

## William Wilson fonds

1839, 1868, 1872, 1892-1929, 1934  
28 cm of textual records

### *Biographical Sketch*

William Wilson was born in Scotland on 20 Dec. 1833 and died in Port Arthur in 1930. He emigrated to the Lakehead in May 1889 from Ayrshire, Scotland with his wife Agnes and six children. Their first home was called Rockford Farm near the present St. Patrick's Square and three years later they moved to Privick Hall, six miles from Port Arthur. In Scotland Wilson was a master miller. In Canada he took up mixed farming though he seems to have specialized in growing vegetables.

### *Scope and Content*

The William Wilson papers, arranged into seven series, are concerned primarily with Wilson's agricultural pursuits and include diaries, ledgers, invoices and receipts along with personal legal papers. His comments published in various newspapers, contained in series 6, form an excellent description of rural Thunder Bay in this period. The diaries are a good source for the study of local climatic change.

#### **Series A 5/1/1-8** - Diaries - 11cm. - 1893, 1895-1929

Handwritten diaries concerned mostly with weather, daily chores, seed orders and special occasions:

- 1) 1895-97 (88 fol.) also includes purchase journal for 1893
- 2) 1897-98 (28 fol.) also has copies of two letters written by Wilson's children
- 3) 1898-1901 (ca.100 fol.) has seed list for 1900 and 1901
- 4) 1901-05 (ca.150 fol.) has seed list for 1902 at back
- 5) 1905-10 (ca.150 fol.) has seed list for 1907, implement inventory for 1909 and list of livestock for 1906.
- 6) 1911-13 (40 fol.)
- 7) 1913-21 (63 fol.)
- 8) 1921-29 (88 fol.)

#### **Series A 5/2/1-2** - Ledgers - 6cm. - 1892-1915

Two ledgers recording the purchase of farm goods and implements. Recorded chronologically are sales of goods such as wood, potatoes, turnips and eggs.

#### **Series A 5/3/1-6** - Certificates - 7 fol. - 1839, 1868, 1872, 1903, 1934.

Birth, death and marriage certificates for members of the Wilson family 1839-1934.

#### **Series A 5/4/1-4** - Deeds - 6 fol. - 1892, 1925

Property deed and related legal papers transferring one hundred acres in Township of McIntyre to William Wilson from T.A. Gorham, 1892.

#### **Series A 5/5/1-8** - Receipts and invoices - 9 fol. - 1901-1902, 1910-1911

Invoices and receipts issued and received by William Wilson relating to his farming and personal activities.

#### **Series A 5/6/1-3** - Scrapbooks - 10cm. - [1879-1923]

- 1) scrapbook containing Christmas and new year's cards, poetry primarily from before 1900 (14 fol.)
- 2) newspaper clippings, probably from a Scottish newspapers pasted over journal transactions

from 1879-1881.

3) clippings including Wilson's published letters to Scottish newspapers in 1890s with some dated as late as 1923.

**Series A 5/7/1-9** - Misc. papers - 22 fol. - 1890-1927

Will, membership tickets, booklets and bulletins.

*Additional Information*

Related material: see Ken R. Johnson, ed., "The Wilson Letters", *TBHMS Papers and Records*, II (1974), 22-28; Rick Watt, "The William Wilson Diaries", *TBHMS Papers and Records*, XV (1987), 40-50.

*Custodial History* - formerly catalogued into museum collection 972.23