

Major John Richardson Collection, 1821-2013, n.d.

RG 600

Brock University Archives

- Creator:** Hugh C. MacDougall
- Extent:** 55 cm of textual records (3 boxes)
- Abstract:** The collection contains books and photocopied writings by Major John Richardson, as well as material about him and his writing compiled by Hugh C. MacDougall. The books include various editions of novels by Richardson, including *Wacousta*, *The Canadian Brothers*, *Écarté*, *Frascati's*, *Hardscrabble*, and *The Monk Knight of St. John*. Other writings by Richardson include *A Canadian Campaign by a British Officer*, *Eight Years in Canada*, *The Guards in Canada* and the poem *Tecumseh*.
- Materials:** Books and photocopied articles
- Repository:** Brock University Archives
- Processed by:** Chantal Cameron
- Last updated:** July 2017

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- Preferred citation:** RG 600, Major John Richardson collection, 1821-2013, n.d., Brock University Archives, Brock University.
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Scope and content:

The collection consists of books and writings by Major John Richardson, as well as material about his life and his writing compiled by Hugh C. MacDougall. The bulk of the collection consists of books. The remaining material consists of photocopied articles. The books include various editions of works by Richardson, including *Wacousta*, *The Canadian Brothers*, *Écarté*, *Frascati's*, *Hardscrabble*, and *The Monk Knight of St. John*. The remaining books are biographical and/or critical and interpretative texts. A few of the books deal with historical events that were relevant to Richardson's writings, or writings that in some way inspired or influenced his work. The photocopied articles consist of short writings by Richardson, critical or interpretive articles, or biographical material.

Biographical sketch:

Major John Richardson was a Canadian author and military officer. He was born in 1796, likely in Niagara-on-the-Lake. His parents were Robert Richardson and Madelaine Askin (daughter of the fur trader and merchant John Askin). Richardson spent some of his youth in Amherstburg on the Detroit River, but joined the military at 15 shortly after war broke out between the United States and Great Britain in 1812. He participated in several military engagements near Lake Erie, fighting alongside Indian forces led by Tecumseh, whom Richardson greatly admired. His experience with the Indians proved useful when he wrote novels portraying them, such as *Wacousta*, *Hardscrabble*, and *Wau-nan-gee*. He fought at the Battle of Moraviantown in 1813, was captured, and imprisoned in Kentucky. He was released the following year and was sent to Europe with the military to fight Napoleon's army.

Eventually he settled in London and then moved to Paris. In 1825 he married Jane Marsh. His experiences in Paris provided material for his first novels *Écarté* (1829) and *Frascati's* (1830). By 1826 he had moved back to London. He concentrated on writing, publishing the poem *Tecumseh* and his personal narrative *A Canadian Campaign*, producing novels, and working in journalism. It was his third novel, *Wacousta; or, The Prophecy* (1832), that proved to be his most successful work. The historical fiction novel is about an English nobleman's quest for revenge after losing his fiancée to Charles de Haldimar, a fellow officer and friend. He disguises himself as an Indian and takes the name Wacousta, assisting Pontiac in leading an armed uprising against English forts in the northwest. In the novel, two of de Haldimar's children are killed, and Wacousta's niece prophesies the end of the de Haldimar line. Richardson wrote a sequel to *Wacousta* in 1840, entitled *The Canadian brothers; or, the prophecy fulfilled*. In 1851, an altered version was published in the United States under the name *Matilda Montgomerie: or, the prophecy fulfilled*.

Richardson returned to active service in the military in 1835, when he joined the British auxiliary legion raised for service in Spain during the First Carlist War. He was promoted major in 1836, and awarded a knighthood in the military Order of St Ferdinand. He was hired as a foreign correspondent by the *Times* in London to cover the rebellions of 1837-38 in Upper and Lower Canada. He became a strong supporter of Lord Durham, the governor-in-chief, which cost him his job with the *Times* and left him with political enemies. His writings during this time include *Eight years in Canada* (1847) and its sequel, *The guards in Canada; or, the point of honor* (1848), in which Richardson chronicles the events under the administrations of Durham, Lord Sydenham, Sir Charles Bagot, and Sir Charles Theophilus Metcalfe. He published several newspapers during this period, all of which eventually failed. Richardson had difficulty securing a government office despite repeated attempts due to his political enemies. He finally secured a post as superintendent of police on the Welland Canal in 1845. He subsequently moved to St. Catharines with his second wife, Maria Caroline Drayson. His post on the Welland Canal proved to be difficult, and he was eventually dismissed when the police force was reduced. His difficulties were compounded by the death of his wife during this period.

