

S. J. McKee Archives



Alfred Angus Murray McPherson collection

<http://archives.brandonu.ca/en/permalink/descriptions4523>

Part Of:	RG 5 Western Manitoba Manuscript Collection
Description Level:	Collection
Accession Number:	21-2006
Other Numbers:	Formerly the Margaret McPherson family fonds
GMD:	multiple media
Date Range:	1862-1978
Physical Description:	4 m
Physical Condition:	Some of the older materials are fragile.

History /

Biographical:

Alfred Angus Murray McPherson was born February 15, 1923 in Brandon, MB. The middle son of Angus and Annie Ethel (Pentland) McPherson, Murray grew up on the family farm in the Brandon Hills District. Following high school he obtained a B.Sc. degree from Brandon College, before enrolling in the Faculty of Education at the University of Manitoba in 1947 where he received his B.Ed. and M.Ed. Murray completed his Ph.D. in Educational Curriculum in 1975 at Michigan State University.

Murray's teaching career began at Brandon College as a chemistry instructor. After the year of teacher training he taught in Daupin Collegiate, then Luxton Junior High School and St. Johns High School in Winnipeg. In 1962, Murray joined the University of Manitoba Faculty of Education where he taught methods in mathematics and served as Head of the Department of Curriculum: Mathematics and Natural Sciences for sixteen years, before assuming the position of Co-ordinator of Student Teaching. During his career Murray co-edited a series of textbooks for elementary grades and was a strong supporter of the Manitoba Association of Mathematics Teachers. Following his retirement in 1988, Murray volunteered with Creative Retirement, Mentors Club and Habitat for Humanity. He also remained active in the United Church.

Murray McPherson married Margaret Elinore Raven on July 14, 1951 in Winnipeg. Margaret Elinore (Raven) McPherson was born in Winnipeg, MB on March 11, 1927. Educated at the University of Manitoba, where she earned a B.Sc. (1947), a Dip. Education (1948) and a B.Ed. (1966), Margaret taught school in Dauphin (1948-1953) and the Winnipeg School Division (Spring 1954). Together they had two children: John Angus Murray McPherson (b. March 19, 1955), an orthopedic surgeon in Winnipeg, and Kathryn May McPherson (b. November 20, 1957), a professor of history at York University, Toronto. Alfred Angus Murray McPherson died on November 25, 2001 at the Charleswood Care Centre in Winnipeg, MB. Margaret continues to live in Winnipeg, MB.

The MacPherson family originally came from the County of Sutherlandshire in the north of Scotland. The need for wool during the Napoleonic Wars resulted in the "Highland Clearances" of the early 1800's, which forced the small farmers or "crofters" to leave their farms and to move to the villages, such as Kildonan, Helmsdale and Golspie along the east coast.

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In 1814, Hugh MacPherson (1773-1843) with his wife Anne Sellars (1783-1837) and their family, immigrated to Nova Scotia and acquired a farm at Watervale, a community on the West River at Pictou. Following the issue of the land title, the "Mac" spelling of MacPherson became "Mc."

Alexander McPherson, the son of Hugh and Anne, married Elizabeth Murray at West River on April 10, 1840. They lived on the family farm at Watervale where they had a family of eleven children, a number of whom died in infancy. Their oldest son Hugh (1845-1916) and their youngest, Johnston (1857-1944), later came to Brandon Hills, MB.

Angus Sellars McPherson, a son of Hugh and Margaret (Sellars) McPherson, was born in Brandon Hills, MB on March 1, 1884. A farmer in the area his whole life, Angus married Annie Ethel Pentland in 1913. Together they had three sons: Howard, Murray and Kenneth. Angus died at Brandon General Hospital on September 5, 1953.

Alfred Angus Murray McPherson's mother, Annie Ethel (Pentland) McPherson, was born into a family that originally came from the ancient Scottish Midlothian or the more modern County of Edinburgh, from the Pentland Hills County, and in and around the towns of Pentland and Carrington. Around the year 1700, at the time of the large movement of immigrants from Scotland and England into Northern Ireland, several families of the clan settled in counties Down and Arnaugh in Ireland.

