

Trent University Archives

Finding Aid - Richard Birdsall fonds (75-1026)

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Richard Birdsall fonds

Table of contents

Summary information	3
Administrative history / Biographical sketch	3
Scope and content	3
Notes	4
Access points	4

Summary information

Repository:	Trent University Archives
Title:	Richard Birdsall fonds
Reference code:	75-1026
Date:	Photocopied [ca. 1975] (creation)
Date:	1837-1839 (creation)
Physical description:	23 items (photocopies)

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Richard Birdsall was born in 1799 at Thornton-le-dale, England, and educated at Londesborough, Yorkshire. His family intended a naval career for him upon graduation. Instead, when he graduated in 1817, he emigrated to Canada. Due to his education, he qualified for a position as a fully-accredited land surveyor in Canada West. In May of 1820, he was commissioned to survey the Newcastle District, where he remained for the rest of his life and became a very prominent man. The Newcastle District was comprised of the counties of Northumberland and Durham and included which would later become the counties of Peterborough, Victoria, and Haliburton. In 1821, he married Elizabeth Burnham, daughter of Zaccheus Burnham, who was a prominent early settler in the District. From his father-in-law, Birdsall bought 920 acres of land at the northeast end of Rice Lake (Lot 1, Concession 1, Asphodel Township) and made his home there. His wife died in a tragic fall in 1827 leaving Birdsall with four young daughters. He remarried in 1836 to Charlotte Jane Everett of Belleville and had four more children with his second wife; two of these were Richard Everett Birdsall (1837-1877) and Francis (Frank) Birdsall (1838-1914). Between the years of 1827 and 1836, Birdsall carried out most of his surveying work, including the survey for the town of Peterborough. In 1831, he was commissioned Captain of the fourth Regiment of Northumberland Militia and he led the Asphodel contingent when the militia was called out in the Rebellion of 1837. Later he was an officer in the Peterborough Regiment. Birdsall was also a Commissioner of the Court of Requests and a Justice of the Peace. When the Colborne District was created in 1841, he was the councillor for Asphodel and in 1850, when districts were replaced by counties, he represented Asphodel at the Peterborough County Council as its first Reeve. He continued in this position until his death on January 20, 1852.

Scope and content

The fonds consists of photocopies of correspondence, petitions, drafts of same to be sent, letters received relating to Birdsall's efforts in organizing a volunteer militia in 1838, and relations regarding the 7th

Provincial Battalion. The fonds also includes a few materials relating to surveying. The photocopied records date from 1837 to 1839.

Notes

Title notes

- **Source of title proper:** Title based on the creator of the fonds.

Immediate source of acquisition

The fonds was donated from an unknown source.

Restrictions on access

None

Related material

For related records see the Helen Marryat fonds (69-001), John Huston fonds (71-006), Smith Township fonds (72-1001), Ontario Department of Lands and Forests field survey notes (83-015) and 1991 additions to the Richard Birdsall fonds (91-1020).

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published
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Access points

- Isolated manuscripts (documentary form)
- Textual records (documentary form)
- Settlement and Surveys (subject)
- Military Records (subject)