. C, n° 2, automne 2008), avec une sélection de plusieurs centaines de couvertures produites au fil des ans. Ce volume était le 100^e imprimé depuis 1899, année au cours de laquelle la OHS a lancé une brochure qui est devenue le fondement de l'une des plus anciennes revues d'histoire au Canada.

one of the most significant ways the OHS achieves its mandate to promote, preserve, and educate about Ontario's history is as a publisher.

The early issues of *Papers and Records* are a fascinating piece of Ontario's historiography; in them were reprinted a number of primary sources, including hundreds of pages of parish marriage, baptismal, and burial records, militia rolls, account books and much more. As time went on however, the editors realized that in order to reach a more popular audience, a more accessible style of narrative history would have to be published. As such, editors began accepting submissions from a broader pool of sources on a variety of topics (e.g. social history) that veered away from the dominant military and political themes.

As OHS Past President Gerald Killan points out in his *Preserving Ontario's History* (1976), the journal did not always meet the strictest scholarly standards, often publishing questionable factual information from both amateur and the newly-emerging professional historian. However, Killan also asserts that "what is surprising is that a select number of [articles] were so carefully researched and written ... they would have easily met the standards set in the 1920s by the first issues of the academically oriented *Canadian Historical Review*."

Throughout the War years and the Depression, the journal experienced some economic hardships, which explains why in some years, no volumes were produced. By 1947, *Papers and Records* was renamed *Ontario History*, and had received an aesthetic "facelift" featuring more photographs and colour covers, as well as a new Book Review section. Today, it continues this tradition and publishes bi-annually in a peer reviewed print-only format. It is currently under the editorship of Dr. Thorold Tronrud and the *Ontario History* editorial advisory committee.

These committee members, as well as all authors and reviewers, volunteer their contributions to the journal.

To learn more about the history of *Ontario History*, read "Nothing Short of a Miracle!" by Dorothy Duncan. It first

appeared in the 100th anniversary volume C, No. 2 of the journal and is available online at www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/oh. In 2012, the Society was proud to launch a popular special double issue of *Ontario History* focusing on the War of 1812, in commemoration of its bicentennial. The issue features ten articles – six new and four previously published – the conflict and its effects.

In addition, the Society has also digitized and posted online over 70 articles and 25 book reviews that have appeared in *Ontario History* since 1905 examining the War of 1812. Available only to subscribers of the journal, the content can be accessed at www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/1812.

Moving forward, the OHS has committed to publishing *Ontario History* in both print and electronic format. The project to digitize the journal has already begun, beginning first with the digitization of the index covering all 113 years of publication. This index is available online at www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/oh.

The first volume of *Papers and Records*, published in 1899, was made possible through a five hundred dollar grant from Ontario's Ministry of Education. In February 2012, The Ontario Historical Society was granted Institutional Eligibility by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and was subsequently granted three year funding through the Aid to Scholarly Journals program.

The Society welcomes new subscribers to *Ontario History*. Learn more at www.ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/oh or feel free to contact the OHS at 416.226.9011 or ohs@ontariohistoricalsociety.ca.

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Montreal City Hall Fire 1922 / L'incendie de l'hôtel de ville de Montréal en 1922