

(WILLIAM) WOOD PAPERS

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Correspondence and papers written by or addressed to the Reverend William Wood (fl.1834-1878). 1834-1871.

Correspondence is chiefly from family members in England to William Wood who emigrated to Canada in 1834 but does include three letters by William Wood giving Canadian news and some extracts relating to Wood's experiences during the Mackenzie Rebellion copied from his journal, 1837-1838. There are also two letters from William Wood's brother, Edward, describing his experiences as an officer in India and several letters from clergy and officials of the Colonial Church Society in Canada. Significant items are described more fully below.

Extent: 45 items and some later clippings. 1 box.  
2.5 inches.

Given to the Library by Mr. H.M.F. Logan of Princeton, B.C., great-grandson of William Wood, in 1985.

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BIOGRAPHY

William Wood emigrated to Canada from England in the summer of 1834. His family lived at Swanwick Hall, Alfretton, Darbyshire where his father, John Wood (d. 1858) was a clergyman and owned property. One brother, Edward, served in India where he was killed in action in 1843.

By 1836 William Wood had married Rachel (d. 1904) and had acquired land near Port Dover at Nanticoke, in Walpole township, where he farmed over the next few years. In 1842 he was appointed Catechist and Lay Reader by Bishop Strachan. In 1848 England's Colonial and Continental Church Society made him their first agent in Ontario and gave him an appointment as Catechist and Lay Reader for the mission of Nanticoke. The mission covered 15 miles along the eastern end of Lake Erie. Wood conducted services at Nanticoke, and the 'out-stations' of McGaw's School, Stoney Creek, Rainham, and occasionally Jarvis. He set up two Sunday Schools and three Bible classes, and ministered to nearly one thousand families.

In 1853 a new church was completed in Nanticoke and an ordained minister was sent out from England as incumbent. In 1855 the Society sent Wood to Port Rowan. Here he set up the first Sunday School that same year and was instrumental in getting St. John's Church built by 1858. The mission initially known as St. Williams, later as Walsingham, included in addition to Port Rowan, Port Royal, Rowan's Hills, and St. Williams. Wood and his family lived at St. Williams. Wood continued to work in this mission, with some assistance, until 1866. Aid from the Society to the Walsingham mission ceased in 1869.

In 1858 Bishop Cronyn ordained Wood as Deacon in a service at St. Paul's Church, London, Ont. In 1859 Wood was ordained as Priest by the Bishop of Huron. He served as the incumbent at St. John's Church, Port Rowan, from 1858 to his retirement in 1878. William Wood died in May 1896.

K. Martyn  
Nov. 1985

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LIST OF SELECTED SIGNIFICANT ITEMS

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Box 1 Collection is arranged chronologically. Most family letters from England not listed.

- 1834, July 25. William Wood, Cobourg [and Toronto] to Mrs. Wood, Swanwick, Alfreton, Eng. A.L.S. Folder 4 p. Describes his passage through the Gulf of St. Lawrence, up the St. Lawrence to Montreal, and then, by land and steamer, to Cobourg, where he stayed several days before moving on to Toronto. Describes his expedition up to Sturgeon Lake to investigate property being offered for sale. Mentions visiting Mr. Boulton in Cobourg and travelling with him to Toronto. Enthusiastic description of landscape and settlements.
- 1836, Aug. 7. Certificate of Baptism: John Wood. 1 leaf. Signed by Thomas Green, A.B., Travelling Missionary of the London District.
- 1836-1838. William Wood. [Extracts from diary] 9 p. Extracted and copied by an unknown hand at a much later date. The original diaries are untraced. Extracts chiefly describe Wood's experiences as a volunteer in the militia raised to quell the Mackenzie Rebellion, Dec. 1837-Jan. 1838. Another collection of extracts was also compiled and the typescript deposited at the University of Western Ontario. These extracts include most of the material on the Mackenzie Rebellion as well as additional entries on Wood's work on his farm. Xeroxes available.
- 1837, May 30. Edward Wood, India, to Mrs. Wood, Swanwick, Eng. A.L.S. Folder 4 p. Describes his life with his regiment.
- 1837, Dec. 3. Edward Wood, Camp Rajcat [India] to Mrs. Wood, Swanwick, Eng. A.L.S. Folder 4 p. Describes his life in India; describes his plan for purchasing his promotion to lieutenant.
- 1839, Nov. 29. Edward Wood [and other family members] to William Wood, Port Dover. A.L.S. Folder 4 p. crossed. Edward describes conditions in England and assures William he could not make a living by farming there; he is better off in Canada despite the hardships.
- 1843, April 26. John Wood [and other family members] Worthing, [Eng.] to William Wood, Walpole. A.L.S. Folder 4 p. Partly crossed. Relays the news of Edward's death in action at the Battle of Meeanee, in Sind, India. Discusses William's plans to prepare himself for taking Holy Orders.