In 1849, Richardson decided to relocate to New York. In America he was recognized as an author of some stature, while in Canada his work was largely ignored. His new novels *Hardscrabble, or the fall of Chicago* (1850) and *Wau-nan-gee; or, the massacre at Chicago* were well received, as were republished editions of *Écarté*, *Wacousta*, and *The Canadian brothers* (retitled *Matilda Montgomerie*). However, this success did not improve his financial situation, as his lack of money forced him to sell his works to publishers for reduced lump sums. He died in New York in 1852 of an infection caused by malnutrition.

Source: Dictionary of Canadian Biography

http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/richardson_john_1796_1852_8E.html

Retrieved: 2017/07/19

Organization:

The collection was sorted into two series:

Series I: Books, 1912-2011, n.d.

Series II: Articles, 1821-2013, n.d.

Inventory:

Series I: Books, 1912-2011, n.d.

Note: All books are in Box 1.

Books by John Richardson

The Canadian Brothers, or the Prophecy Fulfilled: a Tale of the Late American War. Introduction by Carl F. Klinck. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976.

The Canadian Brothers, or the Prophecy Fulfilled: a Tale of the Late American War. Edited by Donald Stephens. Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1992.

Écarté; or the Salons of Paris. Introduction by David Beasley. Simcoe, ON: Davus Publishing, 2004.

Eight Years in Canada. New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1967.

Frascati's; or Scenes in Paris, by Major John Richardson and Justin Brenan. Introduction by David Beasley. Simcoe, ON: Davus Publishing, 2004.

Hardscrabble or the Fall of Chicago: a tale on Indian warfare (1856). Kessinger Publishing Rare reprints.

Journal of the movements of the British Legion (1836). Kessinger Publishing Legacy reprints, 2010.

Major John Richardson's A Canadian Campaign, with his recollections of the West Indies, and David Beasley's In Search of Richardson's Spain. Simcoe, ON: Davus Publishing, 2011.

Major John Richardson's Short Stories. Edited and compiled by David Beasley. Penticton, B.C.: Theytus Books, 1985.

Major Richardson's Kensington Gardens in 1830. Edited, and with an introduction by Carl F. Klinck. Toronto: Bibliographical Society of Canada, 1957.

Major Richardson's The Monk Knight of St. John. Introduction by David Beasley. Simcoe, ON: Davus Publishing, 2001.

Richardson's War of 1812, with notes and a life of the author by Alexander Clark Casselman. Toronto: Coles Publishing Company Limited, 1974.

Tecumseh, a poem in four cantos. Edited by Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman. London: Canadian Poetry Press, 1992.

Tecumseh and Richardson: the Story of a Trip to Walpole Island and Port Sarnia. With an introduction and biographical sketch by A.H.U. Colquhoun. Toronto: Ontario Book Company, 1924.

Wacousta, or The Prophecy. Introduction by Carl F. Klinck. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1967.

Wacousta, or The Prophecy; A Tale of the Canadas. Edited by Douglas Cronk. Carleton University Press, 1987.

Wacousta: a critical edition. Edited by John Moss. Ottawa: Tecumseh Press Ltd., 1998.

Wau-Nan-Gee, or the Massacre at Chicago, a Romance of the American Revolution. Memphis, Tennessee: General Books, 2010.

Westbrook, the Outlaw; or the Avenging Wolf. Preface and introduction by David Beasley. Simcoe, ON: Davus Publishing, 2004.

Books about John Richardson

A Bibliographical Study of Major John Richardson by William F.E. Morley, with an introduction by Derek F. Crawley. Toronto: Bibliographical Society of Canada, 1973.

The Borders of Nightmare: the Fiction of John Richardson by Michael Hurley. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992.

