

Ridington Family fonds

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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



The Library

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Fonds Description

Ridington Family fonds. - 1889-1945.

50.5 cm of textual records.

17 photographs.

Biographical Sketch

John Ridington was born in West Ham, London, England on April 1868, the son of William Richard Ridington, a building contractor, and his wife Cecilia James Eleanor. He was the eighth of nine children. Four of his sisters died in infancy before his own birth. The three who survived all married. They were Jane Ennor (Mrs. Alexander H. Guest), 1852-1942; Elizabeth Symons (Mrs. Joseph Henry Williams), 1856-1941; and Rosina Symons (Mrs. John Ellis Griffith), 1862- 1939). The ninth child and John Ridington's only brother was William Richards Ridington, 1870-1944. The details of John Ridington's education are not known. In later life he claimed to have been a student at the London School of Art and at the University of London; he also received training for a career in teaching. William Richards Ridington emigrated to Canada in the spring of 1889 bringing his wife and two sons. The three sisters remained in England. On April 25th they sailed from Liverpool aboard the *S.S. Parisian*, arriving at Quebec City on May 5th. Then they travelled by train to Birtle, Manitoba, where he took up farming, and opened a carpenter's shop in Foxwarren.

John Ridington was employed as a school teacher in rural schools of northwestern Manitoba, first in the summer of 1889 at Burdette, later at Rookhurst. In January 1896 John Ridington became the publisher and editor of the *Carberry News*. On November 6th of the same year he married Maggie Dykes Charleston. When fire destroyed the press early in 1901, he sold his interest in the paper and moved to Winnipeg where he became "special reporter, dramatic and art critic, and editorial writer" for the *Manitoba Free Press*, under the editorship of J.W. Defoe, with whom Ridington developed a life long friendship.

In 1907 Ridington changed careers again, and joined the firm of William Pearson Co. as a real estate salesman. In 1910 or 1911 he moved to Vancouver, and became sales manager for Canada Western Trust Co. He invested in land development but lost everything in the depression of 1913. He was destitute to the point of borrowing money from neighbours, and the only work he could find was teaching a course in English literature for the Vancouver Night Schools. His daughter Margaret Dorothy Ridington died on March 28, 1912. In later years when reporting the details of his life to biographical directories Ridington eliminated these unhappy years from the record, stating that he moved from Winnipeg to Vancouver in 1914.

By August 1914 he had found employment as the "acting librarian" of the new University of British Columbia. From May to August 1916 he attended the summer school at the New York State Library, Albany. UBC President Frank Wesbrook nevertheless continued to search for an experienced librarian to replace Ridington. In June 1922 Wesbrook's successor, Leonard Klinck, finally changed Ridington's title from Acting Librarian and Cataloguer to Librarian. Ridington's wife Maggie died on April 26, 1927. He married for a second time on August 8, 1929. Muriel Patience Fallows, the daughter of William W. Fallows and his wife Patience Seale. John and Muriel Ridington's son John Fallows Ridington was born on May 29, 1930. John Ridington retired as University Librarian on April 31, 1940, at the age of 72. In the following years he occupied himself by acting as Secretary to the Western Gate Lodge of the Masonic Order, and by writing the occasional column for the *Vancouver News-Herald*. He died on April 20, 1945.

A portrait of John Ridington, painted in 1912 by his brother-in-law Malcolm Charleston, hangs in the Ridington Room of the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre. Malcolm Charleston was a graduate of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he worked as a commercial artist.

Scope and Content

The fonds consists of material generated by John Ridington and other members of the Ridington family and includes correspondence (1904-1987), diaries (1917-1980), Ridington family history, and photographs. Also included is a collection of bound copies of John Ridington's articles and speeches (1911-1944).

Notes

File list available.

Selected photographs have been digitized and included in UBC Archives' [Historical Photograph Database \(UBC 31.1\)](#).

The selection of bound articles and speeches and some other materials were acquired from Jamie Ridington, through UBC Rare Books and Special Collections, in September 2012.

Unbound copy of "A tribute to Dickens" (3-17), and letter to "Mrs. Fallows" (3-28) transferred from Rare Books and Special Collections in 2014.

