

George F. Curtis fonds

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University of British Columbia Archives



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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



The Library

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Fonds Description

George F. Curtis fonds. - 1926-2005.

1.71 m of textual records.

121 photographs.

1 CD.

Biographical Sketch

George Frederick Curtis was born in England in 1906. He graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 1927 and was named a Rhodes Scholar. He earned a BA in Jurisprudence in 1930 and a BCL at Oxford in 1931. Curtis came to the University of British Columbia in 1945 from Halifax where he had practiced law and taught at the Dalhousie Law School. He became the founding dean of UBC's Faculty of Law and continued to serve in this capacity until stepping down in 1971. Curtis faced considerable challenges as the Faculty began with a total budget of \$10,000 and two army huts which provided offices, a reading room and lecture space.

During his illustrious career, Curtis made significant contributions to legal education, scholarship and practice in the provincial, national and international arenas. In recognition of these contributions Curtis received many honours and awards. The Universities of Dalhousie, Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and UBC (1982) granted him honorary degrees. He was named a member of the Order of the Coif in 1964 and in 1986 the Law Society honoured him as the first recipient of the Law Society Award in 1986. He received the R.J. Hnatyshyn Award for Law by the Canadian Bar Association in 1995. That same year Curtis was inducted into the Order of British Columbia at a convocation held in Vancouver's Law Courts on October 13th to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of the UBC Law School. In 2003 he received the Queen's Jubilee Medal and in the fall of that year was appointed an officer of the Order of Canada.

Dean Emeritus George F. Curtis passed away on October 23, 2005 at age 99.

Scope and Content

The fonds consists of biographical material, copies of articles and talks by Curtis, as well as other miscellaneous records created by Curtis in various roles in the Faculty of Law and the University in general.

Related materials can be found in the Faculty of Law fonds.

Acquired in several accessions, most recently in 2014.

Materials relating to the Harry Hawthorne Foundation, included in the [University of British Columbia series](#), may also be found in **the** [Harry Hawthorne Foundation fonds](#).

Series Descriptions

Biographical Series. - 1938-2005.

61.5 cm. of textual records.

Series consists of assorted material pertaining to George Curtis and a list of select papers by Curtis. Also included are autobiographical notes written by George Curtis about his own life (titled “memoranda”), as well as discussions with others and supporting documentation recalling his role in various events and legal cases – these were acquired in the 2014 accession.

Articles, Talks and Notes Series. - 1926-1999.

43.0 cm. of textual records.

Series consists of articles, talks and notes prepared by Curtis, and include prepared notes for speeches, published scholarly articles, and examples of legal documentation used by Curtis while teaching. Series also includes class notes as well as materials created for courses taught or taken by Curtis.

Correspondence Series. – 1934-2004.

22 cm. of textual records.

Series consists of copies of correspondence. Series is organized in keeping with categorized folders arranged by Curtis.

University of British Columbia Faculty of Law Series. - 1945-2005.

18 cm. of textual records.

Series consists of miscellaneous records relating to the UBC Faculty of Law.

University of British Columbia Series. - 1948-1984

9 cm. of textual records.

Series consists of miscellaneous records relating to Curtis participation on the University’s Committee on Honorary Degrees, Faculty Committee on Student Affairs and the UBC Senate. Series also consists of materials related to Curtis’ involvement with the Harry Hawthorn Foundation.

Miscellaneous Series. - 1948-2004

18 cm. of textual records.

Series consists of miscellaneous materials collected by Curtis. Series also consists of certificates given to Curtis.

Photographs and AudioVisual Materials Series. – 1976-2004

121 photographs

1 CD

Series consists of photographs of George Curtis such as portraits and photographs taken at events as well as photographs taken by, or given to, George Curtis on subjects of interest to him. Series also consists of a CD recording of an interview of Dr. George F. Curtis conducted in 1980.

