

Marion C. Keffer Fonds

TITLE: Marion C. Keffer fonds

DATES: 1784-1988, predominant 1854-1984

EXTENT: 1.5 m textual records
79 photographs : 6 tintypes, 3 panoramas, most in card photograph format or snapshots

BIO & ADMIN HIST: Marion Christena Keffer was born on 8 March 1911 at Irvine, Alberta to William Michael Keffer and Lulu Shunk. The Keffers had moved to Alberta from Vaughan Township, Ontario ca. 1901. The Keffer family is counted among the first settlers in Vaughan Township, with brothers, Jacob and Michael arriving with their families from Brother's Valley Township, Somerset County Pennsylvania in 1806. Jacob settled in Lot 12, Concession 3 and his sibling acquired Lots 9 and 10, Concession 3. The Keffers were nothing if not prodigious, for by 1906, in the 1000 acre block constituting the original Keffer lands, there were 125 Keffers. By 1970, nine generations of the Keffer family had lived in Vaughan. The Shunks (Schunck in German) also originated from Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Jacob Shunk purchased 200 acres located on Lot 8, Concession 4 from original grantee, Captain Richard Lippincott (a United Empire Loyalist) in 1804. Like the original Vaughan Township Keffers, the Shunks were Lutheran in terms of religious denomination. By the mid-1800's, the progeny of the above owned thousands of acres of property in Vaughan Township. In 1863, William Shunk married Mary McDougal of Scarborough Township (parents: William McDougal and Mary Loynachan), thus introducing a Scottish element to the otherwise Germanic Keffer-Shunk lineage. Marion Keffer came to find the history of her ancestors and the related study and practice of genealogy of great interest. Therefore, not surprisingly, she was one of the founding members (member no. 15) of the Ontario Genealogical Society. Her research, while focusing on her ancestors, came to encompass Vaughan township families as a whole. She ranged far and wide in these pursuits and was no stranger to the National Archives of Canada (then Public Archives of Canada), the Archives of Ontario (then Public Archives of Ontario), the Historical and

Genealogical Society of Somerset County or any of a host of other research institutes. Nor were Ms Keffer's forays into the realm of documentary evidence limited to the confines of the North American Continent - - a fact to which numerous repositories in Great Britain can attest. The evidence also suggests that Ms Keffer was instructor in an introductory course sponsored by the OGS in genealogical methodology.

SCOPE & CONTENT:

The fonds consists of two sous-fonds: the Keffer Family papers, 1784-1901 (bulk 1854-1901) and the Marion C. Keffer papers, 1911-1988. While the Keffer family papers could be considered an independent fonds d'archives, the link of familial custodianship, particularly in light of Marion Keffer's life-long quest to enhance the existing body of knowledge concerning her ancestors and her demonstrated dedication to the preservation of any evidence bearing upon the former, provide sufficient justification within the context of the principle of provenance, to maintain the material as a single fonds.

The fonds reflects Ms Keffer's activities and principal areas of interest. It also documents the role of the Keffer and Shunk families as well as a number of others on a somewhat smaller scale, in the development of Vaughan Township. In this regard, 19th century agricultural enterprises (size of farms, equipment, crops grown, market forces, local co-operatives) and the pioneer experience, in general, are particularly well-represented.

The following record types may be found in this fonds: photo prints, broadsides, minute books, leaflets, registers, handbills, autograph books, correspondence, transcriptions of original documents in various repositories (petitions, deeds, grants, etc.), research notes and compilations.

TITLE SOURCE:

Title based on contents of fonds.

ACQ. SOURCE:

Gift of Marion Keffer estate executor Valerie C. Cole, 1992. Additional material gift of Jean Bryson, 1998.

ARRANGEMENT:

The fonds was opened for research in July 1992. Upon receipt by the City of Vaughan Archives, the fonds was found to be in good order. Accordingly, with minor exceptions, constituent series were identified and the existing file arrangement merely streamlined to enhance accessibility. Thus, original order and all significant internal relationships between

records/papers and the evidence provided by these connections have been preserved.

