



EDITORIAL GUIDELINES

Canada's History (formerly *The Beaver*) is published six times a year by Canada's National History Society in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Founded in 1920 by the Hudson's Bay Company, the magazine was acquired by CANADA'S NATIONAL HISTORY SOCIETY in 1994 and is now the Society's chief instrument in its efforts to promote interest in and knowledge of Canadian history.

Canada's History's mission is to serve its readers by delivering a dynamic magazine that illuminates the diverse experiences and complex characters that, through time, have shaped Canada. This is achieved through fresh writing, exemplary research, compelling imagery and design, and an ongoing dialogue with our readers.

Canada's History publishes well-written, well-researched, and informative articles about Canadian history that focus on all parts of the country and all areas of human activity. Subject matter covers the whole range of Canadian history, from social history, politics, exploration, discovery and settlement, to aboriginal peoples, war, culture, business and trade.

CANADA'S HISTORY AUDIENCE

Canada's History readers are devoted to Canadian history. Some are interested general readers; some are professional historians; some have an interest in one particular area of Canada's story. Readers are young and old, from mid-thirties to mid-nineties; they live not only in every region of the country, but all over the world. Writers should be aware that, for every reader who is well-versed in your particular history specialty, be it the French regime, medical history, the military, or native studies, there is another reader for whom the subject is entirely new. Thus it's important to provide as wide a context as possible for the uninformed reader.

FEATURE ARTICLES

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

Canada's History publishes approximately thirty articles a year. Many of these are commissioned from regular contributors and professional writers. We do, however, welcome inquiries from others. Articles run various lengths: long features (from 1500 to 3000 words) that provide an in-depth look at an event, person, or era; short features (from 600 to 1200 words) that provide a more narrow focus. Longer articles may be considered if their importance warrants publication. *Canada's History* does not accept articles that have been published elsewhere or that are derived from a single secondary source.

Before submitting an article proposal to *Canada's History*, contributors should become familiar with the magazine by reading one or more of the recent issues from cover to cover. This will give a reliable picture of the magazine's current range, approach, and style.

CONTENT

The magazine is looking for

- articles based on unpublished or new material
- articles written from a nontraditional point of view
- articles on significant but little-known Canadians of the past
- articles that offer a new interpretation of or newly discovered information on significant events
- pictorial features based on photography, art, or other historical imagery
- articles that mark the anniversary of an important historical event (queries for these should be submitted at least ten months prior to the anniversary date)
- articles, original in concept and execution, that not only inform but entertain
- articles that illuminate a present-day phenomenon or state of affairs

While *Canada's History's* mandate to popularize Canadian history does not change, story needs may change from time to time. While all queries are welcome, particularly welcome as of fall 2006 are queries for short features (1,200 to 1,500 words), pre-Confederation stories, stories about explorers and exploration, and stories about the North.

STYLE

The ideal *Canada's History* story has two virtues: It is a pleasure to read and it is informative. When readers have finished an article, they should feel that they have been engaged and have learned something about Canadian history that they never knew before. The magazine is looking for

- Articles with **strong narrative elements** of character and conflict. The character and circumstance of Canadian history are ideally suited to story treatment. You may want to write about the *Spitfire*, or nursing sisters of WWI, but those are merely topics. Tell us more. We need to see how you would develop that into a magazine article – for example: who are the characters; what conflicts or obstacles do they encounter; how do they handle them?
- Articles with **strong leads**. The first few paragraphs must be able to capture readers, hold on to them, then propel them into the story – even readers who swear they couldn't possibly be attracted to the topic. The lead should beguile either by its tone (freshness, surprise, humour, or contradiction, for instance) or by its content (by posing a question or introducing a novel idea or little-known fact), or – ideally – by both. A lead may be two sentences, or it may be three or four paragraphs, but it should not run to great length. In most cases, it should be followed by an anchoring statement containing the hard details that impart to readers why the story was written and why they should be interested in it. Once readers have finished the first four or five paragraphs of your story they should know what it's about and feel compelled to read on.
- **Crisp, clear, and concise prose**. While *Canada's History* readers are generally well educated, the magazine is not an academic publication. Avoid jargon, arcane language, and inflated prose; employ instead the descriptive language of good fiction.
- **Accuracy**. This is vital. Readers rely on *Canada's History* stories to be definitive. The magazine is found in school and university libraries, used for reference, and cited as authoritative. Special care should be taken to ensure that names, places, and dates are correct and based on credible sources.