File List

BIOGRAPHICAL SERIES

BOX 1

- 1-1 "George Curtis and the UBC Law School: A Crucial Phase in the History of Canadian Legal System" by Christina Parkin ca. 1984 - 53 pp. typescript - essay prepared by Parkin a former student as part of the 40th anniversary of the Law School
- 1-2 Transcript of interview with George Curtis by F. Murray Fraser (February 20, 1980), 161 pp.
- 1-3 Article - "George Curtis Awarded Order of British Columbia for UBC's 50th" The Gryphon (Spring 1996)
- 1-4 "Selected Papers" by George Curtis (1987)
- 1-4a Certificate Admitting GFC as a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of BC (July 31, 1948)

[\(Biographical series cont'd\)](#)

ARTICLES, TALKS AND NOTES SERIES

- 1-5 GFC foreword to Cases and Materials on Income Tax (December 1957)
- 1-6 "The Old Fields and the New Corn - Some Observations on the Common Law and Its Continued Vitality" (July 1964)
- 1-7 "Negotiated Federalism" - paper given at meeting of Australian Law Teachers, Sydney (August 23, 1965)
- 1-8 "Farewell" - Bench and Bar dinner (November 6, 1986)
- 1-9 "By This Shall It be Known" (May 1991)
- 1-10 "A Memory or Two of Leonard W. Brockington" (May 15, 1991)
- 1-11 "Recollections: The Providential Huts" (Winter 1991)
- 1-12 "In the Beginning: Getting Faculty" (Fall 1995)
- 1-13 "The Lord Denning T-Shirt" (ca. 1999)
- 1-14 "A Celebrated Saskatchewan Trial" (n.d.)
- 1-15 "A War, Two Men and a Book" (n.d.)
- 1-16 [Association of Law Teachers] (n.d.)
- 1-17 "Canal Flats" (n.d.)
- 1-18 "The Gates" (n.d.)

- 1-19 [Inns of Court Stone Installed in Law School] (n.d.)
- 1-20 "Judicial Notice" (n.d.)
- 1-21 "The Lawyer's Part in Law Reform" (n.d.)
- 1-22 "St. Anselm's: A Personal Recollection" (n.d.)

[\(Articles, Talks and Notes Series cont'd\)](#)

CORRESPONDENCE SERIES

- 1-23 Faculty of Law - General (1948-1951)
- 1-24 Correspondence (1976)
- 1-25 Correspondence (1978-1980)
- 1-26 Copies of incoming congratulatory correspondence (1995)

[\(Correspondence Series cont'd\)](#)

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA FACULTY OF LAW SERIES

BOX 2

- 2-1 Viscount Bennett Scholarship Committee - Correspondence, printed material (1945-1951)
- 2-2 Awards (General) - Correspondence, papers (1945-1951)
- 2-3 Outside/Extension, etc. - Correspondence, printed material (1946-1951)
- 2-4 Faculty of Law - Placement - Correspondence (1951)
- 2-5 Law School Enrolment Figures, 1945-1976
- 2-6 Frederick Read Fund - Correspondence (1978-1981)
- 2-6a Printed copy of "The Law Building" - Speech at opening ceremonies by Louis St. Laurent (September 4, 1952)

[\(University of British Columbia Faculty of Law Series cont'd\)](#)

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SERIES

- 2-7 Committee on Honorary Degrees - Correspondence, minutes, reports (1948-1951)

- 2-8 Faculty Committee on Student Affairs - Minutes (1950/51)
- 2-9 Senate - Miscellaneous reports, agenda (1956-1958)
- 2-10 Extension Department - Fisheries programs - Printed and published material

[\(University of British Columbia Series cont'd\)](#)

MISCELLANEOUS SERIES

- 2-11 Canadian Bar Association , Insurance Law Committee - Minutes, reports, correspondence (1948-1951)
- 2-12 BC Legal Project - Correspondence, reports (1978-1980)
- 2-13 Typed transcript of interview with Diana M. Priestly by Maryla Walters (1988), 140 pp.
- 2-14 Address at the service for Lord Denning] by Lord Bingham (June 1999)