RESTRICTIONS: This fonds is in its entirety free of access restrictions.
COPYRIGHT: Copyright lies with the City of Vaughan Archives. Credit must be accorded the latter in the event of any portion of this fonds being utilized in a written or audio-visual format. The following citation is acceptable: City of Vaughan Archives. Marion C. Keffer Fonds, M992.21, sous-fonds and series name and number.

ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives

TITLE: **Sous-fonds A: Keffer-Shunk Families Papers**
DATES: 1784-1901, predominant 1854-1901
EXTENT: 12 cm of textual records
BIO & ADMIN HIST: Among the first of Vaughan's pioneer families arriving at the turn of the 19th century were the Shunks and the Keffers. Both hailed from Somerset County, Pennsylvania and evidence suggests that emigration was prompted by pressure exerted by the victors of the American Revolutionary War who tended to make life somewhat unpleasant for those who had exhibited pro-British tendencies during the conflict. Somerset County was decidedly Loyalist during the Revolutionary War and consequently many of its residents suffered various levels of persecution in its aftermath. Both families, as did most of Vaughan's early settlers, engaged in agriculture. Members of the Shunk and Keffer clans were also principals in Sherwood Grange (No. 205), an early agricultural co-operative movement. Shunk and Keffer descendants pursued agriculture in Vaughan well into the 1960's. To date, these families continue to be represented in the area as residents of the City of Vaughan.

SCOPE & CONTENT: The papers generated by the Shunks and Keffers (Sous fonds A and Sous-fonds B) consist of small multi-type series.

TITLE SOURCE: Title based on content of sous-fonds.
ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
LOCATION: Box 1
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives

TITLE: **Series I: Keffer-Shunk family papers**
DATES: 1784-1901, predominant 1884-1901
EXTENT: 12 cm of textual records

SCOPE & CONTENT: Series consists of all known surviving documentary evidence of the early Shunk and Keffer clans of Vaughan Township. The series illustrates the role of the Keffers and Shunks in the Sherwood Grange (No. 205), as well as depicting the social and economic role of this type of organization in mid-19th century Vaughan, through minute books of the former. Other pertinent records elucidating upon the pioneer experience in Vaughan include a printed copy of York County minutes, by-laws, reports, etc., for 1871 and William Shunk's copy book (arithmetic), etc. Also interesting for its age, artifactual value and as an example of fraktur design (illuminations made by the Pennsylvania "Dutch" in which flowers, birds and other motifs decorate a text) is a Lutheran prayer book printed in 1784 (inscribed 1795) originating with the Keffer family.

TITLE SOURCE: Title based on contents of series.
ARRANGEMENT: Arrangement is alphabetical by record type or subject.
ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
LOCATION: Box 1
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives

TITLE: **Sous-fonds B: Marion C. Keffer Papers**
DATE: 1911-1988
EXTENT: 1.32 m of textual records and other material
SCOPE & CONTENT: Sous-fonds B consists of records which document Ms Keffer's early life with a particular emphasis upon education and which reflect her principal interests and activities: the Keffer & Shunk families, genealogy and family history.

TITLE SOURCE: Title based on content of sub-series.
ARRANGEMENT: This sous-fonds is composed of four series.
ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
LOCATION: Boxes 2-12
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives

TITLE: **Series I: Marion C. Keffer Personal Papers**
DATES: 1911-1947
EXTENT: 7 cm of textual records and other material
SCOPE & CONTENT: Series consists of records which provide a sketch of Marion Keffer's personal life. It is far from comprehensive, leaving many questions unanswered. However, it does provide some insight. Particularly well-documented is Ms Keffer's educational background. Also to be found are an autograph book,

a photographic portrait, correspondence and newspaper clippings.

TITLE SOURCE: Title based on content of series.
ARRANGEMENT: Files belonging to this series are arranged alphabetically by record type or subject.

ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
LOCATION: Box 2
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives

TITLE: **Series II: Keffer Family Reunion**
DATES: 1938-1964
EXTENT: 5 cm of textual records and other material
SCOPE & CONTENT: Series consists of a small number of records documenting the Keffer Family Reunion, an event which first began in 1938 and was held, subsequently, every 3 to 4 years. Family members from every corner of the North American continent congregated to these gatherings. Attendance figures in the 300 range were not uncommon. The Keffer Family Reunions were highly organized affairs with reunion, genealogical and other committees tasked with the administration of its various aspects. Records to be found in this series include address books, correspondence, donation receipts, family portraits (photo prints), leaflets, mailing lists, minute books, registration forms, reports, itineraries and so forth.

TITLE SOURCE: Title based on contents of series.
ARRANGEMENT: The files belonging to this series are arranged alphabetical by type of record, function or subject.

ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
LOCATION: Box 2
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives

TITLE: **Series III: Genealogy/Family History**
DATES: 1953-1988
EXTENT: 1 m of textual records and other material
SCOPE & CONTENT: Series consists of material which documents Marion Keffer's pursuit of genealogy and family history. It is the largest series in the Marion C. Keffer fonds.

TITLE SOURCE: Title based on contents of series.
ARRANGEMENT: This series is divided into 3 subseries.
ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
LOCATION: Boxes 3-12
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives

TITLE: **Subseries A: Genealogical Conferences/Ontario**

DATES: Genealogical Society (OGS) Material
1971-1979
EXTENT: 6 cm of textual records
SCOPE & CONTENT: Subseries consists of notes, circulars, publications, correspondence, pamphlets and post cards relating to the 1st Australasian Congress on Genealogy and Heraldry held in Melbourne, Australia in 1977, and the XIII International Congress of Genealogy and heraldic Sciences, held in London, England in 1976. Also includes genealogical resource material published by various OGS branches: searching in the National Archives of Canada, directories of family names for certain cities, etc.

TITLE SOURCE: Title based on contents of subseries.
ARRANGEMENT: Files from series arranged alphabetically by subject.
ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
LOCATION: Box 3
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives

TITLE: **Subseries B: Keffer-Shunk-McDougal-Loynachan Research Files**

DATES: 1970-1981
EXTENT: 18 cm of textual records and other material
SCOPE & CONTENT: Subseries consists of research notes, correspondence, genealogical charts, maps, transcriptions of original documents such as surrogate and probate court records, petitions, land grants, etc. relating to Marion Keffer's principal line of descent. It also includes essays about the history of the subject families in addition to a number of more distant familial connections. Also noteworthy is the presence of a representation of the Keffer family coat of arms. Principal repositories consulted were the Archives of Ontario, the National Archives of Canada and the Historical and Genealogical Society of Somerset County Research Centre in Pennsylvania.

TITLE SOURCE: Title based on contents of subseries.
ARRANGEMENT: Files from subseries are arranged alphabetically by family name.
ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
LOCATION: Boxes 3-4
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives

TITLE: **Subseries C: Vaughan Families Research and General Genealogical Reference Files**

DATES: 1953-1988

EXTENT: 96 cm of textual records
SCOPE & CONTENT: Subseries consists of the largest aggregate of material in the Marion Keffer fonds and is composed of research files relating to Vaughan families, subject files pertaining to genealogy and family history and, occasionally, other history-oriented topical subjects. Record types represented in the files include: notes, essays, newspaper clippings, correspondence, pamphlets, circulars, transcriptions and copies of original documents such as petitions, cemetery records, census rolls, deeds, etc.
TITLE SOURCE: Title based on contents of subseries.
ARRANGEMENT: Files from subseries arranged alphabetically by surname or topical subject.
ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
LOCATION: Boxes 5-11
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives

TITLE: **Series IV : Ephemera**
DATES: 1933-1953
EXTENT: 6 cm of textual and other material
SCOPE & CONTENT: Series consists of various sundry items that came into the possession of Mrs Keffer. Of particular interest are original ribbons from the Keffer family reunion 1946 and 1964 (Genealogical Committee ribbon and general Reunion ribbon) and a printer's plate of the Keffer family coat of arms.
TITLE SOURCE: Title based on contents of series.
ACCESSION NUMBER: M992.21
LOCATION: Box 12
REPOSITORY: City of Vaughan Archives