

# James John Talman

b. Sept. 15, 1904, Beira, Mozambique; d. Nov. 21, 1993, London, ON



James J. Talman graduate portrait, c.1925. Credit *Occidentalia* yearbook

## Education:

1925 BA (University of Western Ontario)  
1927 MA (University of Western Ontario)  
1930 PhD (University of Toronto)  
1960 DLitt (Hons) (University of Waterloo)  
1972 LLD (Hons) (University of Western Ontario)

## Positions:

1931-1934 Assistant Archivist, Ontario Provincial Archives  
1934-1939 Provincial Archivist of Ontario (1934-1939) and Legislative Librarian of Ontario (1935-1939)  
1939-1947 Assistant and Associate Librarian, University of Western Ontario  
1947-1970 Chief Librarian of the University of Western Ontario  
Professor in the History Department and the Faculty of Graduate Studies in post-retirement, University of Western Ontario

## Publications (selected):

J.J. Talman authored more than 300 publications. A comprehensive list was compiled by Hilary Bates, "Bibliography of academic and journalistic writings by James J. Talman" in *Aspects of nineteenth-century Ontario: essays presented to James J. Talman*, ed. by Frederick H. Armstrong, Hugh A. Stevenson, and J. Donald Wilson: 334-50. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974.

Talman, J.J. and Elsie McLeod Murray, eds. (1943). *Winter studies and summer rambles in Canada*, by Anna Brownell Jameson. Toronto: Nelson.

Talman, J.J., ed. (1946). *Loyalist narratives from Upper Canada*. Toronto: Champlain Society.

Talman, J.J. and Ruth Davis Talman (1953). 'Western,' 1878-1953, being the history of the origins and development of the University of Western Ontario during its first seventy-five years London: University of Western Ontario.

Talman, J.J. (1963). *Huron College, 1863-1963*. London: Huron College.

Talman, J.J., ed. (1959). *Basic documents in Canadian history*. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand.

Talman, James J. (1968). "Twenty-two years of the Microfilm Newspaper Project." *Canadian Library* 25.2 (September-October): 140-48.

## **Associations/Committees:**

1939-1940, President, Ontario Historical Society

1945-1946, President, Ontario Library Association

1954-1955, President, Canadian Historical Association

1956-1959, Treasurer, Canadian Library Association

1956-1959, Chairman, Governor General's Award Board

Member of the Canadian Historic Sites and Monuments Board and Ontario Conservation Review Board

## **Honours:**

1949 Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada

1963 Honorary Fellow of Huron College

1968 Cruikshank Medal, Ontario Historical Society

1970 Order of the British Empire

1977 Award of Merit, Alumni Association, University of Western Ontario

1991 James J. Talman Award established by the Ontario Association of Archivists (now Archives Association of Ontario)

## **Accomplishments:**

James J. Talman was an outstanding scholar-librarian whose career began during the Great Depression. It was, he said, a time when there were more positions for librarians than historians. Dr. Talman was a successful Canadian university library administrator in the postwar period. During his 23-year tenure, 1947-70, the Lawson library was expanded twice, new libraries were opened for law (1961), business (1962), health sciences (1965), education (the 'flying-saucer library' at Althouse College, 1966), and the natural sciences (1966). In the same period, the University's holdings grew from 172,000 volumes to 1,500,000 and the library budget from \$40,000 to \$3,200,000. Dr. Talman was instrumental in expanding Western's Regional Collection housing the history of southwest Ontario, and it was later named in his honour. Construction of the D. B. Weldon Library (opened in 1972) was planned and underway before his retirement in 1970.

## Sources:

"James John Talman, 1904-1993." In Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada, 2000, 6<sup>th</sup> Series, vol. 11: 153-156. Ottawa: Royal Society, 2001.

"James John Talman, 1904-1993." Ontario History 86.1 (March 1994): 1-8.

Stevenson, Hugh A. (1974). "James John Talman: historian and librarian." In Aspects of nineteenth-century Ontario, ed. by Armstrong, Stevenson, and Wilson: 3-18. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Banks, Margaret A. (1989). The libraries at Western 1970 to 1987 with summaries of their earlier history and a 1988 postscript. London: University of Western Ontario.

ELA biography compiled by Lorne Bruce

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