Title based on the contents of the fonds.

Series Descriptions

Correspondence. - 1904-1987.

13 cm of textual records.

Series consists of letters from John Ridington to Muriel Fallows Ridington (1928-1941), incoming letters to Muriel Fallows' father William Fallows (1904-1936), and other miscellaneous family correspondence (1929-1987).

Diaries. - 1917-1980.

6 cm of textual records.

Series consists of diaries compiled by Muriel Fallows Ridington (1917, 1946/47, 1980) as well as some correspondence from John Ridington to Muriel (1930-1948) which was assembled for John F. Ridington. The series also includes a diary from Mrs. William Fallows (1946).

Ridington Family History. – [n.d.].

1 cm.

Series consists of a Ridington family tree (1749-1910), a number of clippings, primarily obituaries for family members, and memorabilia.

John Ridington material. - 1889-1945.

29.5 cm of textual records.

Series consists of a hand written journal created by John Ridington during his family's trip to Canada by ship (1889), publications and copies of sketches by Ridington, clippings relating to Ridington, and bound copies of his speeches and articles (1911-1945).

Photographs. - 1900-1944.

17 photographs.

Series consists of photographs of John Ridington and other family members, the UBC campus, and one group photograph taken during the Canadian visit of the Duke of Devonshire (1917).

Selected photographs have been digitized and included in UBC Archives' [Historical Photograph Database \(UBC 31.1\)](#).

File List

Box 1

CORRESPONDENCE

To Muriel Fallows from John Ridington

- 1-1 1928 (2 letters)
- 1-2 1930 - June (14 letters)
- 1-3 1930 - July (42 letters)
- 1-4 1930 - August (39 letters)
- 1-5 1930 - September (29 letters)
- 1-6 1930 - December (4 letters)
- 1-7 1931 - January (2 letters)
- 1-8 1933 - October (3 letters)
- 1-9 1935 - June (19 letters)
- 1-10 1939 - June (4 letters)
- 1-11 1940 - May/June (14 letters)
- 1-12 1941 - October - December (22 letters)

To John Ridington

From

- 1-13 Alexander Hursh Guest (June 1930)
 Jane Ennor (Ridington) Guest (June 1930)
 J.W. Dafoe (January 1932)

To William W. Fallows

From

- 1-14 T. Albert Fallows (May 1904)
Samuel H. Fallows (December 1904)
John A. Fallows (November 1910)
- 1-15 Samuel H. Fallows (April 1911)
O.J. MacKay (July 1911)
John A. Fallows (December 1912)
M. Charpentier (December 1913)
M. Charpentier (February 1914)
Samuel H. Fallows (March 1914)
William Lawson (March 1914)
William Lawson (April 1914)
William Lawson (May 1914)
M. Charpentier (May 1914)
Samuel H. Fallows (July 1914)
William Lawson (July 1914)
John A. Fallows (August 1914)
Samuel H. Fallows (August 1914)
William Lawson (October 1914)
- 1-16 M. Charpentier (June 1915)
M. Charpentier (November 1915)
Samuel H. Fallows (March 1916)
M. Charpentier (May 1916)
- 1-17 M. Charpentier (December 1932)
Samuel H. Fallows (May 1933)
M. Charpentier (February 1934)
Samuel H. Fallows (May 1934)
M. Charpentier (June 1934)
M. Charpentier (August 1934)
Samuel H. Fallows (May 1935)
M. Charpentier (February 1936)
M. Charpentier (April 1936)
Samuel H. Fallows (April 1936)

- 1-18 Miscellaneous Family Correspondence
Wedding Announcement for John Ridington and Muriel Patience Fallows
(August 1929)
To John Fallows Ridington from John Ridington (June 1937)
Christmas message from John, Muriel and John Fallows Ridington (1940)
To Muriel Fallows Ridington from Mrs. W.W. Fallows (October 1941)
To Muriel Fallows Ridington from John Fallows Ridington (October 1968)
[Includes an enclosed letter]
John Ridington to John Mennie dated August 19, 1944 to Muriel Fallows
Ridington from Cecilia Steele (April 1979)
John F. Ridington to J. Davaux, Consul General of Belgium (March 1987)

