



Hoping for the Best, Preparing for the Worst: Everyday Life in Upper Canada, 1812–1814

Dorothy Duncan

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An examination of Upper Canadian life at the dawn of a modern nation.

Hoping for the Best, Preparing for the Worst explores the web of human relationships that developed in Upper Canada following the American Revolution, in the years leading up to the War of 1812, and during the conflict that raged for two years between the young United States and Britain, its former master. The book focuses on the families, homes, gardens, farms, roads, villages, towns, shops, and fabric of everyday life in this frontier society.

Upper Canada was a land in transition as First Nations, fur traders, Loyalists, entrepreneurs, merchants, farmers, and newcomers from every walk of life formed alliances and partnerships based on friendship, marriage, respect, religion, proximity, and the desire to survive and prosper. With the declaration of war in June 1812, Upper Canadians realized that not only their lives but their future peace and prosperity were threatened. They responded with perseverance, loyalty, and unexpected acts of bravery.

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