

University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections

Finding Aid - Moses Cotsworth fonds (RBSC-ARC-1140)

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Moses Cotsworth fonds

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Summary information

Repository:	University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections
Title:	Moses Cotsworth fonds
ID:	RBSC-ARC-1140
Date:	1908-1931 (date of creation)
Physical description:	1.2 m of textual records and other materials.
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	Finding aid created by Francesca Rossetti in March 2000 and converted from PDF to AtoM by Ashlynn Prasad in April 2020.
Note [sourcesDescription]:	<p>Information for the biographical sketch was obtained from a variety of sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clay, Charles. "Calendar Reform." Encyclopedia Canadiana, 1970 ed. - Eastman, George . Do We Need Calendar Reform?, n.p., n.d. - Home Page for Calendar Reform, http://personal.ecu.edu/mccartyr/cotsworth.html. - Who Was Who. Vol. 4, 1941-1950. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1952.
Note [generalNote]:	The earliest date found on the textual records was 1867. However, there could be records in the fonds that pre-date 1867. The year of Cotsworth's death is taken as the terminal date because it is assumed that he continued working on the issue of calendar reform up until his death.

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Moses Bruine Cotsworth was born on December 3, 1859, in Willitof, near York, England. He was the son of George and Sarah Cotsworth. Orphaned at the age of two, he was raised by his grandparents and great-grandparents. In 1884, he married Kezia H. Gardiner, (of Blairendinnie, Aberdeenshire), and they had one son and four daughters. He was educated at York Blue Coat School.

Cotsworth began work in 1874 in the office of the Chief Goods Manager of the North Eastern Railway Company, York. He had a series of jobs in which his aptitude for calculations and his investigative skill were evident: in 1881, he worked at Aire and Calder Navigation; from 1884 to 1886, he was the traffic manager for Trent Navigation; and from 1887 to 1891, he was the manager of Manners Colliery, Derbyshire. In 1892, he returned to the Chief Goods Manager office to work on a revision of railway rates

and to do research. He published a book, *Railway Maximum Rates and Charges*, and his improved system of railway statistics has since been used by the British Railway companies and the Ministry of Transport. In 1907, he was appointed by the British Columbia government as Chairman of the Commission to re-organise and regrade the Civil Service. He moved to Vancouver in 1910, and from then until 1921, he was in business as an accountant and investigator of the cost of living for Western Canada.

Cotsworth devoted most of his time and efforts on calendar reform. His interest in calendars and time goes back to his upbringing by his grandparents and great-grandparents who used the old shadow pin, noon-mark, and hour-glass methods as well as an old series of calendars which contained charts, illustrations, and quotations. While he was working for the North Eastern Railway Company, he became aware of the difficulties in using the Gregorian calendar to calculate monthly totals for income and expenditures. These difficulties were due to the different number of weekdays in a month and the fact that, for the railway, every day of the week had a different economic value. The yearly changes of the date for Easter, and other holidays, imposed another difficulty. Even before he founded the International Fixed Calendar League in 1922, he was active in calendar reform. Cotsworth devised a thirteen-month calendar in which each month would have twenty-eight days or four weeks. The thirteenth month, called Sol, would be made up of the last thirteen days of June and the first fifteen days of July. In leap years, the extra day would be added after June the 28th. The 365th day, at the end of the year, would be called Year-day, and it would fall between December the 28th and January the 1st. In this way, Easter would always fall on the same date (the 15th of April). At one point, both the League of Nations and the Royal Society of Canada endorsed Cotsworth's proposal for calendar reform. The federal government of Canada officially endorsed it in 1931. However, Cotsworth's 13-month calendar was not adopted due to lack of world-wide consensus and to other individuals or calendar associations pushing for calendar reform.

Even though the International Fixed Calendar League ceased to exist, Cotsworth continued his work on calendar reform. From 1922 to 1931, he was the Director of the International Fixed Calendar League (previously called the International Almanak Reform League), as well as the Expert to the League of Nations' Committee on Calendar Reform. As such, he visited more than sixty countries as part of his effort to convince people of the benefits of converting to a 13-month calendar. He served as Secretary to the British Association's Research Committee on Geological Evidence of Climactic Change from 1934 to 1937. He was a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society, and a Fellow of the Geological Society. His publications include monographs as well as a series of more than 50 pamphlets on calendar reform. He also wrote about railway rates and climactic change, among other topics. Moses Bruine Cotsworth died in Vancouver on June 4, 1943 .

