British North America, 1759-1867
History 313

Consider Resources

Primary Resources: diaries, letters, speeches, newspaper articles, documents, photos
Secondary Resources: books, journal articles (scholarly vs. popular), theses, the Web

Check subject guide under: Research by Subject → History → by Region → Canadian

Find Background Information

Check the following selected titles to provide definitions, introduction to key issues, dates, events, noted persons, and often bibliographical references:

Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas: North America (Online)
Canadian Encyclopedia (Online)
Dictionary of Canadian Biography (Online)
Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples (Online)
Historical Statistics of Canada (Online)
Oxford Companion to Canadian History (Online)

Find Primary Sources

For general information about primary sources, go to: Research by Subject → Primary Sources

The primary source material in Stauffer Library will vary from topic to topic. It may be a diary, correspondence, letters, newspaper accounts, a law, a debate in Parliament, editorials, a photo, etc. from the period of study, as well as electronic, microfilm, and printed collections of these documents published at a later date.

1. Use QCAT

The Library catalogue is a good place to start your search for primary source materials. Search QCAT to find books and magazine/newspaper titles from the time period about which you are writing as well as published documents and collections. To find newspaper and journal articles, see Indexes below.

A. Search by Subject or Keyword

You can locate items in the library by searching QCAT by doing a keyword Boolean search and then adding one of the special subject terms to your search: correspondence, diaries, interviews, pamphlets, personal narratives, sources....
"fur trade" and canada and (sources or diaries)
"british north america" and correspondence

Also browse subject headings and look for these special subject terms.

Women--Canada--History--Sources
Canadian invasion, 1775-1776--Personal narratives

Collections of primary sources can have these special terms along with the words documents or papers in the title.

documents and canada and social and history

B. Look up Historical Figures, Organizations, and Agencies...

If you know of a person involved in the event or from the time period, look under that person’s name as an author (or subject) for memoirs, diaries, and correspondence. For example:

mackenzie william lyon
wolfe james

Look up groups or organizations as an author (or subject).

canada parliament

2. Use Journal and Newspaper Indexes Covering the Time Period

Newspapers are a good source of primary information. Stauffer Library has a good collection of Canadian newspapers from various centuries on microfilm (located on the lower level).

To find out what newspapers the Library has, search QCAT by newspaper title or search by subject heading:

toronto ont newspapers
vancouver b c newspapers

We have access to the following full text electronic newspapers via the link, Databases:

The Globe and Mail: 1844 - excluding the last 3-4 years
Toronto Star: 1892 - excluding the last 3-4 years
New York Times: 1851 - excluding the last 2 years
Times Digital Archive: 1785-1985

Plus access to many more newspapers (for list, go to the tab, Databases and type in historical newspapers).
For more information and access to historical Canadian newspapers, check our Newspapers subject guide at:

Research by Subject → Newspapers

Periodicals published at the time are another type of primary source. To locate 18th and 19th century periodical literature, consult the following indexes:

JSTOR
A full text archive of core scholarly journal literature in the social sciences and humanities dating back to the 1850s.

19th Century Masterfile
Indexes English language journals published from the late 1700s to the early 1900s.

Periodicals Archive Online
Facsimile page images and searchable full-text for approximately 500 international and scholarly journals in the humanities and social sciences from 1802-1995.

3. Use Government Documents

Publications generated by a government body, public records, reports and statistics are excellent sources of primary materials.

Government documents reference assistance is available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2-4 p.m. or by appointment. You can reach Jeff Moon by email at moonj@queensu.ca.

For information about Canadian legislative documents, check the web page at:
library.queensu.ca/webdoc/gov/canada

Also the web page, Canadian Federal Legislative Documents at:
library.queensu.ca/webdoc/gov/federal-docs

For British legislative documents, check the web page at:
library.queensu.ca/webdoc/gov/countries_uk

4. Search the Web

To search the web for primary source collections, do an "Advanced Search" in Google:

"primary sources" “fur trade” canada or canadian

Primary source materials and related websites can be freely searched on the Web as well as the links below that lead you to websites for which the Library pays.

Access the following via the Databases tab:
Some websites provide access to online versions of primary sources which may be digitized images, facsimiles or full text. See below for a selection of websites:

Acadian Heartland: Records of the Deportation and le Grand Derangement, 1714-1768  

  Canada in the Making  [www.canadiana.org/citm/index_e.html](http://www.canadiana.org/citm/index_e.html)
  Pioneers and Immigrants  [www.canadiana.org/citm/themes/pioneers_e.html](http://www.canadiana.org/citm/themes/pioneers_e.html)

Early Canadiana  [canadiana.org/ECO](http://canadiana.org/ECO)
  Provides access to full-text books and pamphlets published from the time of the first European settlers up to the early 20th century.

In Pursuit of Adventure: The Fur Trade in Canada and the North West Company  
[www.canadiana.org/citm/index_e.html](http://www.canadiana.org/citm/index_e.html)

Libraries and Archives Canada – Collections  [www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/website/index-e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/website/index-e.html)

New France: New Horizons Exhibition  

Our Roots: Canada's Local Histories Online  [www.ourroots.ca/e/](http://www.ourroots.ca/e/)
  Full text access to rare books and primary sources describing many aspects of Canadian history.

Peel's Prairie Provinces  [peel.library.ualberta.ca/index.html](http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/index.html)
  Citations to and full text materials relating to the history of the Canadian Prairies.

Virtual Museum of New France  

The library subscribes to a growing number of electronic databases that include primary source materials. For more information, check the Canadian History: Primary Sources subject guide as well as the websites section of the Aboriginal Studies subject guide.