[\(Miscellaneous Series cont'd\)](#)

BOX 3

BIOGRAPHICAL SERIES (Continued)

- 3-1 Alberta Press Reference (1938-2002) [3 folders]
- 3-2 Miscellaneous documents (1955-1987) [2 folders]
- 3-3 Miscellaneous documents and articles (1957-2005)

BOX 4

- 4-1 Commonwealth Scholarship (1959-1985) [2 folders]
- 4-2 Biographical material "Occasional pieces (Stories)" (1967-1992)
- 4-3 Various magazine articles and booklets regarding George Curtis and related subjects (1971-2006) [2 folders]
- 4-4 British Columbia Legal History Collection Project – Interview of Dr. George F. Curtis, Volume 2 (1980)
- 4-5 Curriculum Vitae of George Curtis (1984-1996)
- 4-6 Biographical notes (1993-2003)
- 4-7 Biographical notes (1994-2004) [2 folders]
- 4-8 Biographical information on George Curtis (1997-2000)
- 4-9 Order of Canada (2004)

- 4-10 Obituaries for George Curtis (2005)
- 4-11 Curtis memoranda (n.d.) [Note: written on folder "UBC Stories"] [2 folders]
- 4-12 Curtis memoranda (n.d.)
- 4-13 Curtis memoranda (n.d.)
- 4-14 Curtis memoranda 1945+ drafts (n.d.) [2 folders]
- 4-15 Curtis memoranda 1950s drafts (n.d.)
- 4-16 Curtis memoranda 1960s drafts (n.d.)

BOX 5

- 5-1 Curtis memoranda 1970s drafts (n.d.)
- 5-2 Curtis memoranda Canada Again drafts (n.d.)
- 5-3 Curtis memoranda Dalhousie drafts (n.d.) [2 folders]
- 5-4 Curtis memoranda Early Days drafts (n.d.)
- 5-5 Curtis memoranda Legal Education (n.d.)
- 5-6 Curtis memoranda Oxford drafts (n.d.)
- 5-7 Curtis memoranda UBC Law 1945 (n.d.)
- 5-8 Curtis memoranda UBC Law 1945+ (n.d.)
- 5-9 Curtis memoranda UBC recollections (n.d.) [2 folders]
- 5-10 Miscellaneous papers (n.d.)
- 5-11 Newspaper clippings (n.d.)
- 5-12 Paper by Christina Parkin "George Curtis and the UBC Law School: A Crucial Phase in the History of Canadian Legal Education" (n.d.)

ARTICLES, TALKS AND NOTES SERIES continued

- 5-13 Pleadings – originals (1926)
- 5-14 "Vicarious Liability for Tortious Acts" by G.F. Curtis (1936)
- 5-15 Selected papers by Dr. George Curtis (1936-1965) [2 folders]
- 5-16 Syllabus – Equity 1 (1938-1939)
- 5-17 "The Law and the Citizen" by G.F. Curtis for CBC National Broadcast (1939)
- 5-18 "The Theory of the Floating Charge" by G. F. Curtis (1941)
- 5-19 "A Learned and Honourable Profession" a speech by G. F. Curtis to a Harvard Law School Student Club (1951)
- 5-20 Law of the Sea (1952-2005)
- 5-21 "Isolation, Intention, and Income" by G.F. Curtis (1953)
- 5-22 "Some Observations on Professional Standards" by G.F. Curtis (1954)
- 5-23 "Symposium on Legal Education Canada" by G.F. Curtis (1955)
- 5-24 "The Lawyer's Part in Law Reform" by G. F. Curtis (1956)

- 5-25 "Tough Law" by G.F. Curtis (1956)
- 5-26 Constitutional and Fundamental Rights (1959-1977) [2 folders]