- **Popular writing.** No theses please. Dissertations, academic papers, and the like cannot be considered for publication in *Canada's History*, but may form the bases for articles. However, historians and other experts are encouraged to make the transition to popular writing. Those who feel they cannot make the transition, but nevertheless feel their work is of interest to *Canada's History* readers, are welcome to submit story ideas that can be turned over to staff or professional writers.

LEAD TIMES

Canada's History publishes six times a year. Editing and production needs mean that we are often working on content six months or more in advance of publication. Story proposals should take this into account. Most successful proposals will be for subject matter that is not overly time-sensitive and will stand for publication for some time after it is completed.

On time sensitive material, such as that hooked to specific anniversaries or relating history to current events, we need to receive final copy a minimum of two couple in advance of the month of contemplated publication, and most often, four months or more in advance. The timing of proposals for such material should take that into account.

QUERIES

We welcome all written inquiries but please note that we cannot commit to replying.

Please begin with a query rather than a finished manuscript. We prefer written queries sent by e-mail to editors@canadashistory.ca. Please type the word *query* in the subject line to receive confirmation that your query has been received. Queries may also be sent by regular mail to *Canada's History*, Bryce Hall, Main Floor, 515 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2E9. We cannot commit to returning unsolicited query material, and we cannot trace queries that are sent anywhere else but to the query email address.

AGAIN, PLEASE NOTE that due to the volume, we cannot reply to most unsolicited queries or other submissions. Only queries found to be of interest can be assured of a reply. Please do not send unsolicited original material, manuscripts or research. We cannot be responsible for their return.

When proposing a story idea, writers should submit

- a rough outline and brief synopsis of their idea with a statement explaining the significance to the modern reader
- a list of sources they expect to use
- proposed length
- a writing sample, such as a page or two of the proposed article or a copy of a previously published article
- a CV that outlines previous writing experience and special qualifications you bring to your subject
- suggestions for, or photocopies of, illustrative material (photos, drawings, artwork, etc.)

The editors cannot provide critiques of submitted material. Declining a submission does not necessarily mean that it lacks merit; the magazine may have recently published or commissioned a similar article, may only be seeking articles that focus on a particular era or subject, or may simply have a full inventory

of articles awaiting publication. Please be aware that we receive many hundreds of queries a year, thus even very worthy article ideas can't always be pursued.

If your idea appears to be a good match for *Canada's History*, you will be contacted by an editor to discuss it further. If an article is commissioned, please be prepared to submit: an electronic version of the manuscript; source list and material (photocopies of research material—pages from books, documents, or journals you have used) for fact checking; a biographical note that will identify your expertise to readers; photographs or other illustrative material (or a list of sources for images).

DEPARTMENTS

We also accept submissions for the following regular departments:

- **Currents:** News items that alert readers to history-related events, community action, exhibits, trends, websites, historical research and the like. Upper word limit is 400 words;
- **Getaway:** The subject of the piece is a history weekend getaway, focusing on three to five history-linked attractions within a relatively restricted area. The appeal should be both to distance travelers and to stay-at-home types who want to explore their own environment. Sites should have a genuine historical link or focus and a thematic overview that relates to the historical significance of the area (for example, aboriginal Vancouver Island, Acadian New Brunswick, Winnipeg's Exchange District). Photos and a service sidebar are also required. Length is 600 words (excluding service sidebar). More detailed guidelines will be forwarded once a story idea is accepted.
- **Moment:** features a singular event or incident that can be pinpointed to a day, ideally even the time of day, presented as a snapshot in time. Sometimes, the incident may appear of minor or no significance. Yet it signals a significant change in social consciousness, political direction, or the like. Moments are tied to the issue date (an event that occurred in the month of May, for example, appears in the April/May issue). Upper word limit is 500 words.

For the preceding departments, you may query us with your idea, following the procedures outlined above under the title Queries. Please identify the department that you are querying about, as well as the subject of your article, and provide a brief outline or synopsis that will tell us what points you will cover. A writing sample is also helpful. Queries will be evaluated on originality, writing style, and fit with other articles in the magazine. Again, though, we cannot reply to all unsolicited submissions.

- **Your Story:** is written by readers about their firsthand experiences with an historic event or personage. Like our feature articles, Your Story should enlighten readers on little-known stories that present interesting characters, challenges, or conflicts of Canadian history from a new perspective. Personal memoirs of a general nature are discouraged; the article must focus on an historic event or personality. You may query us with a letter or writing sample, or if you prefer, a finished manuscript that does not exceed 1000 words. An image or image reference is also desirable.

If sending by email, please send to editors@canadashistory.ca. To receive confirmation that your query has been received, please ensure that the word *query* appears in the subject line.