The British Auxiliary Legion in the First Carlist War, 1835-1838: a forgotten army, by Edward M. Brett. Portland, OR: Four Courts Press, 2005.

The Canadian Don Quixote: the Life and Works of Major John Richardson, Canada's First Novelist, by David Beasley. Erin, ON: Porcupine's Quill, 1977.

The Canadian Don Quixote: the Life and Works of Major John Richardson, Canada's First Novelist, by David Beasley. Simcoe, ON: Davus Publishing, 2004.

History of the British Legion and War in Spain by Alexander Somerville. Uckfield, England: The Naval & Military Press Ltd., 2011.

John Richardson by William Renwick Riddell. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1923.

John Richardson and His Works by Dennis Duffy. Downsview, ON: ECW Press.

Major John Richardson: a Selection of Reviews and Criticism. Edited and with an introduction by Carl Ballstadt. Montreal: Lawrence M. Lande Foundation, 1972.

The Massacre of Old Fort Mackinac (Michilimackinac): a Tragedy of the American Frontier by Raymond McCoy. Bay City, Michigan: Raymond McCoy, 1956.

Memoranda of the Contest in Spain, January 1840 by Sir De Lacy Evans. London: James Ridgeway, Piccadilly, 1840.

Narrative of the Massacre at Chicago (August 15, 1812) and of preceding events, by Juliette Augusta (Magill) Kinzie. Chicago: Fergus Printing Company, 1914.

Recovering Canada's First Novelist: Proceedings from the John Richardson Conference. Edited by Catherine Sheldrick Ross. Erin, ON: Porcupine's Quill, Inc., 1984.

The Story of Old Fort Dearborn by J. Seymour Currey. Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Co., 1912.

A Tale of Sad Reality: John Richardson's Wacousta, by Dennis Duffy. Toronto: ECW Press, 1993.

Wau-Bun: the "Early Day" in the North-West, by Juliette M. Kinzie. Introduction by Nina Baym. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1992.

Wacousta! A melodrama in three acts with a description of its development in workshops, by James Reaney. Toronto: Press Porcépic Limited, 1979.

A World Under Sentence: John Richardson and the Interior by Dennis Duffy. Toronto: ECW Press, 1996.

Books that influenced Richardson's writing

Hook, Theodore. *Jack Brag*. Toronto: Campbell & Son. [Richardson wrote a sequel, *Jack Brag in Spain*]

St. John Bliss, Isabel. *Edward Young*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1969. [author of *Revenge* and *The Brothers*].

Series II: Photocopied Articles/Short writings, 1821-2013, n.d.

Writings by John Richardson

- 2.1 A Canadian Campaign by a British Officer [John Richardson]. *The New Monthly Magazine and Literary Journal*. 1826-1827.
- 2.2 *The Guards in Canada; or the Point of Honor: being a sequel to Major Richardson's Eight Years in Canada*. Montreal: H.H. Cunningham, 1848.
- 2.3 Hardscrabble: a tale of Chicago. *Sartain's Union Magazine of Literature and Art*, Vol. VI, January-June 1850.

- 2.4 *Miller's Prophecy Fulfilled.*
- 2.5 *The Miser Outwitted*, 1841.
- 2.6 *Personal Memoirs of Major Richardson, as connected with the singular oppression of that Officer while in Spain by Lieutenant General Sir De Lacy Evans.* Toronto: R. Stanton, 1838.
- 2.7 A Trip to Walpole Island and Port Sarnia. *The Literary Garland, and British North American Magazine*, Vol. VII, no. 1 (Jan. 1849).
- 2.8 Bibliographies. Contains bibliographies of writings by and about Major Richardson. Also includes summaries of some of Richardson's novels.