DIARIES

- 1-19 Muriel Fallows (1917)
- 1-20 Muriel Fallows Ridington (1946/47) - Also includes correspondence from
John Ridington to Muriel (1930-1948). This material was assembled for John F.
Ridington.
- 1-21 Diary entry - Muriel Ridington (May 1980)
- 1-22 Diary of Mrs. William Fallows [mother of Muriel Fallows Ridington] (1946)

RIDINGTON FAMILY HISTORY - GENERAL

- 1-23 Ridington Family Register (1749-1910) and additional clippings and letters.
- 1-24 Ridington Family - Clippings - Obituaries for various members of the family

[\(continued\)](#)

Box 2

JOHN RIDINGTON MATERIAL

- 2-1 The Journal of John Ridington, Emigrant on Board the "Parisian", April 30 - May 4, 1889
Written by John Ridington dated April 1889 describing how he, his brother William, and their parents left England and came to Canada to begin a new life there. The journal consists of 40 pages hand written in pencil that documents life on the ship during their voyage from Liverpool to Quebec City.
[Because the original is fragile, researchers are asked to use the typed transcript prepared by Basil Stuart Stubbs, 1996 which is included with the journal]
- 2-2 Birthday Poems to J. Ridington (1932, 1937)
- 2-3 J. Ridington's Passport (1942)
- 2-4 Copies of sketches of the UBC Library and his house by Ridington
- Publications/Reports/Talks by Ridington
- 2-5 "The Doukhobor Pilgrimage" Canadian Magazine (January 1903)
"The Poetry of the War" (1918)
- 2-6 "The University, the University Library, and the Returned Soldier" (1918)
"Artist or Artisan - Which" (Feb. 1923)
"Adventures Among Books" (Dec. 13, 1928)
- 2-7 "Canadian Libraries - A Report" by Mary J.L. Black, George H. Locke and John Ridington (1930/31)
- 2-8 "Libraries in Canada - A Study of Library Conditions and Needs" John Ridington and Mary J.L. Black (1933)
- 2-9 "The Meaning and the Mission of Music" (n.d.)

- 2-10 Clippings
"John Ridington, Beloved Library Head, Retiring" (1940)
"Micawber Found a Place" (1972)
- Miscellaneous J. Ridington Materials
- 2-11 Obituaries/Tributes for John Ridington (1945)
- 2-12 Funeral Service for John Ridington (April 1945)
- 2-13 "Hamber Hall - Royal Wing" [library expansion] (Nov. 30, 1938)
- 2-14 Correspondence, printed material re. Masons (1942)
- 2-15 Library - "Exits and Entrances and Stack Room Control" (Dec. 1939)
- 2-16 UBC Library - "First Report on Grant for Undergraduate Reading from the Carnegie Corporation of New York" (August 1933)
- 2-17 Report of the Library Committee to Senate (1929, 1930, 1931, 1932)
- 2-18 Misc. Correspondence (1932, 1936)
- 2-19 "Some French and English Libraries" by H. Ashton (n.d.)

[\(continued\)](#)

PHOTOGRAPHS

- 31.1/1 John Ridington ca. 1918 [print]
- 31.1/2 John Ridington ca. 1940 [print]
- 31.1/3 John Ridington and William Richards Ridington Jr. ca. 1944 [print]
- 31.1/4 Commemorative plaque to William R. and Cecilia Ridington n.d. [print]
- 31.1/5 Group photograph during visit of His Excellency, the Duke of Devonshire 1917 [print]

- 31.1/6 John and William R. Ridington n.d. [small print/small negative]
- 31.1/7 John and Emily Louisa (Day) Ridington n.d. [small print/small negative]
- 31.1/8 Emily Louisa Ridington and daughter? n.d. [small print/small negative]
- 31.1/9 Unidentified members of Ridington family n.d. [small print/small negative]
- 31.1/10 Main Library ca. 1926 [small print]
- 31.1/11 Main Library - 2 views n.d. [small print]
- 31.1/12 Main Library ca. 1949 [small print]
- 31.1/13 Congregation procession leaving the Library n.d. [small print/small negative]
- 31.1/14 Science Building n.d. [print]

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Box 3

JOHN RIDINGTON MATERIAL (cont.)

