

Second in a six-part series looking back at 80 years of *Canadian Geographic*

# Decades of Discovery 1940s

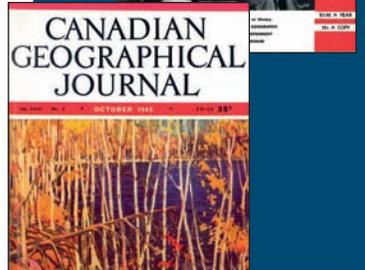
## War and peace

As the 1940s dawned, it was clear that Canada and the world were facing war on a gigantic scale. The stories of Canada's soldiers and the war effort played out on the pages of the *Canadian Geographic Journal*, as this magazine was then known.

Amid the devastation of the Second World War, the *Journal* showcased the might of an emerging nation by featuring, in words and pictures, the Canadian soldiers who stood on guard for thee. Writers spoke to readers in the rabble-rousing, if now unacceptable, language of the day — of soldiers “ready for instant action at first sight of the Jap,” of Air Force pilots who, “night after night, carry destruction to the German war machine.” Many articles were written by majors, lieutenants and other members of Canada's military brass, offering readers detailed, behind-the-scenes accounts of life on the battlefield, in the air and out at sea.

Once victory was declared in Europe and the Pacific, talk of combat all but disappeared from the magazine. Instead, war-weary Canadians were presented with pleasant articles about pleasant places. Stories about tanks and bombers gave way to features on wildlife, flowers and Canadian artists. Tom Thomson's painting *In the Northland* (LEFT, second from bottom), proved a soothing cover choice for October 1945. After a war in which over one million Canadians served overseas and more than 40,000 perished, the magazine offered a tranquil escape.

Mary Vincent



**CONFLICT AND CALM** The magazine's covers shifted from the perils of war to tranquil landscapes by decade's end.



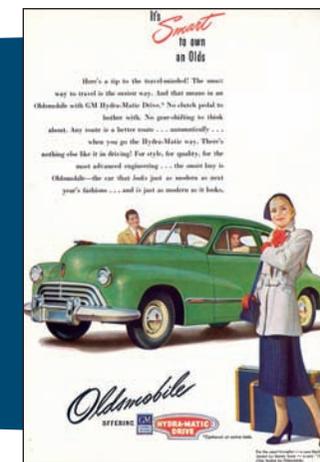
**CANADIAN TO THE CORE** Our soldiers made the country proud, “with their skill, their courage and their blood.”



**INDUSTRIAL BOOM** Wartime brought expanded production of commodities such as nitrogen, used in explosives.



**CANADA GOES GLOBAL** Canada's part in the Allied victory meant a chance to sit at the big players' table of international affairs. Articles such as this one on atomic energy reflected the nation's budding role on the world stage.



**BE PATRIOTIC — AND SPEND!** Ads were often a rallying cry for Canadians to support the war effort. But sometimes, they were just about selling stuff, such as cars.