Between 1790 and 1820, a number from both Scotland and Ireland immigrated to Canada settling mainly in Eastern Ontario in the Counties of Hastings, Lennox and Addington and on Amherst Island. Around 1860, some moved to Huron County in Western Ontario to carve homes out of the bush. In 1881, Thomas James Pentland came from Goderich to Manitoba and settled near Douglas. He had learned the trade of a blacksmith and found one was needed so badly he gave up the intention to homestead and built a shop northwest of Douglas, on the South East quarter of Section 17-11-17. He later added a store and house there.

On July 22, 1885, Thomas James Pentland and Annie Isobel McVety were married at the home of the bride's parents at High Bluff and lived northwest of Douglas until 1890, when he made a deal with Isaac and Fred Lewis. Thomas took their homesteads on Section 14-12-18 and they took over the store, which they moved to Oakenside. T.J. Pentland continued to farm there until his death in June of 1919. T.J. Pentland was elected to the Council of the RM of Elton for Ward 1 in the fall of 1884 and served three years as councilor and fourteen years as Reeve.

The McVety and Owens families both came from County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland to Ontario during the first half of the nineteenth century. Henry McVety and Elizabeth Owens were married March 11, 1856, at Belgrave and lived at Morris until the spring of 1882, when they moved to High Bluff, Manitoba and fifteen years later to Bagot. In 1882, their daughter Annie Isobel came to Douglas to teach at the first Elton School situated 2.5 miles north and 1 mile east of present Douglas.

The family of Thomas and Annie Pentland consisted of three sons and three daughters. Fred, who served overseas in the 78th Battalion in the First World War and was killed in September 1917; Harry, who farmed in Justice until 1922, then lived in Brandon until his death in 1948; Ethel (Mrs. Angus McPherson), now living in Brandon; Evelyn (Mrs. N.C. Thompson) now living in Brandon; Wesley, living at Justice on the home farm; and Grace who died in 1908.

Harry Pentland's son, H. Clare Pentland, was born October 17, 1914, on a farm near Justice, MB, where Harry had taken up farming. Clare graduated from Brandon College in 1940, with an Economics degree and attended the University of Oregon, where he completed a Master's degree in 1942. He obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Toronto in 1961. His dissertation was later published as "Labour and Capital in Canada 1650-1860." A noted economist and a founder of the history of labour in Canada, H. Clare Pentland died on October 13, 1978.

Custodial History:

Prior to the death of Murray McPherson, Margaret McPherson's husband, he and his daughter Katherine McPherson, professor of history at York University, searched through various farm houses previously occupied by members of the McPherson family and gathered together family archival materials to safeguard them from destruction. These materials were transferred to the McPherson residence in Winnipeg and upon the death of Murry McPherson, Margaret became the sole custodian of the records. The decision to place the records at the McKee Archives was arrived at for two reasons. First, the records relate to the Brandon Hills and the history of this region. Second, Murray McPherson attended Brandon College in the 1940s, and felt kinship with the institution. The records came to the McKee Archives courtesy of the good offices of Diane Hageland of the Association for Manitoba Archives. Margaret McPherson donated the records to the McKee Archives on May 4, 2006.

Scope and Content:

Fonds consists of personal and business records for various members of the McPherson and Pentland families. These were generated in the course of settlement in the Brandon Hills, travel, participation in the First World War and various forms of associational life, in particular the Orange Lodge. The fonds includes correspondence, financial records/ledgers, legal documents, postcards, photographs, scrapbooks, greeting cards, livestock records, Brandon College Sickles, school records, electoral records, diaries, membership records, certificates, income tax records, ration cards, notebooks, newsclippings, autograph albums, poetry, receipts and speeches.

Notes: Biographical information for the fonds was provided by Margaret McPherson. Processing done by Deidra Wallace and Christy Henry summer/fall 2006. Description by Christy Henry. Numerous spellings of the surname "McVety" appear in the fonds, including McVetie and McVitie. The oldest documented spelling in documents of a legal nature is McVety. This spelling therefore will appear throughout the finding aid.

Accruals: Further accruals expected.

Storage Location: 2006 accessions

Storage Range: 2006 accessions

Arrangement:

Original file order has been maintained, while some boxes have been combined to provide a more suitable environment for the preservation of print materials. The boxes have been renumbered accordingly. Due to the original file order, however, the file numbers in the database have been prefaced by their original box numbers. For example, File 3.5 refers to the fifth file of the original third box.