



CLARA THOMAS ARCHIVES

**Inventory of the
Sheldon and Judy Godfrey collection**

Inventory #F0435

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F0435 - Sheldon and Judy Godfrey collection

Fonds/Collection Number: F0435

Title: Sheldon and Judy Godfrey collection

Dates: 1434-2003

Extent: ca. 2,089 volumes of books and periodicals
6.5 metres of textual records
41 maps
22 prints

Biographical Sketch/ Administrative History: Sheldon (1938-) and Judy (1940-) Godfrey were born in Toronto. Sheldon Godfrey received a Master of Arts in Canadian history from the University of Rochester in 1962, a Doctor Juris from the University of Toronto 1964 and was called to the bar in 1966. Judy Godfrey practiced as an occupational therapist since 1961, and she pioneered the diagnosis and treatment of perceptual handicaps in children. In addition to several philanthropic, environmental and civic initiatives that began in the early 1970s, the Godfreys have been leaders in the preservation of Ontario's built heritage, and as prolific researchers and writers on the Jewish experience in pre-Confederation Canada. They have undertaken the restoration of commercial heritage buildings in Ontario, focussing on Toronto since 1975, leading to several national and local awards in the early 1980s. They were founders of the Town of York Historical Society in 1983, have been active in other community-based heritage organizations, and have played a leading role in strengthening government policies for heritage preservation. During the 1990s, the Godfreys, with Sheldon serving as Chairman of The Heritage Canada Foundation, led an effort to redefine the popular understanding of heritage to include intangible subjects as well as historic buildings, taking an inclusive approach that reflected Canada's diverse multicultural population. In addition to drafting new heritage mission statements for Heritage Canada in 1993 and for the City of Toronto in 1999, the Godfreys have written extensively on heritage and, during the 1990s, on the Jewish experience in Canada prior to Confederation. Their research on this topic formed the basis for two books: "Burn This Gossip: The True Story of George Benjamin of Belleville, Canada's First Jewish Member of Parliament, 1856-1863" (Toronto, 1991); and "Search Out the Land: The Jews and the Growth of Equality in British Colonial America, 1740-1867" (Montreal, 1995), which won several awards as a result of its contribution to Jewish and multicultural history. Sheldon Godfrey was made a Member of the Order of Canada in 1998.

Scope and Content: Collection consists of published works including books, journals (articles excerpted from issues as well as runs of serials), Canadian and British government documents, almanacs, gazetteers, directories, newsletters, and newspapers that describe the social, economic, and legal factors influencing Jewish life in Canada (especially for the period prior to Confederation), the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. These works include bibliographies, biographies, commemorative publications, local histories and reproductions of primary documents that pertain to Jewish involvement in the trade of the British Empire, migration and settlement, professions such as medicine and education, and studies of the Jewish experience in Canadian and international communities from the 18th to the 20th centuries. Series S00251, Jewish manuscripts, contains original correspondence, financial and legal documents, and research notes by the Godfreys regarding Jewish families in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes that provides information regarding their involvement in economic, cultural and political affairs, including the fur trade. The series features 11 letters between John A. Macdonald and George Benjamin, who represented North Hastings as a Member of Parliament between 1856 and his retirement in 1863. Series S00252, Biographical research files, contains the research notes, correspondence, and copies of correspondence, abstracts of land titles and other instruments of ownership, property plans, and wills compiled by Sheldon and Judy Godfrey in preparation to write books on Canadian Jewish history and articles for the "Dictionary of Canadian Biography," as well as speeches to various historical and genealogical societies. The series was arranged by the Godfreys into sections using broad geographical areas (Upper

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Canada, Lower Canada, and the Maritimes), and then by the names of individuals and families. Series S00253 consists of unbound issues of 19th century newspapers, which contain advertisements and notices concerning Jewish businesses in various parts of Canada. Donation made in 2006 and 2007 expand the holdings for the books and archival series, and includes a wide range of British and Canadian documents that reflect the breadth of the Godfreys' collecting interests. The donation made in 2007 strengthened the collection's holdings of 18th and 19th-century newspapers from Canada (particularly Quebec, Montreal, and Toronto) and the United Kingdom, and added almanacs from New England.

S00251	Jewish manuscripts
S00252	Biographical research files
S00253	Unbound newspapers

Location of originals: Location of originals identified by donors as marked throughout the finding aid.

Restrictions on Access and Use: No restrictions on access.

Finding Aid: File list available. An item list for S00251, Jewish manuscripts, created by Sheldon and Judy Godfrey is available in the reading room.

URL of Finding Aid: <http://archivesfa.library.yorku.ca/submissions/fonds/ON00370-f0000435.htm>

Accruals: The fonds comprises the following accessions: 2003-060, 2005-051, 2006-057, 2007-062. Further accruals may be expected.

Immediate source of acquisition: Donated by Sheldon and Judy Godfrey in 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007.

Provenance Access Points: Godfrey, Sheldon, 1938-
Godfrey, Judith, 1940-

Date of creation: 2005/01/19

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