



The Law Society
of Upper Canada

Barreau du
Haut-Canada

FINDING AID FOR

Newton Wesley Rowell fonds

PF224

Summary

The "Newton Wesley Rowell fonds" Fonds contains:

0 Subgroups or Sous-fonds

0 Series

0 Sub-series

0 Sub-sub-series

0 Files

0 File parts

3 Items

0 Components

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PF224

Newton Wesley Rowell fonds. -- 1890-1891. -- 3 cm of textual records (3 v.)

Biographical/Sketch/Administrative History

Newton Wesley Rowell was born on 1 November 1867 in St. John's, Ontario, to parents Joseph Rowell and Nancy Green. After attending a local school, in 1883 Rowell took a commercial course in London, Ontario, and, in 1886, he passed his high school matriculation examinations and was admitted as a law student by the Law Society of Upper Canada. He remained in London as a student for law firm Fraser & Fraser from 1886 until 1891, when was called to the Bar. Rowell's early career was spent practising property and corporate law in Toronto with lawyer Isidore Hellmuth's firm. By 1902, Rowell was made a King's Counsel, and he became a senior partner in Rowell, Reid and Wood in 1903.

In addition to his work as a lawyer, Rowell was a lay minister and prominent member of the Methodist Church. It was through his affiliation with the church that Rowell met his wife, Nellie Langford, whom he married in 1901. Rowell remained a leading figure within the church, and he was involved in creation of the United Church of Canada in 1925.

Rowell's interest in politics led him to join the Liberal Party. He ran unsuccessfully for the Liberals in York East during the 1900 federal election. In 1911, he was appointed the leader of the Ontario Liberal Party and won a seat as an MPP in Oxford North, serving as Leader of the Opposition. By 1917, Rowell was motivated to leave the Ontario Legislature and the Liberal Party to join Robert Borden's Unionist government as president of the Privy Council. He won a seat as MP for Durham in the December 1917 federal election and became Canada's first Minister of Health in 1919, but he did not run for re-election in 1921. In 1920, he served on a delegation representing Canada at a November assembly of the League of Nations.

By 1921, Rowell had returned to his law firm and began to appear in London, England, before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on a number of cases, most notably the 'Persons Case' in 1929. In 1932, he became the president of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs and of the Canadian Bar Association, and an honorary bencher of Lincoln's Inn. He was an elected bencher of the Law Society of Upper Canada from 1911 to 1926, and in 1935 he served a one-year term as Law Society treasurer. He was appointed Chief Justice of Ontario in 1936, but he retired from the position in 1938 after suffering a stroke. Newton Rowell died in Toronto on 22 November 1941.

Scope and Content

Fonds consists of three letter books maintained by Newton Wesley Rowell while an articling student with the firm of Fraser and Fraser in London, Ontario. These items document Rowell's travels to Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Washington State, Oregon, Montana and Idaho to collect debts on behalf of the firm's client, Molson's Bank, who were attempting to recover the debts of two bankrupt London, Ontario, farm implement distributors.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Title Notes

Title based on contents of the fonds.

2016013-001 Letter book. -- Aug.-Sept. 1890. -- 1 cm of textual records (1 v.)

Scope and Content

Item is a letter book created by Rowell while in Manitoba attempting to collect debts related to promissory notes made by farmers who had purchased farm equipment. The letters in this book are written by Rowell to lawyers in his firm, including M.D. Fraser in London, T.H. Gilmour and F.J. Calvert in Winnipeg, as well as local lawyers and clerks. These letters document Rowell's visits to towns and farms around the province and his strategies to negotiate debt repayment plans with farmers, as well as his observations of his surroundings and experiences in various locations in Manitoba, including Portage La Prairie, Birtle, Winnipeg, Carberry, Brandon, and Shoal Lake.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Title Notes

Title based on contents of the item.

2016013-002 Letter book. -- Sept.- Nov. 1890. -- 1 cm of textual records (1 v.)

Scope and Content

Item is a letter book created by Rowell while attempting to collect debts related to promissory notes made by farmers who had purchased farm equipment in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The letters in this book are written by Rowell to lawyers in his firm, including M.D. Fraser in London, T.H. Gilmour in Brandon and F.J. Calvert in Winnipeg, as well as local lawyers and clerks. These letters document Rowell's visits to farms near Brandon, Souris, Virden, Oak Lake, Moosomin, Wolseley, Qu'Appelle and Regina and detail his strategies to negotiate debt repayment plans or make settlements with specific farmers. Letters also include Rowell's requests for advice and money, as well as his observations about the local weather and crop conditions and his experiences travelling without a driver and navigating the countryside.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Title Notes

Title based on contents of the item.

2016013-003 Letter book. -- Nov. 1890 - Jan. 1891. -- 1 cm of textual records (1 v.)

Scope and Content

Item is a letter book created by Rowell pertaining to his work to collect debts related to promissory notes made by farmers who had purchased farm equipment in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia in Canada and Washington, Oregon, Montana and Idaho in the United States. The letters in this book were written by Rowell while in Vancouver, Victoria, Tacoma, Great Falls and Winnipeg and sent to lawyers in Moosamin, Qu'Appelle, Wolseley, Brandon, Regina, Tacoma, Astoria, Great Falls, Wallace, Grenfell and Russell. One letter was sent by Rowell directly to a debtor. Also included are letters sent by Rowell to his firm's lawyer in Winnipeg, F.J. Calvert, which detail his trip through the mountains to British Columbia and his impressions of Vancouver, as well as a lengthy letter written by Rowell to a hotel in Tacoma regarding the loss of his coat.

Restrictions

No restrictions on access.

Title Notes

Title based on contents of the item.