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- 1846, April 24-29. William Wood, Walpole, to Mrs. John Wood, Swanwick Hall, [Eng.] A.L.S. Folder 3 p. Chiefly family news; mentions his fears over impending war with the United States; regrets his church is still unfinished after three years; laments the spread of puseyism over Upper Canada
- 1850, May 24. William Chave, Secretary, Colonial Church Society, London, to William Wood. A.L.S. Folder 4 p. Comments on Wood's letter relaying criticism of the Society's hymn book; advises him on his position in the Society.
- 1850, Dec. 20. Edwin Hough, Assistant Secretary, Colonial Church Society, London, to William Wood. A.L.S. Folder 4 p. Conveys Society's thanks for Wood's contribution from his own stipend which he has sent since he had difficulty raising other money; states it is important to have the colonial missions self-supporting.
- 1851, May 30. Edwin Hough, London, to [William] Wood. A.L.S. Folder 4 p. Discusses Society's sending another agent to Western Canada; assures Wood his work is appreciated despite his not having been ordained; suggests he make his Library free.
- 1851, Sept. 8. Mesac [?] Thomas, Secretary, Colonial Church and School Society, London, to William Wood, Nanticoke. A.L.S. Folder 4 p. The question of establishing another mission and appointing another agent has been referred to William Bond, Secretary of the Corresponding Committee in Montreal; assures Wood he is keenly interested in his work in Canada.
- 1852, April 9. William Bond, Montreal, to [William Wood] A.L.S. 2 p. Forwards a copy of the Society's resolution that the Corresponding Committee in Montreal will superintend the Society's operations west of Quebec and all communications regarding expansion of missions in that area should be directed to the Committee.
- 1853, July 8. Edwin Hough, London, to William Wood. A.L.S. Folder 2 p. Asks for information about settlements of "free coloured peoples" in Wood's area; inquires whether Wood could take on a mission to them.
- 1854, Sept. 14. M.M. Dillon, Toronto, to [William Wood] A.L.S. 4 p. Has come to Toronto in connection with the Society's wish to establish a special mission to the "coloured people"; asks Wood to come to Toronto to see him on this matter.

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- Box 1 1855, June 5. Colonial Church and School Society. Corresponding Committee, Montreal. Extract from Minutes. 1 leaf. Wood is to be stationed as catechist at a location to be determined by the Rev. M.M. Dillon.
- 1857, Aug. 10. William Wood, St. Williams, to Emily Jane Woods, Swanwick Hall. A.L.S. Folder 4 p. Crossed. Family news; soon the frame of a church in Port Rowan will be raised; congregation has been meeting in a schoolhouse since Wood came two years ago; general church news; an "Evangelical" man is now Bishop; fortunate since "these high church Puseyites ... drive members away to join other sects"; Wood's own congregation continues steady.
- Jubilee sketch of St. John's Church. 8 leaves. 2 drafts. Undated and in unidentified hand. Partly extracts copied from William Wood's diary but altered to third person. Describes Wood's early efforts to set up a church, 1855-1857. With this are 2 leaves on the founding of a church at Rowan Mills.