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OHS Alison Prentice Award Winner: "Persistence is Power: Effie Mitchell, Dr. William J. Robinson, and Family Involvement at the London Asylum for the Insane (A Case Study)."

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Ontario Historical Society is pleased to present the 2026 Alison Prentice Award for Canadian Women's History, which recognizes an early career historian for an outstanding project bringing greater awareness to women's history in Ontario, to Paige Murray, for her cognate paper, "Persistence is Power: Effie Mitchell, Dr. William J. Robinson, and Family Involvement at the London Asylum for the Insane (A Case Study)."

This paper is an original piece of scholarship based on a primary source previously unexamined by historians. It contributes to the historiography of women's history, history of the family, and the history of psychiatric institutional care in Canada.

Thoughtful and well-supported, Paige Murray analyses the roughly 200 letters that were exchanged between Mrs. Effie Mitchell and Dr. William J. Robinson, from 1911 to 1918, discussing the patient case of Effie's daughter Ms. Mirabel Mitchell at the London Asylum for the Insane.

Murray convincingly argues that "this case study illuminates how a mother's persistency and engagement translated into a subtle, arguably influential, level of power that shaped her daughter's experience as a patient at the London Asylum for the Insane." Murray's classification of Effie's engagement with the institution highlights an important aspect of this history that medical historical have often been ambivalent about applying to family members of institutionalized patients. Murray's work makes a significant contribution to our understanding of Canadian women's history and the Awards Committee congratulates her on winning the 2026 OHS Alison Prentice Award.



The OHS Alison Prentice Award was presented at the 2026 OHS Awards Ceremony on November 14, 2026 at the Historic John McKenzie House in Willowdale, Toronto, Ontario. Left to right: OHS Awards Committee Co-Chair Hans Bathija and winner Paige Murray.

Founded in 1888, the Ontario Historical Society is a non-profit corporation and registered charity dedicated to the preservation and celebration of Ontario's history for people of all ages and cultural backgrounds. To learn more about the OHS Awards Program, or to submit a nomination, please visit ontariohistoricalsociety.ca/awards/ or contact the Society's offices by telephone or e-mail.

-Ontario Historical Society-

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