

Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association Rapport de l'assemblée annuelle de la Société historique du Canada

Report of the Annual Meeting

Report of the Secretary

G. W. L. Nicholson

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[See table of contents](#)

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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY

The 39th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association was held at Queen's University, Kingston, on June 8-11, 1960. A record number of 196 delegates signed the register. Headquarters for the Association were in Leonard Hall which, with other new residences recently opened at Queen's, provided comfortable accommodation for those attending the meetings. Although most of those present did not realize it, the occasion was probably the last on which a single university would play host to all the Canadian Learned Societies.

In recognizing the financial burden imposed upon a university in entertaining so many societies in a limited space of time the C.H.A., along with the majority of the other societies, had previously notified Queen's that it would not accept hospitality in the form of a luncheon or dinner tendered by the university. The Association is however indebted to Queen's for a very pleasant reception held in Wallace Hall on 10 June. Members and their wives were also the guests of the Ontario-St. Lawrence Development Commission at a dinner in Yeo Hall, at the Royal Military College of Canada on 9 June; and social activities came to a happy conclusion on the afternoon of the 11th when Dr. and Mrs. A. R. M. Lower entertained delegates and their wives at a Garden Party at their home, "Horizon House", Collins Bay. The Association is very much indebted to the Committee on Programme and Local Arrangements, capably headed by Professor Fred W. Gibson.

The opening day, Wednesday, 8 June, was devoted to business meetings of the Archives Section and the Local History Section, chaired respectively by Mr. Hartwell Bowsfield and Miss Margaret Ormsby. Professor D. M. L. Farr, Carleton University, addressed the Archives Section on *The Development of Archival Institutions in Canada*, and was followed by Mr. A. Willms, Public Archives of Canada, who explained *The Purpose and Procedures of the Public Archives Records Centre*. In the evening the Council of the Association held its first meeting.

The general sessions began on 9 June in Kingston Hall. In the Canadian History Section, Professor J. M. S. Careless, University of Toronto, ably demonstrated from the correspondence of George Brown to his wife Anne the latter's claim to be regarded as the "Mother of Confederation". Professor Paul Cornell, Acadia University, led the discussion. Professor A. M. Keppel-Jones, Queen's University, described to the Commonwealth Section the British occupation of Mashonaland, emphasizing the decisive roles played by Cecil Rhodes

and King Lobengula. The commentator on this paper was Professor Gwendolen Carter, Smith College. In the afternoon, Professor Margaret Prang, University of British Columbia, discussed the part played by N. W. Rowell in Canada's external policy during the period 1917-1921, giving him the credit of being "one of the few who had begun to think about the role of an autonomous Canada in a perilous world". The discussion was led by Mr. Edgar McInnes, President, Canadian Institute of International Affairs. In the Ancient History Section, Professor E. T. Salmon, McMaster University, showed how the unification of the Italian peninsula by the Romans, not only militarily and politically, but linguistically and sentimentally, set the stage for the development of the Latin world in other parts of the globe. Professor Eric Smethurst, Queen's University, acted as commentator. In the evening, following the dinner in Yeo Hall, R.M.C., members assembled in Currie Hall to hear a paper by Mr. Ronald L. Way, Director of Historic Buildings and Sites, Ontario-St. Lawrence Development Commission. Mr. Way described the important work being done by the Commission in creating Upper Canada Village, near Morrisburg, as a "Living Museum". Professor R. A. Preston, R.M.C., led the discussion. Following Mr. Way's paper, buses took C.H.A. members to Fort Henry to witness a dramatic night display of nineteenth century drill by the Fort Henry Guard.

The morning of 10 June saw two papers being given in the Canadian History Section and one on European history. Professor W. J. Eccles, University of Alberta, considered *The History of New France according to Francis Parkman*. Mr. André Vachon, Archiviste de la Province de Québec, examined the part played by *eau-de-vie* in Indian society. He suggested that excessive drinking was not the main cause of the rapid disintegration of the Indian way of life, and that contrary to the opinion of missionaries, liquor was not the major obstacle to the conversion of the Indians. In commenting on these papers, Professor Guy Frégault, University of Ottawa, commended Professor Eccles for having emphasized Parkman's over-simplification of history, citing Lucien Febvre's dictum for the historian: "Pour comprendre, ce n'est pas clarifier, simplifier, réduire à un schéma logique parfaitement net Comprendre, c'est compliquer. C'est enrichir en profondeur." With respect to the second paper the commentator suggested that there was work to be done in studying the impact of the French civilization on the various Indian populations with careful references to chronology. In the session on European history, Professor R. M. Saunders, University of Toronto, examined Pierre Bayle as a "skeptical prophet of enlightenment", charging the great seventeenth-century lexicographer-philosopher with having conducted "a crusade to win men to doubt, to lead the world into the peace of confessed uncertainty". In commenting, Professor C. D. Rouillard, University of Toronto, was inclined to question this accusa-

tion of skepticism, suggesting rather that Bayle's relentless questioning was in order to make sure that what he admitted to the rank of historical truth might "possess all the certainty that knowledge of this order is capable of". In the afternoon, Professor George W. Brown, University of Toronto, gave an informal progress report on the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, of which he is the Editor. A joint session with the Canadian Political Science Association, held in Dunning Hall Auditorium, heard a panel discussion on *The Relevance of Western Political and Social Ideas to the Societies of Southern and Eastern Asia*. Members of the panel, which was chaired by Mr. Edward B. Jolliffe, Q.C., Toronto, were: Professor Keith Cal-
lard, McGill University, Professor W. C. H. Dobson, University of Toronto, and Mr. Hubert R. Kemp, of Ottawa.

Following a meeting of the Council on the morning of 11 June, the Association heard the Presidential Address by Professor W. L. Morton, University of Manitoba. Professor Morton gave a penetrating analysis of *The Relevance of Canadian History*, developing four permanent factors — Canada's northern character, its historical dependence, its adherence to a monarchical government and a "national destiny committed . . . to special relations with other states".

The General Meeting of the Association brought to a close the proceedings at Kingston. The Secretary reported that membership of the C.H.A. at the end of May 1960 stood at 871, a net gain of 31 over the previous year. The following officers were elected for 1960-1961: President: W. K. Ferguson, London; Past President: W. L. Morton, Winnipeg; Vice-President: R. A. Preston, Kingston; English Language Secretary: G. W. L. Nicholson, Ottawa; French Language Secretary: Rev. Adrien Pouliot, S.J., Quebec; Treasurer: R. S. Gordon, Ottawa; Editors of the *Annual Report*: J. P. Heisler and P. E. Dumas, Ottawa; Councillors (to retire in 1963): Ubalde Baudry, Ste. Rose (Laval), P.Q.; R. G. Glover, Winnipeg; B. Wilkinson, Toronto; P. B. Waite, Halifax.

Ottawa, August, 1960

G. W. L. NICHOLSON,
English Language Secretary.