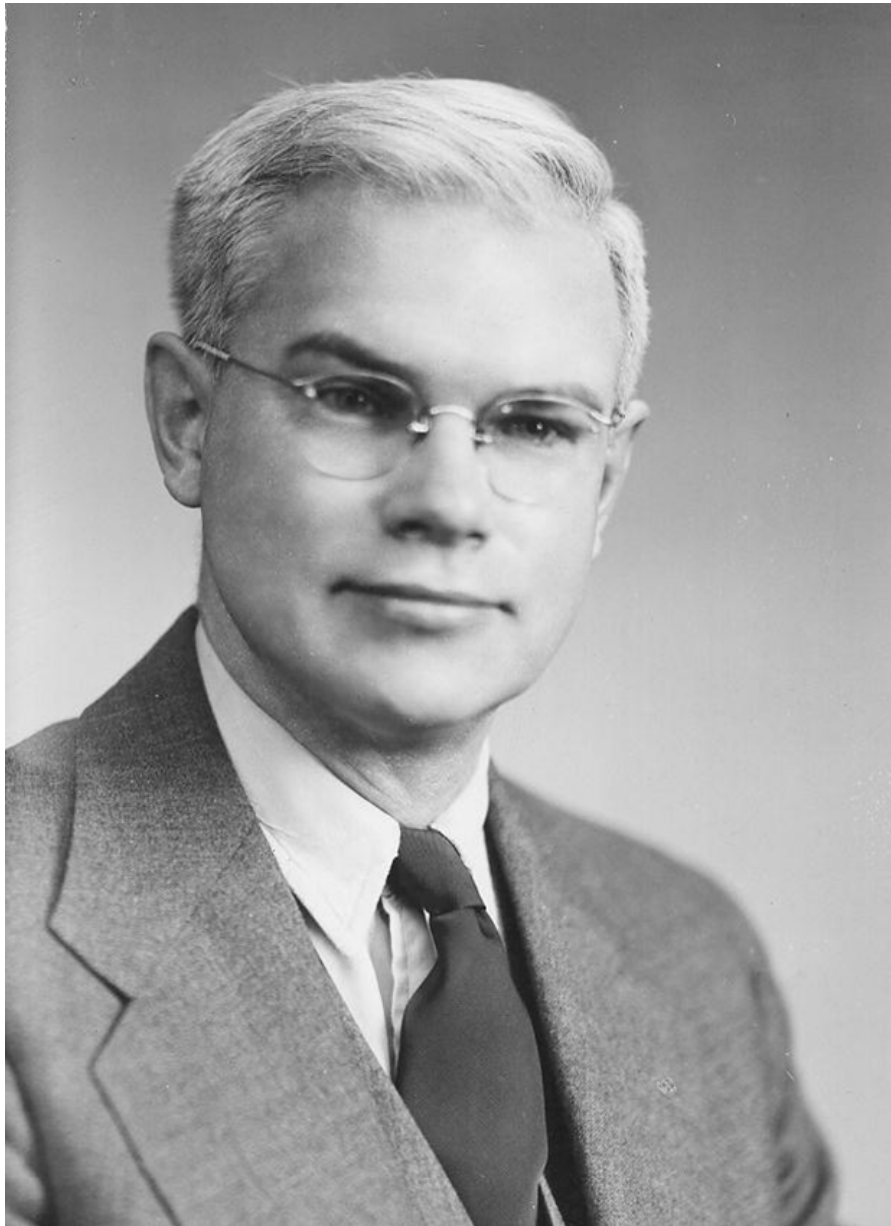


**Donald Campbell Charles Masters**  
**1908-2001**



Donald Campbell Charles Masters, Professor Emeritus in the Department of History at the University of Guelph, died Nov. 14, 2001.

Dr. Masters was admitted as a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1953.

He was born in 1908 in Shelburne, Ont. He earned his BA and MA at the University of Toronto, where he won the MacKenzie Fellowship in History and the IODE Overseas Scholarship for Ontario. He completed a PhD at Oxford University in 1935.

In the 1930s, Dr. Masters had the rare distinction of serving as a post-doctoral fellow before coming a university professor and researcher. After a year at Queen's University, he taught and studied at United College in Winnipeg for five years.

He moved to Bishop's University in 1944, where he remained for more than 20 years as head of the Department of History. His contributions as professor and researcher were recognized when, in 1975, Bishop's awarded him an honorary degree as Doctor of Civil Laws.

Dr. Masters was one of the first appointees to the Department of History in Guelph's newly formed Wellington College – the forerunner to the College of Arts at the University of Guelph -- when he arrived as a professor in 1966. He retired in 1974 but continued to serve both the University of Guelph and the University of Waterloo as an active participant in their graduate history programs.

Named Professor Emeritus by the University of Guelph in 1977, Dr. Masters was cited as one of a small group of contemporaries who believed the country's history worthy of study. Called a "Canadian historian and historian of Canada," he brought to Canadians an understanding of the country's leaders and of Canadian events, institutions and places.

Working before the days of research grants, Dr. Masters accomplished much of his work on his own. Beginning in 1937, he published seven monographs, several of them reprinted in paperback editions. He contributed chapters to major works and, in Canada's centennial year, wrote a script (later published) for the CBC radio series *The Coming of Age*. His booklets, papers and reviews in many of the best-known historical journals illustrated the full gamut of his interests.

Among his most influential books on Canadian economic history, politics and thought were *Canada in World Affairs, 1953 to 1955* (1959); *Protestant Church Colleges in Canada: A History* (1966); *The Reciprocity Treaty of 1854: Its History, Its Relation to British Colonial and Foreign Policy, and to the Development of Canadian Fiscal Autonomy* (1963); *A Short History of Canada* (1958); *The Winnipeg General Strike* (1950); and *The Rise of Toronto, 1850-1890* (1947). At age 87, he published his last book in 1995, a biography of John Henry Cody, former president of the University of Toronto.

An obituary published in *Bishop's University News* (Sept. 2002) described a spoof lecture that illustrated his well-known sense of humour:

"Purporting to deal with Canadian literary history, the lecture began seriously with stirring examples of Canadian narrative poetry. Soon Dr. Masters turned his attention to the

‘Saskatchewan poetess Sarah Binks’ (based on *Sarah Binks* published in 1947). Typically a few earnest students continued to take notes while the rest rocked with laughter as the poems degenerated from bad to worst. Dr. Masters gave this lecture many times over the years, often on request. One April fools’ day, when all the chairs in the lecture room had been turned backwards, he entered from the back and delivered his Binks lecture.”

Through his studies, writings and teaching, Dr. Masters stimulated interest and inspired activity by graduate students and contributed to ensuring the proper documentation of Canadian history. Many of his students went on to influential positions in education, journalism, politics, law and the church.