Writings about John Richardson and his work

Criticism and Interpretation

- 2.9 *The Canadian Brothers*, 1851, 1991, n.d. Contains an article on the Beauchamp-Sharp Tragedy (the basis for *The Canadian Brothers* plot); a summary of the novel and characters by chapter; an article entitled *Beyond the Marriage Metaphor: Nation, Violence, and the Fallen Woman in The Canadian Brothers* by Sunnie Rothenburger; an article entitled *John Richardson's Kentucky Tragedies* (1991); and a photocopied clipping from *Sartain's Union Magazine of Literature and Art* referring to "Matilda Montgomerie", the sequel to *Wacousta* (1851).
- 2.10 *Écarté, or the Salons of Paris*, 1851. Contains copies of clippings from the New York Tribune and Brooklyn Eagle announcing the publication of the novel.
- 2.11 *The Monk Knight of St. John*, 1850, 1991-2002, n.d. Contains photocopied book reviews from newspapers (1850); a public notice from the publisher stating they will not print any more copies of the book; an article entitled *Double Entendre: Rebel Angels & Beautiful Losers in John Richardson's "The Monk Knight of St. John"* by Michael Hurley; and reviews of David Beasley's edition of the novel.
- 2.12 *Tecumseh*, 2005. Contains an article entitled *A Na(t)ive Paradise: John Richardson's Tecumseh* by Wanda Campbell.
- 2.13 *Wacousta*, 1851, 1978-2011, n.d. Contains a book review from *The International Monthly Magazine of Literature, Science and Art*, 1851; *The Dark Covert of the Mind: Wacousta* by Ken McLean; *Beyond the Pale: Gender, Savagery, and the Colonial Project in Richardson's Wacousta* by Manina Jones; *John Richardson's Byronic Hero in the Land of Cain* by Michael Hurley; *The Wacousta Syndrome* by Andy Lamey; book review of *Wacousta*, edited by Douglas Cronk; *Madness in English Canadian Fiction* by Susanne

Pauly; *The New World Gaze: Disguising the Eye of Power in John Richardson's Wacousta* by S. Leigh Matthews; *Geometries of Nation-Building: Triangulating Female Homosociality in Richardson's Wacousta* by L. Chris Fox; "That 'ere Ingian's one of us!" *Orality and Literacy in Wacousta* by Edward Parkinson; and an outline of the novel and characters.

- 2.14 Wau-Nan-Gee, or the Massacre at Chicago, 1852, n.d. Contains a photocopy of the book's title page, and a brief clipping about the book from the New York Times, June 15, 1852.
- 2.15 Westbrook, the Outlaw, 2004, n.d. Contains biographical information on Andrew Westbrook, who was used as the basis for the character in the novel.
- 3.1 General criticism/interpretation, 1920-2005. Contains a book chapter entitled *John Richardson and the Historical Romance*; several articles, including *Myth and Prejudice in Kirby, Richardson and Parker* by L.R. Early; *Richardson's Indians* by Leslie Monkman; *Early Canadian Literature in English: a Survey and a Challenge* by Mary Jane Edwards; *John Richardson's Dream World* by Dennis Duffy; a thesis entitled *Cautious Constructions: ideological anxiety in the new worlds of John Richardson and James Fenimore Cooper* by Nicholas J. Mount; a thesis entitled *The Production of White Space: adventure as spatial practice in Cooper, Richardson, and Boldrewood* by Douglas Ivison; a paper presented at the Cooper Panel of the 2002 Conference of the American Literature Association by Edward Watts entitled *Copper, Richardson, and the Frontiers of Nationalism*; and an article by Oana Godeanu entitled *Canadian Identity before the Confederation: the case of Susanna Moodie, T.C. Haliburton and John Richardson*.

Biographical information

- 3.2 Biographies, 1837-2013, n.d. Contains excerpts from *The British Legion* referring to Major Richardson (1837); a news clipping from *The Brooklyn Eagle* re: a duel that Richardson was involved in (1842); a news clipping about a "hostile meeting" between Major Richardson and Stewart Derbishire (1843); a report from the Journals of the Legislative Assembly re: the petition of Major John Richardson, late Superintendent of Police on the Welland Canal, complaining of the sudden dismissal of himself and the Force under his command (1846); a news clipping about a talk Richardson gave to the New York Historical Society re: the events of the War of 1812 (1851); news clippings re: Major Richardson's life and works (1906); *A Colonial Romantic: Major John Richardson, Soldier and Novelist* by Desmond Pacey; *A Soldier's Progress: some military records pertaining to John Richardson, a Pioneer Canadian Poet and Novelist* by William F.E. Morley; *The Colonial Major: Richardson and Wacousta* by T.D. Maclulich; *The Pen and the Sword* by Peter Unwin; a brief biography of John Richardson from the Dictionary of Canadian Biography; *In Search of Richardson's Spain* by David Beasley; an article about

the Irish on the Welland Canal, with mention of Richardson's work as Superintendent of Police on the Canal; a picture of Major John Richardson; and an article written by Hugh MacDougall entitled *The Novels of John Richardson, "The Canadian Cooper"*.

