

Resources for Researching Land Records

225 Research Guide

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The Archives of Ontario has many records that document land occupancy and ownership. These include petitions to the Crown, records of private land transaction and maps. You can use land records to study many topics (e.g., family history, land use, local history and settlement patterns).

This research guide list resources at the Archives of Ontario to help you start research into land records. In turn, these resources will direct you to records that may have the information you are looking for. These resources are available online in the “Start Your Research” section of our Web site, except when noted otherwise.

A good starting point, if you not sure when and how a person acquired property, is the Ontario Land Records Index. It will help you find land records, mostly those created as part of the Crown land granting process. The index is available in two microfiche sets (by individual’s name and by township), in the Archives’ reading room and through [microfilm interloan](#) (the Microfilm Interloan Catalogue can be found in the “How to Access Your Records” section of our website).

The land records mentioned in this Guide are divided into the following main categories:

- **Crown Land Records**, created at various stages of the process leading to the sale or grant of land by the Crown (the government), from a settler’s initial petition (request for a land grant) to the land patent (document formally transferring ownership).
- **Land Registry Office Records**, documenting *private* transactions between individuals or companies. All private land transactions had to be registered with Land Registry Offices, located in each county and northern district. Our holdings include microfilm copies of indexes and copybooks of instruments and deeds (transactions) and other records.
- **Records on Private and Government-Sponsored Land Settlement Efforts in the 1800’s**, by the following promoters:
 - the **Canada Company** acquired and sold over 1 million acres of land, mostly in southwestern Ontario,
 - **Thomas Talbot** was mandated by the government to settle over 60000 acres in southwestern Ontario during the first half of the 1800’s,
 - **Peter Robinson** was mandated by the government to bring Irish immigrants to what became Peterborough county, in 1822 and 1825
- **Maps and plans**, which can provide visual information on land settlement, occupancy and use

The following table shows where you will find more information.

Title	For More Information
Ontario Land Records Index	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Guide 205 – Using the Ontario Land Records Index ca. 1780 - ca. 1920 ▪ Crown Land Records (visit the Microfilm Interloan catalogue) ▪ Pathfinder and binders to the Ontario Land Records Index (Reading Room only)
Crown Land Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Guide 215: Guide to Early Land Settlement Records, ca. 1790 to ca. 1850 ▪ Crown Land Records (visit the Microfilm Interloan catalogue) ▪ Second Heir and Devisee case file database ▪ Fenian and South African land grant records (RG 1-99) (visit the Archives Descriptive Database, in the “Start Your Research” section of our website) ▪ Pathfinder to the land petitions (Reading Room only) ▪ Pathfinder to land patents (Reading Room only)

Title	For More Information
Land Registry Office records (private transactions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Guide 215: Guide to Early Land Settlement Records, ca. 1790 to ca. 1850, Section 9
Maps and plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Guide 215: Guide to Early Land Settlement Records, ca. 1790 to ca. 1850, Section 7 ▪ Historical County Atlases (visit the Microfilm Interloan catalogue)
Records of promoters of land settlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Research Guide 215: Guide to Early Land Settlement Records, ca. 1790 to ca. 1850, Section 4

MAKING CONTACT

Ready and Willing

Although unable to do your land records research for you, our reference staff are waiting to assist you. You may telephone or write to them by mail or email or — best of all — visit the Archives of Ontario.

Contact us

Telephone: 416-327-1600 Toll free (Ontario): 1-800-688-9933
Fax: 416-327-1999
Email: reference@ontario.ca
Address: Archives of Ontario, 134 Ian Macdonald Blvd., Toronto, ON M7A 2C5

Website

For information about the Archives' holdings, as well as access to research guides and other customer service materials available through the Archives of Ontario, please visit our website www.ontario.ca/archives.

Customer Service and Research Guides

The Archives of Ontario has published a series of in-depth research guides on a variety of specific topics. For more information, please see "Research Guides and Tools" under "Start Your Research" on the home page of the Archives website.

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This document may contain references to electronic links that can be activated only by using the HTML version found on the Archives of Ontario website.

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