BOX 6

- 6-1 "Trends in Legal Education" by G.F. Curtis (1961)
- 6-2 "Methods of Law Reborn" by G.F. Curtis (1965)
- 6-3 "Negotiated Federalism" by G.F. Curtis (1965)
- 6-4 "The Old Fields and the New Corn – Some Observations on the Common Law and Its Continued Vitality" by G.F. Curtis (1965)
- 6-5 Papers and talks (1965-1991)
- 6-6 Transcript – Academie de Droit International de la Haye Colloque (1973) [2 folders]
- 6-7 "Stare Decisis at Common Law in Canada" by G.F. Curtis (1978)
- 6-8 Central Collegiate Institute – 75th Reunion Yearbook and speech notes (1985-1987)
- 6-9 Miscellaneous articles (1991-2005) [3 folders]
- 6-10 Notes on Equity (1988)
- 6-11 "Fifty Years On" by G.F. Curtis (1999)
- 6-12 Miscellaneous cases (2004)
- 6-13 Legal documents – examples with index (n.d.) [3 folders]
- 6-14 Articles by G. F. Curtis (n.d.)
- 6-14 Curtis notes and stories (n.d.)
- 6-15 Law of the Sea Expanded Reading List – Part II (n.d.) [2 folders]

CORRESPONDENCE SERIES continued

- 6-16 Correspondence (1934-1978)
- 6-17 Correspondence - Youth Parliament (1949-1950) [Note: written on folder "Boys Parliament" and "Youth Parliament"]
- 6-18 Correspondence (1957-2001)
- 6-19 Correspondence – Letters received on retirement (1971)

BOX 7

- 7-1 Correspondence (1974-2004) [2 folders]
- 7-2 Correspondence (1980-1981)
- 7-3 Correspondence – Re: MacKenzie Papers (1988)
- 7-4 Correspondence (1988-2004)

- 7-5 Correspondence – Re: George Tamaki (1993-1994)
- 7-6 Correspondence and research re: Fiat justitia ruat coelom (1995)
- 7-7 Correspondence – CBA Awards (1995)
- 7-8 Correspondence – UBC Law – 50th Anniversary (1995)
- 7-9 Correspondence – 90th Birthday (1996)
- 7-10 Correspondence – Order of B.C. (1996)
- 7-11 Correspondence – World Court (1997) [2 folders]

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA FACULTY OF LAW SERIES continued

- 7-12 UBC Law – Correspondence (1945-1949)
- 7-13 UBC Law – Curriculum (1945-1948)
- 7-14 UBC Law – Faculty (1945-1949)
- 7-15 UBC Law - Meeting Minutes (1945-1950)
- 7-16 UBC Law – Miscellaneous (1945-1971)
- 7-17 UBC Law – Students (1945-1949)
- 7-18 “The Opening of the New Law Building” (1976)
- 7-19 Honorary UBC Doctor of Laws – correspondence, etc. (1981-2).
- 7-20 Class reunion booklets (2000-2005)
- 7-21 UBC Law – Articles (n.d.)
- 7-22 UBC Law – Building (n.d.)
- 7-23 UBC Law – Curtis accounts (n.d.)
- 7-24 UBC Law School history (n.d.)
- 7-25 Founding of UBC Law (n.d.)
- 7-26 The Temple Stone (n.d.)

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SERIES continued

- 7-27 Harry Hawthorne Foundation – meeting minutes, bibliographies, and other materials (1971-1984)

MISCELLANEOUS SERIES continued

- 7-28 Library of Parliament booklet on The Farmers’ Creditors Arrangement Act (1982)
- 7-29 Documents – Honorary UBC Doctor of Laws (1982)
- 7-30 Law Society Award (1986)

- 7-31 "The Dort Bible" (1990s-2000s)
- 7-32 Honours & Certificates (1995-2003)
- 7-33 90th Birthday Guest Book (1996)
- 7-34 Member certificate for Dr. George Curtis – Canadian Institute of International Affairs (2003)
- 7-35 98th Birthday scrapbook (2004)