- 3.3 Death notices, 1845, 1852. Contains a death notice for Maria Caroline Richardson, wife of Major Richardson, and death notices for Major Richardson from various newspapers.

Historical Context

- 3.4 Excerpts from *History of the British Legion and War in Spain* by Alexander Somerville, 1839. Major Richardson's name is highlighted on some pages.
- 3.5 Encyclopedia articles, 2010-2011. Contains articles on events and people that were relevant to Richardson's life and writings, including the Battle of Bloody Run, the Beauchamp-Sharp tragedy, First Carlist War, Pontiac's War, siege of Fort Detroit, and Theodore Hook (author of *Jack Brag*).
- 3.6 Personal narratives, book chapters and articles, 1821-1985. Contains excerpts from *Narrative Journal of Travels through the Northwestern Regions of the United States...* by Henry R. Schoolcraft; *Family records and events* by Livingstone Rutherford; *The History of the Second Regiment, Queen's Royal Regiment* by Colonel John Davis; *Chicago and the Old Northwest, 1673-1835: a study of the evolution of the Northwestern Frontier, together with a history of Fort Dearborn*; *Boys' Book of Indian Warriors and Heroic Indian Women* by Edwin L. Sabin; John Kinzie's narrative of the Fort Dearborn Massacre; an article entitled *The Identity of Gladwin's Informant* by Helen Humphrey; *British aid in the Carlist War: 1835-1840*; and *Outcast no longer, B.W.A. Sleigh's "the Outcast Prophet"* by Eva Seidner.

Other related material

- 3.7 Edward Young's *Revenge* and *The Brothers*, 1777-1914. Contains a booklet of Young's play *The Brothers* [possibly the basis for Richardson's *The Canadian Brothers*]; photocopies of Edward Young's plays *Revenge* and *The Brothers*, as well as excerpts from *The Life and Letters of Edward Young* by Henry C. Shelley.
- 3.8 George Thompson, 1854, 1993-2008. Contains articles about George Thompson (a contemporary and friend of John Richardson), including an excerpt from his autobiography describing the conditions that Richardson lived in towards the end of his life.
- 3.9 John Askin, 1936, n.d. Contains excerpts from the John Askin papers, and an article entitled *John Askin: Early Detroit Merchant* by Louise Rau.

- 3.10 Othello, 1994-1999. Contains articles about Othello.
 - 3.11 Wacousta—theatre production, 1833-1834. Contains photocopied news clippings about the production of *Wacousta*.
 - 3.12 Book reviews, 1977-2006. Contains reviews of books written about Major John Richardson.
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Related material:

RG 274, Petition of Major John Richardson, late superintendent of police on the Welland Canal, 1846.

Beasley, David R. *The Canadian Don Quixote : the life and works of Major John Richardson, Canada's first novelist*. Simcoe, Ont.: Davus Pub., 2004. **SPCL PS 8435 I3 Z67 2004**

Morley, William F.E. *A bibliographical study of Major John Richardson*. Toronto: Bibliographical Society of Canada, 1973. **SPCL Z 8744 04 M67 1973**

Richardson, Major (John). *Correspondence, (submitted to Parliament), between Major Richardson, late superintendent of police on the Welland Canal and the Honorable Dominick Daly, Provincial Secretary : also between Major Richardson and Lieutenant Colonel Elliot, lately commanding Niagara frontier; Major MacPherson, Royal Canadian Rifles; Hamilton H. Killaly, Esq., S. Power, Esq. chief engineer, Welland Canal, &c. &c. &c.* Montreal: Donoghue & Mantz, 1846. **SPCL FC 3143.3 R52 A4 1846**