**Find Secondary Sources**

1. **Books**

   To find books on your topic in QCAT, think of the words that best describe your topic and then connect them with Boolean operators: **AND, OR, NOT**.
For a selection of books on the role of native women in the fur trade, try this search:

native and women and “fur trade” and canada

Search by: Keyword Boolean

Select useful titles and look at the subject headings. Use them to provide more keyword ideas or as individual searches themselves.

(aboriginal or indigenous or native or indian or metis) and “fur trade?” and canada

Search by Subject

Relevant subject headings for this topic:

Fur trade--Canada
Fur traders' spouses--Northwest Canadian
Frontier and pioneer life--Northwest Canadian
Indian women--Canada
Indigenous peoples Women

Other useful subject headings for an overview of the historical period include:

Canada--Economic conditions--1763-1867
Canada--History--1763-1867
Canada--History--1775-1783
Canada--Politics and government--1791-1841
Canada--Social life and customs--19th century
Canada--Social conditions--18th century

2. E-Books

The library subscribes to a number of e-book packages. Packages that are of interest to history students are: ACLS Humanities E-Book, Canadian Electronic Library, MyiLibrary, Blackwell Reference Online, Cambridge Histories Online, and e-Duke Books Scholarly Collection (via ebrary).

Records for these e-books should be in QCAT or Summon but one can directly go to these e-books packages and search them. Access is via Databases.

3. Articles

Use the following electronic journal database to find scholarly articles:

→ America: History and Life: 1954 - present

Also Useful: → Bibliography of native North Americans: 1954- present
→ Historical Abstracts: 1954-
→ Humanities & Social Sciences Retrospective Index: 1907-1984
→ Religion Database: 1949-

Also check out more indexes to search by going to the following subject guides, e.g. Aboriginal Studies, History - Canadian, etc. and then click the link, Article Indexes.
To search indexes, click the tab **Databases** and enter the title of the database.

America: History and Life covers the history of Canada and the United States from prehistoric times to present. It indexes articles from 1,700 journals, selected books and dissertations.

For articles on native land treaties with the British in Canada, try:

Search: native and Britain and land and treaties

Modify search: (native or aboriginal or indians or indigenous) and Britain and Canada and land

To find out if Queen’s subscribes to the journal, click **Get It! @ Queen’s** if full text not readily available.

**Journals**

Queen’s Library subscribes to about 90,000 full text e-journals via various publishers’ packages. Search QCAT or Journals A to Z to find specific titles.

One collection that is of particular interest to history students is **JSTOR**, a digitized collection of articles from key periodicals (about 357 history titles are indexed), excluding the most current 2 to 5 years of a title. Access JSTOR via the tab, **Databases**.

4. **Summon**

With Summon, you can search, discover and access information on any topic from the Queen’s Library collections – print and electronic books, single articles to entire e-journals, newspapers, theses and more.

You can limit your results to peer-reviewed materials, filter by year and format, narrow by additional subject terms and then save, print or email references.

Summon is a good starting point to find material for your research but if you are doing higher level research, you will want to search relevant subject specific databases.

5. **Book Reviews**

To locate a book review, you need the following information: author; full title of the book; year in which the book was first published.

For reviews, check the database, **Book Review Index**. You can also find book reviews in **Summon**
Also check the subject guide, **Book Reviews**, for additional resources to search.

**Search Other Library Catalogues**

If you don’t find what you need in QCAT and Summon, try searching other library catalogues, using WorldCat, a database of library catalogues around the world. It can help you identify materials in other libraries, which you may then request through Interlibrary Loan.
To access, click on **Find Information** and then on **Other Library Catalogues**.

**Request an Interlibrary Loan**

Use interlibrary loan (ILL) to obtain loans or copies of items that Queen's libraries do not own. Click **RACER** on the library homepage. For more information, consult the brochure: **RACER, Our Interlibrary Loan System**.

**Search the Web**

Check our Search the Web guide: [library.queensu.ca/research/guide/search-web](library.queensu.ca/research/guide/search-web)

**Google**

Google Advanced Search [www.google.ca/advanced_search](www.google.ca/advanced_search)

...offers a variety of ways to structure a more precise search and improve the efficiency of your search results.

Google Scholar [scholar.google.ca/](scholar.google.ca/)

... searches for scholarly materials including journal articles, theses, books, preprints, abstracts and technical reports from broad areas of research.

**TIP:**

By searching Google Scholar through the Queen’s Library website the "Get It! @ Queen’s" citation linker is activated (which allows you to click through to the Library’s subscriptions). To import citations into RefWorks choose **Scholar Preferences**, then **Bibliography Manager**. Select RefWorks. Save Preferences.

For assistance on writing a historiographical paper, check our guide.

**Evaluate Websites**

Anyone can create a webpage so it is particularly important to analyze and assess information that you find on the Web before using it in a research paper.

Go to our Evaluating Web Sources page for a checklist of points to consider when analyzing a webpage:

**How-to & Help → How-To Guides → Finding → Web: Evaluate**

**Evaluate Sources**

Evaluating all of your sources is a crucial step of the research process. Go to our Evaluating Sources page for criteria on how to judge information sources.

**How-to & Help → How-To Guides → Writing Essays → Evaluating Sources**
Cite Sources

Check our Citation and Style Guides page at: How-to & Help → How to Cite Sources

Chicago is the preferred style of documentation in history. Check QCAT for print copies in the library system. Also available online.

Since there are many different citation styles, always check with your instructors to determine which style is expected for your courses.

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Stauffer Library
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