Custodial history

The records were given to the University of British Columbia after Moses B. Cotsworth's death, as was instructed in his will. A fourth box of records was added in December, 1978 after it was discovered, uncatalogued, in the Main Stacks of the Main Library.

Scope and content

The fonds consists of textual records, photographs (prints and Negatives), pictorial images, postcards, statistical information, and maps. All of the records reflect Moses B. Cotsworth's involvement in calendar reform and his efforts to make his 13-month calendar more widely known throughout the world. Administrative records of his International Fixed Calendar League as well as papers reflecting

his interests in mathematics, astronomy and astrology are included. The records have been arranged into the following series: Correspondence and Personal Notes; Newspaper Articles; Pamphlets on Calendar Reform and Related Material; Posters and Related Material; Records Relating to Egypt (Pyramids, Sphinx); Records Relating to Stonehenge; Statistical Charts and Graphs; and Records Relating to Miscellaneous Subjects.

Notes

Title notes

Arrangement

The records were contained in four file storage boxes and one oversize Hollinger box. The materials seemed to be thrown together without any apparent order. Thus, there did not seem to be an original order given to the records by the creator. Apparently, from information obtained from one of his daughters, the fonds seems to be incomplete since many of Cotsworth's personal papers and belongings were lost at sea during World War II. Since all of the records deal with the principal activity of calendar reform, it was decided to arrange the series according to either the physical form of the records or the subject matter of the records.

Finding aids

Inventory available. PDF document attached.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
- **Physical description:** 1.2 m of textual records 416 photographs 203 charts 102 nitrate negatives 72 glass plate negatives 8 maps

Access points

- International Fixed Calendar League (subject)

Series descriptions

Correspondence and Personal Notes

Date: [pre-1943] (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of letters written to Cotsworth, personal notes (mostly written on envelopes and scraps of paper), drafts of printed material that may have been used in his publications, and miscellaneous articles written by other individuals. All of the records deal with calendar reform, but the personal notes reflect the wide range of Cotsworth's interest in this matter. They include notes taken on his travels to Stonehenge, Egypt, Northern British Columbia, and Alaska. The personal notes also include descriptions, even lists, of photographs taken on his trips. The articles written by other individuals deal with calendars and religious topics.

Physical description: 4 cm of textual records.

Note:

It is difficult to provide a specific date range for this series since only the correspondence is dated.

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1140-1-1	File - Correspondence			
RBSC-ARC-1140-1-2	File - Personal Notes			
RBSC-ARC-1140-1-3	File - Drafts of printed material/ pamphlets			
RBSC-ARC-1140-1-4	File - Miscellaneous articles by other writers			
RBSC-ARC-1140- BC-1973-1 to 2	File - Photographs			

Newspaper Articles

Date: 1894-1931 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of two folders containing newspaper clippings. The first folder contains loose clippings of articles from newspapers and journals. They deal with a diverse array of topics, most notably Stonehenge, telling or measuring time, and calendars and calendar reform. The second folder is a bound volume of newspaper clippings taken from a variety of sources covering the time period of August 4 to November 3, 1931, done by Editorial Services Ltd. on behalf of the International Fixed Calendar League. These clippings are mostly about calendar reform and the activities of the League.

Physical description: 8.5 cm of textual records.

Publication status:

published

File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1140-1-5	File - Newspaper Articles -- Including other published articles/material			
RBSC-ARC-1140-1-6	File - Newspaper Articles -- Bound volume			
RBSC-ARC-1140-BC-1973-3	File - Photograph			

Pamphlets on Calendar Reform and Related Material

Date: [pre-1943] (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of pamphlets, leaflets, reports, articles, other textual information, a scrapbook of graphical images, calendars, diverse pictures and diagrams (for example, astronomical diagrams, pyramids, different types of calendars used through time), statistical charts and other kinds of charts, and photographs. Cotsworth incorporates the textual information and all the different kinds of graphical images into his pamphlets and other publications. There are photographs of the different diagrams and pictures as well as photographs of certain pages of Cotsworth's published pamphlets.

