

Your Tweedsmuir History

Some Things to Watch For

By W. E. Hanna

THE happy privilege I have had of examining the Tweedsmuir History books submitted for competition makes me feel very humble. The many women who have cooperated so splendidly to compile these "Histories" have my unbounded admiration. They have contributed greatly to preserving the fine tradition of their communities and to honoring the builders of these communities, the men and women who have gone before.

To help in some small way to make what is already good even better, the following suggestions are offered.

I The Book:

Choose a well-bound loose leaf book with post binders. Avoid zipper books, also books with rings. Make sure the book will lie flat when opened.

Choose ruled paper if the text is to be written by hand. I have seen this done very successfully, with plain bold handwriting, very uniform throughout, always clear and easy to read. But make sure you have such a writer or writers. If the paper has an extra margin, 1½ inches or so, you will have a book which will be flat when opened. Discuss this with your dealer.

Two sizes of books might be used: (1) Small—11¾ inches wide, 12½ inches long over-all, the paper for this would be 11 x 12. This would be a two-post binder book. The page actually used in this type of book might be 8 x 8½ inside all-around double margin lines. (2) Large—pages 14 x 11, at least three-post.

However, if you have capable women with artistic ability in your groups you might use a tooled leather-covered book with wider pages, perhaps tinted in color, but this type of book would require very special care.

You might consult your dealer about the best insert between pages.

II Table of Contents or Index:

Plan your work and indicate your plan at the beginning in your table of contents. This may be complete for the book or may indicate only the main divisions. Each division then may have before it a short table of contents of its own.

The plan suggested in the general instructions for these books is the one to follow, at least until a better one is announced.

Since you should have a table of contents it follows you must have your pages numbered.

III Your Material:

Include documents such as deeds, store bills, church announcements or special calendars, teachers' contracts, but be sure to protect these under Cellophane or other protective material.

Pictures also should generally be protected. They also should be dated, — day, month,

year, so far as possible, but the year in any case. Newspaper clippings should also have exact date.

Maps: — past and present, but always with date. These may be old printed maps or carefully drawn hand-made for the book.

Farm histories: — If possible in all cases go back to original owner. Interesting incidents of pioneer experiences will add to interest. Be sure to include histories of farms and farm families occupied by same family, say 30 years or more. (This, of course, applies to older Ontario. In newer Ontario 30, 40 years or more may be pioneer years). In all cases, do it now. Talk to your over-ninety friends now.

So with churches, schools, industries, go back to the beginning. There is a wonderful opportunity for pictures here. If a group is shown, give a key to the names so far as possible.

Genealogical trees. These can be interesting. Different kinds of 'trees' can be used — a tree itself, or small oblongs with different colors, for men and women, or circles, large and small, or simply lines across and down.

IV Odds and ends:

Use only the right hand page.

Do not begin a new topic on the page where one topic is completed.

Begin a fresh page.

Leave spaces, do not crowd.

Take great care in placing pictures. Make each page pleasing to the eye.

Be sure you include 'firsts' — the first mower, reaper, binder, tractor, combine, telephone; rural mail; electric power; settler, teacher, preacher, of course.

The name of the community — township or village — how and when and why chosen.

V Care of your book — and its use:

Let the teacher of the school know there is such a book and see that he or she becomes acquainted with its contents not too long after taking over.

But guard your book carefully against misuse or abuse. You might even consider keeping it in the vault of a near-by bank, to be brought out from time to time for use. You might consider having made a special glass-topped table with lock for its display in township hall or village library.

Consult Dr. G. W. Spragge, Department of Archives and Records, Queen's Park, Toronto, about possibility of having photostat made of some parts of your book for preservation in the Archives Building.

And Finally —

You are doing a noble work. Keep on keeping on. More power to you.