

**Basics of Research
Six Nations Land Research Office**

Compiled by the Staff of the Six Nations Land Research Office,
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Definition of History

There are many definitions of history, the following are a few selected quotes:

"History is a lie agreed upon" (Historian)

"History is a fable agreed upon" (Napolean)

"Written History is an Act of Faith" (Charles A. Beard)

"History, as written, is necessarily made up of selected facts"
(Dr. D. Hale)

History of Indians

There are many unanswered questions about the early history of Indians that never can or never will be answered. The further removed in time the researcher is from the event the more difficult it is to document the facts of a claim.

Early history of most areas is not well known before the coming of the European. Some of the written history of Indians which has been accepted as fact is inaccurate. History has also been written with a biased and nationalistic flavour.

Nothing is really known on the early history of Indians except through oral history or traditions handed down from generation to generation. Researchers may have to rely on archaeological findings when no written records exist.

All history of Indians has not survived as some documents have been destroyed, lost, or not recorded at all. Researchers should be aware that some events may never have actually occurred and there may only be references to the event.

Correcting Written History

Once something is in print, it is accepted by many as fact. Some early histories which have been written and accepted as fact, need to be restudied and placed into the context of the time in which they were written. However, it is almost impossible to correct something that has been in print for over fifty years.

Scholars are unwilling to accept new positions and opposing viewpoints that have been held over a long period of time which have been expressed in works done by members of the review board or by professors under whom they studied. Students also do not want an accepted scholar's name tarnished.

Writers are also reluctant to correct written history. They may be alienated from the academic community. Funding Agencies may not fund their project or even stop funding a project after damaging information is revealed. Editors may not publish the material if detrimental to the reputation of nationally recognized scholars.

Roles of Researchers

Confidentiality

Researchers should use their utmost discretion regarding claims research. Any information that is revealed may prove detrimental to the settlement of a claim.

Impartiality

One of the most difficult tasks of being a researcher is to remain impartial when collecting information. Researchers' personal opinions may interfere with their objectivity and blind them to relevant facts. Impartiality is as essential for a researcher as it is for a judge.

Focusing

Another difficult task for researchers is to remain focused. Usually when researching a claim a number of subsidiary or claims totally different from the present one being researched arise. To remain focused on the claim being researched and to not lose sight of the other claims revealed, a list of claims to be researched at a later date should be made.

Recognition of Facts

Researchers should use common sense regarding written information and not believe everything that is written. Usually what is written first becomes the accepted or definitive most complete and accurate account of any given subject.

Be wary of statements. They reflect one person's opinion about a subject which usually contains his/her observations, sympathies, prejudices, and political persuasion.

To assist in determining whether the ascertained facts and statements are true or false, apply the following two principles:

1. external criticism
 - where, when, why, and by whom the material was written
2. internal criticism
 - after the material has been proclaimed genuine, each statement should be examined individually to determine its meaning

Searching for Material

The fastest and best method of researching is to start backwards; start from the latest date and then go back to the early date.

Find out what has already been written to prevent duplication and allow the researcher to build on the research of others. However, do not rely totally on the research of others or secondary sources as information may be incomplete or taken out of context and references and footnotes have been known to be incomplete or even wrong. Primary sources, where original documents are stored, are the best sources of information.

Secondary sources includes published and some unpublished material. Published material consists of books, periodicals, journals, magazines, and newspapers. Unpublished material consists of anything that has not been published and is usually in the form of documents, letters, manuscripts, tapes of personal interviews, articles in journals, masters theses, and Ph.D. dissertations.

Prevent researching the same ground twice by keeping an accurate and up-to-date bibliography of the places researched. Complete citations or references should be given. i.e. for primary sources list record group, microfilm/microfiche number, volume number, page/item/letter number and name of institution where the document came from; for published material list author, title, place published, publisher, year published, and page number.

Consult general inventories, shelf lists, finding aids, indexes, and bibliographies of published and unpublished material for possible sources of information. In published material, special notice should be taken to footnote references and bibliographies as they may lead to other sources.