Physical description: 12.5 cm of textual records and other material.

Language of the material:

Note:

It is difficult to provide a specific date range since not all of the records are dated.

Publication status:

published

Physical description:

The physical extent does not include photographs and/or negatives.

File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1140-2-1	File - Pamphlet by Moses B. Cotsworth as Director, International Fixed Calendar League			
RBSC-ARC-1140-2-2	File - M. B. Cotsworth's scrapbook of material used in pamphlets			
RBSC-ARC-1140-2-3	File - Textual and graphical information used in pamphlets written by M. B. Cotsworth			

RBSC-ARC-1140-2-4	File - Drafts of articles; revisions done by Cotsworth
RBSC-ARC-1140-2-5	File - Pamphlets by other writers
RBSC-ARC-1140-BC-1973-4 to 34	File - Photographs

The Need of a "Rational Almanac" [textual record] / by Moses B. Cotsworth, F.G .S., of York, England; printed for the Royal Society of Canada

Date: 1909 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Item is a pamphlet containing the paper that Cotsworth presented to the Royal Society of Canada . Sir Sandford Fleming's introductory address to the Royal Society of Canada is also included in the pamphlet. Cotsworth discusses the history of calendars, the difficulties inherent in the Gregorian calendar, and the benefits and ease of changing to a calendar having thirteen months of four weeks each.

Physical description: 33 pages.

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Posters and Related Material

Date: [pre-1943] (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of posters of calendars, clocks, climactic maps, and statistical charts in differing stages of completeness. There are posters of calendars of different religions and cultures and of calendars used in ancient times. There is a set of posters that has been used by Cotsworth for demonstration purposes, and it mostly consists of statistical charts, clocks, different types of calendars, and his own 13-month calendar. There are photographs of many of the different kinds of posters. Many of the images on the posters can be found in Cotsworth's publications.

Physical description: 12.5 cm of textual records and other material.

Language of the material:

Note:

Very few of the posters in this series are dated. It is difficult to determine the period of time that Cotsworth was working on these posters.

Note:

Oversize "Mohammedan" calendar is located in flat storage.

Publication status:

published

Physical description:

The physical extent does not include photographs and/or negatives.

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1140-3-1	File - Posters in Preparation (Part 1 of 3)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-3-2	File - Posters in Preparation (Part 2 of 3)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-3-3	File - Posters in Preparation (Part 3 of 3)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-3-4	File - Posters in preparation — other types of calendars (Part 1 of 2)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-3-5	File - Posters in preparation — other types of calendars (Part 2 of 2)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-3-6	File - Posters of other kinds of calendars			
RBSC-ARC-1140-3-7	File - Finished posters — for demonstration purposes (Part 1 of 3)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-3-8	File - Finished posters — for demonstration purposes (Part 2 of 3)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-3-9	File - Finished posters — for demonstration purposes (Part 3 of 3)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-BC-1973-35 to 54	File - Photographs			

Records Relating to Egypt (Pyramids, Sphinx)Date: [pre-1943] (date of creation)Scope and content:

Series consists of drawings of pyramids, notes, posters in preparation, and photographs (with the accompanying negatives) taken in Egypt of the Sphinx and the pyramids. Some of the diagrams of the pyramids include astronomical measurements. Cotsworth used these diagrams to illustrate how the Egyptians measured time. These diagrams were then included in pamphlets written by Cotsworth.

Physical description: 2.5 cm of graphic material and other material.Language of the material:Note:

A specific date range for the records cannot be given since most of the records in this series are not dated.

Note:

Oversize map of Nik River and oversize poster of Ra are located in flat storage.

Publication status:

published

Physical description:

The physical extent does not include photographs and/or negatives.

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-1	File - Records Relating to Egypt (Pyramids, Sphinx)			
RBSC-ARC-1140- BC-1973-55 to 84	File - Photographs			

Records Relating to Stonehenge

Date: [pre-1943] (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of two monographs, posters (both finished posters and posters in preparation), drafts of diagrams and notes, two postcards, personal notes, diagrams, pictures, and photographs. It includes diagrams and photographs of Silbury Hill. Cotsworth used Stonehenge as an example of how time was measured in the past. He included the posters, diagrams, and pictures in his pamphlets on time and calendar reform.