PHOTOGRAPHS AND AUDIOVISUAL SERIES

Photographs

- UBC 74.1/1 [Deans of the Law School] - colour photograph ; 25 x 20 cm. (ca. 1995)
Left to right: G. Curtis, Ken Lysyk, Lynn Smith, Bertie McClean, Peter Burns.
- UBC 74.1/2 [George Curtis and others] – 11 black & white photographs ; 9.1 x 11.5 cm (1976)
- UBC 74.1/3 [George Curtis and others] – black & white photograph ; 16.8 x 11.3 cm (1976)
- UBC 74.1/4 [George F. Curtis Portrait] – colour photograph ; 12.6 x 9.9 cm (1977)
[Note: photo stained]
- UBC 74.1/5 Class of 1959 – 25th reunion – colour photograph ; 19.4 x 24.3 cm (1985)
- UBC 74.1/6 [George Curtis and 1 other] – colour photograph ; 8.8 x 12.9 cm (1986)
- UBC 74.1/7 [George Curtis with 28 others in rows] – colour photograph ; 20.2 x 25.2 cm (1986?) [Note: with accompanying list of names]
- UBC 74.1/8 Law School grounds – colour photograph ; 8.7 x 13.0 cm (1988)
- UBC 74.1/9 [UBC looking north from Crescent Road and East Mall - colour photograph ; 8.8 x 13.1 cm (1990)
- UBC 74.1/10 "Dort Bible" - 5 colour photographs ; varying sizes (1991)
- UBC 74.1 /11 [George Curtis and 4 others at 1991 reunion dinner] – colour photograph ; 12.6 x 17.7 cm (1991)
- UBC 74.1 /12 [Interior of church] - colour photograph ; 13.1 x 8.8 cm (1992) [Note: written on back "Sharing and exchange of knowledge"]
- UBC 74.1/13 [Law Society Award Statute] - 2 colour photographs ; 10.0 cm x 14.9 cm (1996)
- UBC 74.1/14 Class of '52 Reunion dinner - colour photograph ; 8.6 x 13.1 cm (1997)
- UBC 74.1/15 [Photo of George Curtis and two others taken at UBC Rededication of Statue of King George VI] – colour photograph ; 10.1 x 15.1 cm (2002)
- UBC 74.1/16 [Photographs taken at the 1954 50th reunion dinner – 59 colour photographs ; 10.1 x 15.1 cm (2004)

- UBC 74.1/17 Hammond Building in Moose Jaw – colour photograph ; 10.0 x 15.0 cm (n.d.)
- UBC 74.1/18 [George Curtis and 13 others at 50th Anniversary Call to the Bar] – colour photograph ; 12.6 x 17.7 cm (n.d.)
- UBC 74.1/19 [Building with ivy] – colour photograph ; 12.6 x 17.4 cm (n.d.)
- UBC 74.1/20 George Curtis and J. Haig de B. Farris ; black & white photograph ; 11.2 x 16.2 cm (n.d.)
- UBC 74.1/21 [George Curtis and 16 others] ; colour photograph ; 20.1 x 25.1 cm (n.d.)
[Note: written on back “Pennask Group HHF”]
- UBC 74.1/22 [Photograph of flowers and building at UBC] ; colour photograph ; 8.8 x 13.1 cm (n.d.)
- UBC 74.1/23 [Travel photographs] – 5 colour photographs ; 10.1 x 15.0 cm (n.d.)
- UBC 74.1/24 [George Curtis – office at UBC] – 22 colour photographs ; 10.0 x 15.0 cm (n.d.)

Audiovisual

- UBC AT 3840 CD titled “Reminiscences” of an interview of Dr. George F. Curtis by F. Murray Fraser as part of the British Columbia Legal History Project – Aural History Program – from the Faculty of Law at the University of Victoria (1980)