

P186-Highway Book Shop Fonds

P186- Highway Book Shop Fonds

**13.2 metres of textual and iconographic records;
n.d; 1927-2010 (Predominant dates: 1971-2003)**

Administrative history: From 1957 to 2011 the Highway Book Shop (HBS) became a landmark building on Highway 11 in the Tri-Town area of northern Ontario. An administrative history of HBS would not be complete without some mention of its founder Dr. Douglas Charles Pollard and his first wife Jean Bogart and Lois, his second wife. From its inception Doug was the driving force behind the operation. Following Jean's death in 1979 Doug married Lois Williams, who also became integral to the longevity of the store. In 1980 Doug Pollard received an honorary degree from Laurentian University through its affiliate Nipissing University College. This was actually the first honorary Doctor of Letters that Nipissing bestowed. Doug Pollard was committed to northern Ontario as a volunteer, helping to lead architectural conservation bodies, as well as business and tourism organizations. He also served the literary community much more broadly as a member of the Ontario Arts Council and as a member of the committee for the Stephen Leacock award for humour. Doug was twice nominated for the Order of Canada and finally received the honour in 2008, but unfortunately passed away before the investiture ceremony on 25 November 2009. Lois accepted the award on 7 April 2010, on the behalf of her late husband.

The enterprise started off as a small printing shop which increased and diversified into book sales as well. In 1959 the Pollard's expanded the shop with a two-storey addition to provide more space and gave room for the prominent red lettering cut "Books" that adorned the building. As business continued to grow in the 1960s space became an issue for the HBS. An expansion was necessary in 1961, this time a single-storey extension was added on the north side of the building. Additions continued again in 1963 with the construction of a new garage. In 1966 a major expansion occurred, which added 2,500 square feet for shelving and office space. At first printing was small, limited to the reprinting of certain historical pamphlets and small books in the late 1960s but from 1970 onward the HBS began accepting new manuscripts for publication.. Many subjects were chosen for publishing, but the preservation of local northern Ontario history was the driving force behind the HBS. In 1973 a new room was added to the building specifically with publishing in mind and by 1976 a separate building containing the printing offices, dark-room facilities, and all the printing equipment was in operation. During this time the HBS received considerable grants from the Ontario Arts Council and the Canada Council which helped bring the publishing department into full swing. During the 1980s and 1990s, HBS conducted many sales booths at various functions and in several locations throughout Ontario. The store continued adding office and shelf space intermittently throughout the 1980s and 1990s. With the rise of internet commerce, the HBS started selling publications online, allowing them to reach customers on a global scale. In 2003, three tractor trailers full of books were moved to the rear of the building,

adding considerable storage space. The Highway Book Shop played a significant role in the diffusion and promotion of the works of northern Ontario authors, publishing books in English, French, and syllabic Cree. In total the Highway Book Shop published 462 works (books and pamphlets) from the early 1970s until 2010. Some of the more notable works were Barnes' book, *Killer in the Bush*, John Benson's *Birds Don't Fly at Night* and the publication of historian Peter Fancy's eight volume set, *Temiskaming Treasure Trails*. After 54 years of operation, the HBS closed its doors in May 2011.

For more information please consult Lois Pollard's, *Highway Book Shop: Northern Ontario's Unexpected Treasure* (2011) which is available in the Regional Collection at the Archives.

Scope and Content: The Highway Book Shop fonds attests to the activities of the enterprise in promoting and publishing works by northern Ontario authors. Moreover, the fonds also demonstrates the shop's commitment to the preservation and documentation of local northern Ontario history through publishing. It consists of the HBS's administrative records from the publication side of the enterprise. These include financial records which consist of author agreements, invoices, statement of royalties, and annual reports. These documents give insight into the financial side of the publishing end of the HBS. The fonds also includes correspondence from Doug Pollard and other HBS editorial staff to authors working with the book shop or other external individuals and groups. It also contains Doug Pollard's personal records which include letters, notes, and keepsakes. The fonds also contains the HBS published works and also includes various manuscripts, publication specifications, and notes from authors that had published with the HBS over the course of its history. Manuscripts that were rejected but were never returned can also be found in this fonds. Furthermore, the fonds also contains many original photographs and sketches that were used in the publication process. Most notably are photographs (original and reproductions) of Haileybury and Cobalt in the late 19th and early 20th century. Examining the drafts, revisions, and proofs provides into how the HBS produced various works from the early 1970s until 2010. The fonds are of special interest to researchers of publishing history, business history, and northern Ontario history.

NOTE: Immediate source of acquisition: Donated by Lois Pollard in April 2010.

Restrictions on access: Restrictions on access applies to some records.

Terms governing use and reproduction/publication: Copyright Act regulations apply to these records.

Accruals: A first accrual was received in July 2010 and a second in June 2011. No further accruals are expected.

Finding Aids: Please see the summary of the fonds available in the Archives.