Physical description: 3 cm of textual records and other material.

Note:

Not all of the records are dated, therefore, a specific date range cannot be given for this series.

Related material:

Newspaper clippings relating to Stonehenge and druids can be found in the Newspaper Articles series.

Publication status:

published

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-2	File - Records Relating to Stonehenge			
RBSC-ARC-1140- BC-1973-85 to 119	File - Photographs			

Statistical Charts and Graphs

Date: [pre-1943] (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of hand drawn and machine produced statistical charts and graphs. The main areas of everyday life that Cotsworth analysed were: business, schools, production, customs and duties, hotels, post office, retail stores, and railways. He used these statistical analyses to show that there would be fewer inconsistencies in the data if the months were made up of four weeks/twenty-eight days. The series also consists of charts and diagrams/maps (of Canada) showing values for mean rainfall.

Physical description: 3 cm of graphic material and other material.

Language of the material:

Note:

A specific date range cannot be given to the records since many of the records have not been dated.

Note:

Seven oversize charts/graphs are located in flat storage.

Publication status:

published

Physical description:

The physical extent does not include photographs and/or negatives.

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-3	File - Statistical Charts and Graphs (Part 1 of 2)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-4	File - Statistical Charts and Graphs (Part 2 of 2)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-BC-1973-120 to 124	File - Photographs			

Records Relating to Miscellaneous Subjects

Date: [pre-1943] (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of diagrams, pictures, pamphlets, maps, a newspaper article, postcards, articles, published journals (both loose and bound), and photographs. The records have been organised according to subject matter because they did not fit into any of the other series. They have been organised in the following way: clocks, glaciers/geological data, obelisks, picture postcards, published journals and other published materials/pamphlets, published material, miscellaneous maps, miscellaneous photographs, and published journals (bound volumes). Most, if not all, of the information in this series has been used by Cotsworth in his efforts to try to bring about changes to the Gregorian calendar. He used the information in his publications on calendar reform.

Physical description: 10 .5 cm of textual records and other material.

Note:

Given the diverse array of records found in this series, it is difficult to give this series a specific date range because most of the items are not dated.

Publication status:

published

Physical description:

The physical extent does not include photographs and/or negatives.

File / item list

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-5	File - Records Relating to Clocks	[pre-1943]		
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-5-BC-1973-125 to 127	Item - Photographs			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-6	File - Records Relating to Glaciers/ Geological Data			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-6-BC-1973-128 to 194	Item - Photographs			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-7	File - Records Relating to Obelisks			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-7-BC-1973-195 to 209	Item - Photographs			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-8	File - Picture Postcards			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-9	File - Published Journals and Other Published Materials/Pamphlets			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-10	File - Published Material			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-11	File - Miscellaneous Maps			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-11-BC-1973-210 to 212	Item - Photographs			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-12	File - Miscellaneous Photographs			
RBSC-ARC-1140-4-12-BC-1973-213 to 239	Item - Photographs			
RBSC-ARC-1140-5-1	File - Published Journals — Bound Volumes (Part 1 of 2)			
RBSC-ARC-1140-5-2	File - Published Journals — Bound Volumes (Part 2 of 2)			

Zimmer Tower: Astronomical Clock and Studio: Supplement to the Illustrated Guide of Lierre (Belgium) / Louis Zimmer; published by the "Gidsenbond," Belgium

Date: 1931 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Item is a pamphlet, which describes the clock tower that Zimmer constructed as clockmaker to the Royal Court in Belgium. He finished the tower in 1930 and presented it to the city of Lierre on the occasion of Belgium's centennial anniversary of independence. The pamphlet describes the twelve

dials built onto the face of the Centenary Clock. It explains what the dials mean, how they function, and how measurements are taken. It includes diagrams of the clock dials as well as charts and other diagrams. It also describes dials found in the Astronomic Studio. These include thirteen dials, dealing with the subdivision of time, as well as other dials representing astronomical phenomena. Zimmer has included a dial that functions according to Cotsworth's 13-month calendar.

Physical description: 24 pages.

Publication status:

published

File / item list