The following lists suggestions on how to utilize general inventories, shelf lists, etc. to their utmost:

1. understand how documents have been preserved
 - by governments, regions, agencies, subjects, etc.
2. know the original geographic location
 - some bands have moved all over the country and a number of agency records may have to be consulted
3. know the set up of the government of the day
 - strong relationship between institutions and who is in power, power shifted gradually from 1764-1867
 - Executive Power: 1764-1841, Governor General
1841-1867, Executive Council
 - Legislative Power: 1764-1792, Governor General
1792-1867, Parliament
 - Bureaucratic Power: 1764-1841, Civil Secretary
1841-1867, Provincial Secretary

When researching, look for information instead of one document, rarely does one document show all the facts.

There was a lot of correspondence back and forth from London to Canada as well as internally between agencies in Canada that relate to the same subject. As there are a lot of copies of correspondence on one subject, it is recommended that a copy of the correspondence received by or written by be used for legal purposes.

As some original documents may never be located, certified copies are accepted by the courts. Certification means that you have an accurate copy of the document stored at the Archives.

Presentation

Researchers must properly present the ascertained facts to clarify a claim. Even though gaps in history can never be filled, enough knowledge of the past can be recovered to substantiate a claim.

State the facts clearly, precisely, and avoid repetitive and wordy statements. The historical past tense is usually used in writing a claim. However, in some instances the present or even the future tense is necessary to reveal the story around the claim. The third person principle is also usually used.

Researchers should avoid referring to themselves by name, I, myself, or me. If necessary for researchers to give an opinion or refer to themselves, they should do so by calling themselves "the researcher," "the author," or "the writer".

Ownership of Research

Unless employed by someone to research, researchers own their work.

It is highly recommended that a written contract be issued between the Band and individuals and/or associations employed to research for the Band. This enables the Band to take legal action in the possible event that the researcher refuses to submit any work performed on behalf of the Band.

The following outlines what is included in a contract between the Six Nations Land Research Office and an individual employed to research on a contract basis:

1. names of the parties to the agreement
2. name of the supervisor of the contract employee and outlines the duties expected to be completed
3. indicates that the Six Nations Land Research Office is responsible for providing necessary office accommodation and supplies through contribution acquired for the project
4. states that the employee is considered an employee of the Six Nations Council and is therefore subject to all the exemption benefits
5. stipulates number of hours per week
6. stipulates dates of employment
7. stipulates salary and method of payment
8. stipulates vacation days and vacation pay
9. stipulates number of paid sick days, if any
10. states that the Six Nations Land Research Office is responsible for all out of town expenses incurred for carrying out the stipulated research, through funds acquired for the project
11. "It is agreed that the material obtained for this Research Project is at the expense of the Six Nations Land Research Office and is therefore, the property of the Six Nations Land Research Office."
12. shows that all the terms of the contract may be negotiated at any time with the consent of both parties
13. the contract is signed by all named parties and is also witnessed

Copyright

Copyright is the legal right to copy. The owner is the only person who may copy their work or permit someone else to and usually includes the sole right to publish, produce, reproduce, and to perform a work in public.

The author owns the copyright to their work unless employed by someone to create the work, in which case the employer is the owner.

Copyright applies to all original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic works including books, writings, musical works, sculptures, paintings, photographs, motion picture films, dictionaries and encyclopedias. Also applies to mechanical contrivances such as records, cassettes and tapes.

In Canada, copyright is automatically acquired providing the author was a Canadian Citizen or a British Subject, or resides in Her Majesty's dominions, or a citizen or subject of a country belonging to the Berne Copyright Convention or Universal Copyright Convention, or which grants by treaty, convention, agreement or law to citizens of Canada the benefits of its copyright statute on substantially the same basis as to its own citizens.

For voluntary registration a fee of \$35.00 is charged for examining and registering an application to register a copyright and issuing a certificate of registration. To apply contact:

Consumer and Corporate Affairs Canada
Copyright and Industrial Design Branch
50 Victoria Street
Place du Portage, Tower 1
Hull, Quebec
K1A 0C9

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