

# S. J. McKee Archives



## T.R. Wilkins collection

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4298>

Part Of: RG 1 Brandon College fonds

Description Level: Sub-series

Series Number: MG 1 1.4

Accession Number: 3-2016

GMD: textual records

Date Range: 1911?-1940

Physical Description: 7 cm

History /

Biographical:

Thomas Russell Wilkins was born in Toronto in 1891. He received his B.A. from McMaster University in 1912, and became the Science Master at Woodstock College the following year. In 1916, he and his wife Olive moved to Chicago, where Wilkins was an instructor of Physics at the University of Chicago. The next year he served as a master signal electrician in the U.S. Signal Corps. During World War I, Wilkins completed pioneer research for the United States Navy, which led to the development of pulse sonar devices in the 1920s. He had also been researching the possibilities of a wireless telephone.

Wilkins and his wife moved to Brandon in 1918, where he took up the position of Professor of Physics. During his time at Brandon College, Wilkins introduced the latest technology to classrooms, designed the original Science Building, and along with the Brandon Citizen's Committee, secured building funds for the Citizen's Science Building.

Receiving his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago in 1921, Wilkins resigned from Brandon College in 1925 to pursue postgraduate study at Cambridge University. In 1926, he began research at the University of Rochester, where he also took up the position of Professor of Physics. From 1930 to 1938, he acted as the Director of the Institute of Optics.

Widely known for his work in the fields of cosmic rays and atomic disintegration, in April 1939, Wilkins announced the perfection of a camera that was able to record the "footprints" of invisible atoms after they collide. In October 1939, he received a medal from the Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain recognizing his work regarding the use of photographic emulsions in the study of radium. The following year, Wilkins perfected a camera that could determine the energy levels inside the nuclei of stable chemical elements. He received a grant from Sigma Xi, the National Society for the Promotion of Scientific Research, in November of 1940.

Wilkins married twice. The first marriage, to Olive Angles Cross took place on June 17, 1913. Olive Wilkins died suddenly on May 13, 1937, at the age of 45. Wilkins married Susan Gwendolyn Whidden, the daughter of former Brandon College president Dr. H.P. Whidden, in 1938.

Thomas Russell Wilkins died suddenly of a heart attack on December 10, 1940, on his way back to his laboratory after a faculty meeting. He was 49 years old.

#### Custodial History:

Records were accessioned by the McKee Archives in 1998. Prior custodial history is unknown.

#### Scope and Content:

T. Russell Wilkins' records contain correspondence between himself and Mrs. Wilkins and Dr. Whidden concerning their employment with Brandon College. There are letters between the two men regarding the building of the Science Building in 1920. There is also a copy of the Canadian Baptist. Besides programmes and a picture, there is also correspondence between various people. Dr. Wilkins kept the papers he had written for various classes at McMaster University in the years 1911 and 1912. There is a "toast to the ladies" that he delivered at a banquet of some sort, that gives an interesting view on how Wilkins, and possibly other men of his time, viewed women. There are numerous newspapers clippings, and several pages taken from journals such as Popular Mechanics, Popular Electricity and others. Dr. Wilkins was at the top of his field of study. He was an extremely bright man who managed to create some very useful tools of science. His papers are interesting and informative to read.

Notes:	History/Bio information taken from Campus News May 1990
Name Access:	Olive Wilkins Thomas Wilkins H.P. Whidden
Subject Access:	science building science scientific development
Storage Location:	2016 accessions



## Albert Edward McKenzie

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4301>

Part Of:	RG 1 Brandon College fonds
Description Level:	Sub-series
Series Number:	MG 1 1.7
GMD:	multiple media
Date Range:	1940?-1960?
Physical Description:	39 cm textual records 4 photographs

## History /

### Biographical:

A.E. McKenzie was born in Wilcox Lake, York County, Ontario in 1870 to F.B. and Maria (Carley) McKenzie. His family came to Manitoba in 1883. He was educated in Brandon, Manitoba and graduated from the Collegiate Institute at age 21. In 1897 he founded the Brandon Seed House. McKenzie was present at the cornerstone-laying ceremony of Brandon College on July 13, 1900. From that moment on, he was very involved in the College, first as an interested businessman, and later as a member of its Board of Directors. In 1902, McKenzie married Laura Bell in Port Arthur. They had two daughters, Marjorie Bell and Kathleen. In 1906 the Brandon Seed House was incorporated and from then on was known as the "A.E. McKenzie Co. Ltd.."

McKenzie became a member of the Brandon College Endowment Committee in 1918. The following year he was on the Finance Committee. By 1925, McKenzie was a member of the Board of Directors. In 1928, he was part of a syndicate that advised the Baptist Union that they were developing an endowment plan to provide continuing financial support to the College and talked the Union into providing \$10 000 towards the accumulated deficit.

In 1931, McKenzie organized the Brandon Board of Trade to help save Brandon College when the Baptists said they could no longer afford to keep the College. After the By-law failed, he helped to organize the Brandon Citizen's Campaign to raise enough money so that the College could open the following year.

When the Baptists withdrew support in 1938, McKenzie was one of the central figures on the Brandon Board of Trade that decided to save the College from closure. A representative delegation from Southwestern Manitoba of over 60 men descended upon Premier Bracken's office to try and convince him to help the College. On June 12, 1938 McKenzie said he would set up a \$100 000 endowment to Brandon College. He subsequently raised this amount to \$300 000. On August 1, 1938 the Board of Trade launched a campaign to raise \$15 000 to match what the government was prepared to offer the College. McKenzie was asked to provide Brandon College with \$3000 personally. In September of 1938, McKenzie upped his endowment once more to \$500 000. The fund raising worked however, and the charter establishing Brandon College Incorporated was assented to on April 17, 1939. On June 6, 1939 a by-law was again presented to the citizens of Brandon, and fortunately it passed.

In 1941, McKenzie received an honorary L.L.D. from the University of Manitoba. The A.E. McKenzie Foundation was created in 1945 by the provincial government, who had assumed 90% of the A.E. McKenzie Co. Ltd. stock.

On September 25, 1964 McKenzie died at the age of 94. He never retired, but worked full time until two weeks before his death. The funeral was held in the J.R.C. Evans Lecture Theatre. The Arts and Library Building at Brandon College was completed in 1960, and is known as the A.E. McKenzie building, in honour of the man who contributed so much time, effort and financial help to the College during a crucial period in its history.

### Custodial History:

Records were accessioned by the McKee Archives in 1998. Prior custodial history is unknown.

#### Scope and Content:

A.E. McKenzie's records in the Brandon College fonds are very useful from an administrative point of view. Because McKenzie was so involved in Brandon College from the very beginning until his death in 1964, it is easy to understand how the College Administration arrived at decisions. There is correspondence between McKenzie and various regarding College and Board of Director business. There are Brandon College financial statements and letters regarding the A.E. McKenzie Foundation. The records contain newspaper clippings, pamphlets and lists of names of members of various Brandon organizations. As well, McKenzie has letters regarding Building Expansion in the 1940's and minutes of Board of Director meetings. There are also several photographs. One photograph is the 1919 graduation picture of Zoe Hough. Another is tentatively identified as Frances Wolverton, also of the Class of 1919. There are two more photographs of unidentified young women.

Name Access:	A.E. McKenzie A.E. McKenzie Foundation Brandon College Zoe Hough Frances Wolverton
Subject Access:	Class of 1919 administration board of directors building expansion
Storage Location:	MG 1 Brandon College Teaching and Administration 1.7 Albert Edward McKenzie
Related Material:	RG 3 A.E. McKenzie Seeds Co. Ltd. fonds