

York Records

In the 19th century, the area that would eventually become the city of York was largely agricultural, with grist, lumber, and woollen mills dotting the banks of the Humber River. In the first half of the 20th century, it was a refuge for working-class families earning independence by building their own homes. The City of Toronto Archives has records, created by municipal governments as well as private groups and individuals, about York, including personal papers; published books and reports; and visual material, including maps and photographs.

Important Dates

- ◆ Pre 1850: The area that would become the Township of York is part of the Home District
- ◆ January 1, 1850: The Township of York is incorporated
- ◆ 1853-1926: The municipalities of Brockton, East Toronto, East York, Forest Hill, Leaside, North Toronto, North York, Parkdale, Swansea, West Toronto Junction, Weston, and Yorkville separate from York and incorporate as individual municipalities, reducing the size of the Township of York
- ◆ April 15, 1953: York and Weston become two of thirteen municipalities in the new Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto
- ◆ January 1, 1967: York and Weston amalgamate and are incorporated as the Borough of York
- ◆ June 10, 1983: York is incorporated as a city
- ◆ January 1, 1998: York ceases to be an individual municipality and becomes part of the amalgamated City of Toronto



J.A.D. McCurdy in biplane, Weston, 1911, Fonds 1244, Item 78

Types of records

Council proceedings

Early council proceedings from York County are found in Christine Mosser, ed., *York, Upper Canada, Minutes of Town Meetings and Lists of Inhabitants, 1797-1823* (Toronto: Metropolitan Toronto Library Board 1984) in the Research

Hall Library (call number 929.3513541 Y7 1984). Council proceedings for York from 1860 to 1997, and for Weston from 1882 to 1966, are also available. To find them, search for them in the Gencat database.

By-laws from 1850 to 1997 are also available; please consult Reference Desk staff.

Assessment rolls

The Archives has York assessment rolls from 1882 to 1992 and Weston assessment rolls from 1883 to 1966. To find them, ask the Reference Desk staff for assistance.

Other municipal records

Many records created by York have been transferred to the Archives. They will be listed in our database, conserved if necessary, stored under appropriate environmental conditions, and made available to the public. These records will include correspondence files about major issues in York's history, including the Depression and post-war development; financial records; building permits; newspaper clippings scrapbooks; Board of Health files; and planning records, among other topics. We invite researchers to return to the Archives periodically to see these new records as they become available.

The records of the former Metro (regional) government and its agencies, boards, and com-

City directories

Some areas of York are listed in the Toronto city directories in a separate suburban section (see each year's table of contents for page numbers) from 1905 to 1929. Starting in 1930, York listings are part of the main directory. Between 1983 and 1995, York listings appear only in the "central" and "west" editions of the directory, which are not published every year. After 1995, York listings appear in one volume along with parts of the City of Toronto.

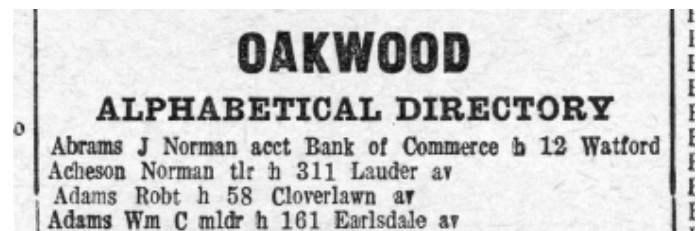
Directories before 1941 are available on microfilm, found in the self-serve cabinets in the Microfilm Room at the back of the Research

Maps

To find maps showing York, look in the binder in the Research Hall labelled "Cartographic Collection," or use the Gencat database. Reference Desk staff can show you how to use the database. The Archives also has several atlases that may be useful. They are found in the section titled "Atlases" in the main area of the Research Hall.

missions also include information about matters relevant to York, including public works, such as water mains; transportation, such as roads and the TTC; planning; parks; and social services. To find these records, search on your research topic in the Gencat database, or speak to Reference Desk staff.

Also available now are records from the municipalities of Brockton (RG 101), East Toronto (RB 103), Forest Hill (RG 106 and 323), North Toronto (RG 105), Parkdale (RG 102 and 203), Swansea (RG 107 and 323), West Toronto (RG 104), and Yorkville (RG 100).



Toronto City Directory 1926

Hall. Directories from 1941 to 2001 are available in hard copy on the shelves in the Research Hall.

The Archives also has a copy of a *Directory and Map of the Township of York* (917.13540025 ON8 1909) for 1909, which includes listings for York villages. Ask Reference Desk staff to retrieve this directory for you from closed reference.

Fire Insurance Maps

The Archives has fire insurance maps on microfilm for parts of York for 1948, 1957, 1962, and 1964. They are found in the metal cabinets in the Microfilm Room at the back of the Research Hall (boxes are titled "Goad's" or "Underwriters").

Each set of maps begins with a key map and an index of street names. You can use either to find your area. A key to the symbols used in the maps is found on the bulletin board in the Microfilm Room at the back of the Research Hall.

