

Archives of Ontario Pathfinder to: PETITIONS FOR LAND

Early settlers applied to the Crown for land grants, leases, and other land privileges. The document used to do this was called a “petition”. To find out if an individual submitted a petition, start by searching the following two resources located in the Main Reading Room:

Petitions to the Crown Lands Department, 1827 to 1904:

- These records are held by the Archives of Ontario.

The *Upper Canada Land Petitions*, 1793 to 1867:

- The Archives of Ontario provides microfilmed copies for the convenience of researchers. The original records reside at Library and Archives Canada. Go the other side of this pathfinder for more information.

The *Upper Canada Land Petitions (UCLP)*, 1793 to 1867:

Oaths of allegiance, affidavits, correspondence and supporting documentation *may* be filed with the petitions.

- [Click here to view an online index](#), then click on “Genealogy and Family Search”, and follow the links to the database.

If the name is there:

1. Write down the bundle and petition number, and microfilm number.
 - The reel is in the self-serve cabinets

For Petitions:

1. Write down the bundle and petition numbers, the volume number, and the year that appear on the card.
2. Go to the Guide to Upper Canada Land Petitions and Land Books (on the reference bookshelves) and consult the microfilm list in section 2.
3. Match the bundle and petition number you recorded to the correct microfilm number.

Example of generic petition card:

Note: Some of the cards pertain to members of specific groups. See the User’s Guide for more information.

Name of the petitioner	Date
Location at time of petition	
Upper Canada Land Petition Bundle/petition, volume	

For Land Book Entries:

Write down the volume and page number, and the year that appear on the card. Go to the Guide to Upper Canada Land Petitions and Land Books (on the reference bookshelves). Match the land book volume and page number and the year you recorded to the correct microfilm number.

Note: *If the name is not there*, it may still be possible to locate the petition; see section one of the User’s Guide for more information.

Example of generic land book card:

Note: Some of the cards pertain to members of specific groups. See the User’s Guide for more information.

Name of the petitioner
Land Book number and year
Page

If the name is not there:

1. Go to the microfilm index, located in the cabinets against the back wall (cabinets are labelled).
 - Names of petitioners are arranged alphabetically.
 - The name of the first and last petitioner on the reel is typed on the box.
2. Choose the appropriate reel for the surname of the petitioner you are researching.

If the name is still not there:

1. Consult the supplementary index on microfilm reels H1976 to H 1978; these reels are in the carousel with the main *UCLP* index.
 - These hold *index cards for petitions that were missed* when the first index was filmed.
2. Write down the bundle and petition numbers, the volume number, the year and the microfilm reel number, that appear on the card. The reel is in the self-serve cabinets.

Example of index cards for petitions that were missed:

Name of the petitioner	Date
Location at time of petition	
RG 1 L 3 (LAC reference code)	
Volume, Bundle/petition	
Microfilm reel	

Note: *If the name is not there*, it may still be possible to locate the petition; see section one of the User’s Guide for more information.

Petitions to the Crown Lands Department, 1827 to 1904, RG 1-54:

This series consists of microfilmed copies of *indexes, registers, and petitions* of requests for land received by the Commissioner of Crown Lands. The series has been divided into 3 sub-series based on type of document: registers and indexes of land petitions are in RG 1-54-1; petitions for land are in RG 1-54-2; and petitions for land surveys are in RG 1-54-3.

1. If you are looking for evidence that a petition was received from an applicant, consult the online listing for sub-series RG 1-54-1, *registers and indexes* of land petitions, in the Archives Descriptive Database. The listing will point you to the correct microfilm reel.
 - The listing is arranged chronologically. It will refer you to one of the self-serve microfilm reels in MS 691.
 - These microfilm reels are also available through interloan.
2. The *petitions* themselves, in sub-series RG 1-54-2, are available on microfilm and *may* include supporting documentation such as covering letters, location of the lands requested, and the Order in Council numbers where grants were approved.

To determine the correct *number of the self-serve microfilm reel*, consult the online listing in the Archives Descriptive Database for sub-series RG 1-54-2.

- The listing is organized alphabetically by the applicants' names. It will refer you to one of the self-serve microfilm reels in MS 691.
 - There are two parts to the listings, volumes 1 to 54 and boxes 1 to 6. Check both.
 - Please note that microfilmed records are identified by their former reference codes. Sub-series RG 1-54-2 was formerly series RG 1 C-I-1, volumes 1 to 54.
 - These microfilm reels are available through interloan.
3. Petitions for *land surveys*, RG 1-54-3 can be ordered directly from the circulation desk.
- This sub-series is not available on microfilm and therefore not available through interloan.