Bound Articles and Speeches

- 3-1 "Second chambers" – Mount Pleasant Liberal Club, Vancouver, B.C. 31
January 1911
- 3-2 "Why study literature?" – King Edward High School [Vancouver, B.C.] 4
October 1914
- 3-3 "The contribution of the Englishman to the national life of Canada" – The
Vagabond Club, Vancouver, B.C. October 1918
- 3-4 "The 'new' poetry" – California Library Association, Del Monte, Cal. 1919
- 3-5 "The place of the library in the community" – Y.M.C.A., Vancouver, B.C.
February 1920

- 3-6 "New needs and new responsibilities" – First Annual Session, American Library Association, Colorado Springs, U.S.A. 2 June 1920
- 3-7 "The day we celebrate" – St. George's Society [Vancouver, B.C.] 23 April 1921
[with photo of Library under construction – removed]
- 3-8 "Artist, or artisan – which?" – P.N.L.A., Olympia, Wash. 31 August 1922
- 3-9 "Humour – considered nationally" – The Vagabond Club, Vancouver, B.C. 12 April 1923
- 3-10 "Nelson and Trafalgar" – First Baptist Church, Vancouver, B.C. 19 October 1923
- 3-11 "Books, book collections, and book collectors" – The Vagabond Club, Vancouver, B.C. 8 December 1927
- 3-12 "Our debt to Dickens" – Dickens' Fellowship, Vancouver, B.C. 20 January 1928
- 3-13 "Canada's poet laureate: Bliss Carman" – P.N.L.A., Spokane, Wash. 30 August 1929
- 3-14 "Recent and contemporary poetry" – Alberni 16 October 1929
- 3-15 "The new biography" – The Book Club, Plymouth Congregational Church, Seattle, Wash. 3 February 1930
- 3-16 "Canada and its libraries, 1934" – The Library Journal 15 June 1934
- 3-17 "A tribute to Dickens" – Dickens Fellowship Dinner [Vancouver, B.C.] 1934
[with additional typescript copy, unbound – included]
- 3-18 "Progress or retrogression? Art for three quarters of a century" – The Art Gallery, Vancouver, B.C. 1935
- 3-19 "Education and the library" – Vancouver Institute 29 February 1936

- 3-20 "The menace of propaganda" – Vancouver Institute 25 March 1939
[with unbound typescript of "Some thoughts on a 'national library' for Canada" – included]
- 3-21 "The volume of the sacred law" – Western Gate, No. 48, A.F. & A.M. 11 March 1940
- 3-22 "Some problems of the peace" – St. John's United Church, Vancouver, B.C. 6 June 1944
[2 copies bound, hardcover and softcover]
- 3-23 "Immortality" – Scottish Rite, A.F. & A.M., St John's Church Forum [Vancouver, B.C.] 1 April 1945
[with copy of Ridington's funeral service programme, clipping "Ten great books you should know", and correspondence]
- 3-24 "Radio addresses" 1925-1940

RIDINGTON FAMILY HISTORY – GENERAL (cont.)

- 3-25 "McLaren MGA" [drawing of race car] signed "By J. Ridington" [n.d.]
[removed from frame]
- 3-26 Bachelor of Commerce degree certificate of John Fallows Ridington 15 May 1956
- 3-27 "Scrapbook for a golden anniversary" 1966
Letter from Basil Stuart-Stubbs to Muriel Ridington 14 March 1966
- 3-28 Letter from Florence S. Pearse addressed to "Mrs. Fallows", regarding illness of Muriel [presumably Muriel Fallows Ridington] 18 May 1946

PHOTOGRAPHS (cont.)

- 31.1/15 Construction of Main Library [ca. 1924] small B&W print [found with file 3-7
"The day we celebrate]

31.1/16 Seale – Patience Seale Fallows' Father – Taken August 1900 by Emma Cooke
[group photo of grandfather of John Ridington's second wife, with five
children] B&W print, mounted