Aerial photos

The aerials cover the York area from 1947 to 1992. Each aerial shows a part of the city, not the entire city. Use the index maps for each year, available on the large tables by the lockers, to find the identification number of the aerial photograph(s) you wish to see. The identification number for a particular area changes from year to year up to 1983, so before 1983, you must look up each area separately for each year. Starting in 1983, the identification numbers stay the same for each year. Once you have an identification number, you may then look at

Books

These general reference books on the history of York are a good place to start your research:

J.C. Boylen, *York Township: An Historical Summary* (Toronto: Municipal Corporation of the Township of York and the Board of Education of the Township of York 1954)
971.354 B69 1954

Wilbert G.Thomas, *The Legacy of York: A Survey of the Early Development of the Communities of York* (Toronto: Historical Committee of

Reports

The Archives holds published reports regarding York, including those on topics such as public transit and roads, as well as official plans. Look in the Research Hall Library in the "Government Reports" section under the category you are interested in, or search the Gencat database.

Photographs

To find photographs of York places and events, search on your research topic in the Gencat database.

the aerials, which are arranged by year and identification number in the large map cabinets by the lockers.

When using the aerials, please wear the white cotton gloves provided, to protect the photographs from fingerprints.

An additional but small group of aerial shows areas around the Don and Humber rivers from 1937 to 1942. These aerials are known as Series 97, Aerial Photographs of Valley Lands. To see these aerial photographs, ask the Reference Desk staff to retrieve them from the vault.

the City of York 1992)
971.354 T36 1992

Wilbert G.Thomas, *The Legacy of York: A Survey of the Later Developments (1920-1950) in York Township* (Toronto: Historical Committee of the City of York 1992)
971.354 T36 1996

City of York: A Local History (Toronto: Board of Education for the City of York 1987)
971.354 C39 1987

Other Information

For general information, see the information file titled "York, Ont.—City 1983-." You may also find other information files about more specific topics. For a list of information file titles, please consult Reference Desk staff. For a list of York mayors and other municipal information, please ask Reference Desk staff for the binder entitled "York Reference Highlights."

Another useful source for York history is the York Museum, 2694 Eglinton Avenue West, 416-394-2759.

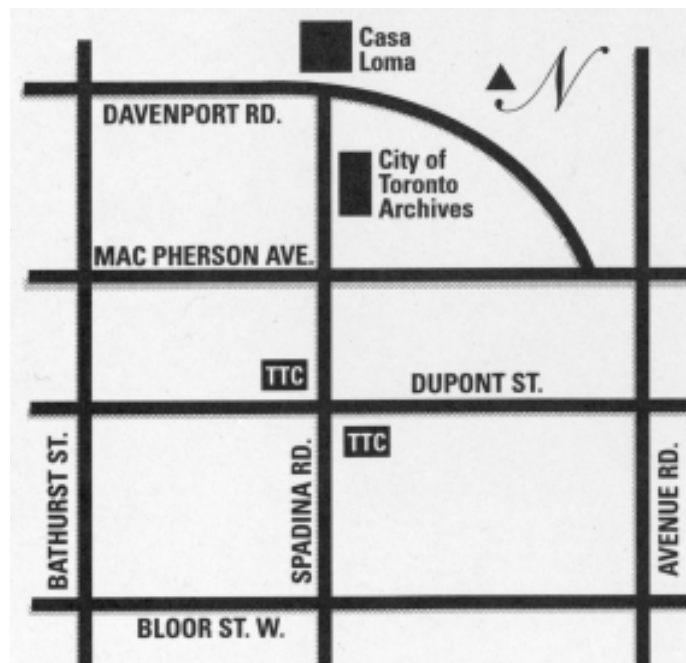
Highlights

Some photographic highlights of York records currently available at the City of Toronto Archives include early airplane flights near Weston (Fonds 1244), the first TTC streetcar in York (Series 71), and views of Weston and York streetscapes in the 1920s (Series 71). Highlights of other media



Introduction of streetcar route on Rogers Road, York Township, November 19, 1924, Series 71, Item 3526

include correspondence, plans, and notes regarding various properties in the Township of York from 1851 to 1900 (Fonds 79), including a brochure for "suburban gardens and villa residences" for sale on Balmoral Avenue, Weston (Series 346, File 105). Also of interest are the daily journals of William Abbott Parsons (1844-1923), who owned a farm near Eglinton Avenue and Dufferin Street (Fonds 85).



The City of Toronto Archives is easy to get to by public transit. Exit the University subway line at Dupont station and walk north.

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www.toronto.ca/archives

9:00-4:30 Monday to Friday
10:00-4:30 Saturdays (September to June)
Closed Sundays

Our archival heritage is unique and irreplaceable. Please help us preserve it for future researchers by using only pencil when taking notes, wearing cotton gloves when handling photographs, and checking with Research Hall staff before making photocopies. Please do not remove any archival materials from the Research Hall. Thank you for your consideration!

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