



White and Curren families papers and photographs

<https://archives.whyte.org/en/permalink/descriptions830>

Part Of: Peter and Catharine Whyte fonds

Description Level: 2 / Sous-fonds

Fonds Number: M36 / V683 / S37

Series: III. White and Curren families

Sous-Fonds: V683

Accession Number: 3069

Reference Code: M36 / S37 / V683 / III

Date Range: 1869 - 1958

Physical Description: ca. 2 m of textual records (and 36 oversize items). -- ca.3100 photographs (ca.1800 negatives, ca.1300 prints, 5 albums of ca.400 prints).

History /

Biographical:

The White and Curren families of Banff, Alberta were the maternal and fraternal relatives of Peter Whyte. Dave McIntosh White, 1864- 1940, Peter Whyte's father, came to the Canadian Rockies in 1885 with the Canadian Pacific Railway. In 1894 he opened a general merchandise business, the Park Store, in Banff. The success of this business resulted in expansions in 1908-1909 and in 1912-1913. For a short time, Whyte operated a similar business in Bankhead. White was a long-time friend of the Stoney Nakoda, Annie (Curren) White, 1879-1955, emigrated to Canada from Scotland with her father, John Donaldson Curren, and a brother in 1886. They settled in Anthracite, east of Banff, where J. D. Curren operated a small coal mining business. Annie Curren married Dave White in 1901. Their children, all born in Banff, were Clifford, 1902-1964, Lila, 1903-1961, Peter, 1905-1966, and Dave Jr. (Jackie), 1908-1961. Clifford and Jack worked for the family business, Dave White and Sons.

Scope & Content:

Series consists of the following series: A. Dave White Sr. papers, 1887- 1942; B. Annie White papers, 1875-1955; C. Dave (Jack) White papers, 1911- 1955; D. Clifford White notebook, ca.1915; E. John D. Curren papers, 1886- 1940; F. White-Curren family photographs, 1885-1953. Papers consist of personal, legal and financial papers; and records of Dave White, General Merchant, Dave White and Sons and White and Bayne Store. Pertains to Stoney Nakoda First Nations, Banff Indian Days, Highland gatherings, buildings, churches, skiing, coal and coal mines and Lake Minnewanka. Photographs consist largely of negatives and prints produced by various members of the White family, including Dave, Annie, Clifford and Jack White, pertaining to the White family members, travels, activities; the Banff-Lake Louise area; Banff events, places and people; winter sports; social events and friends, 1910- 1953, and glass negatives by J. D. Curren pertaining to Curren and White families and activities, Mount Assiniboine pack trip and Bow Valley scenes; ca.1885-1905. Also includes collected prints of family and friends, family businesses and buildings and winter sports, and albums pertaining to White and Curren families, 1885-1919 and Clifford White photographs, 1917-1921.

Subject Access:	<p>Banff V</p> <p>Banff - Events V</p> <p>Banff National Park</p> <p>CURREN FAMILY</p> <p>Stoney Nakoda First Nations</p> <p>White, Annie M</p> <p>White, Clifford Sr.</p> <p>WHITE, DAVE SR.</p> <p>White, Jack (Dave White Jr.)</p> <p>WHITE FAMILY</p>
Access Restrictions:	Access to photographs requires permission in advance from the Head Archivist.
Finding Aid:	<p>Series-level outline available. Electronic database available.</p> <p>Photographs are described at the sub-series level only (printed inventory provides more detail than the computer inventory).</p>
Related Material:	Consitutes Sous-fonds III of the Peter and Catharine Whyte fonds.
Title Source:	Title based on contents of file
Content Details:	Forms part of Sous-fonds III of the Peter and Catharine Whyte fonds.

Photographs in this section begin with the early family portraits of David McIntosh White taken in New Brunswick and those of Annie Curren White taken in Scotland. The earliest negatives attributable to David and Annie White date ca.1908, or approximately the time they moved to their new home between Lynx Street and Bow Avenue. Most of the negatives from the first two decades of family photography are sized 8.3 x 11 cms., with the exception of what appears to be occasional experimentation with other formats, such as vest pocket and 4 x 5 Graflex, and images generated by other family members, such as J.D. Curren and the White children. This body of photography was undoubtedly initiated through the acquisition of a roll film camera on or about 1908.

Judging from subject arrangement and other evidence, including shadow images of the photographer, most White family photography is attributable to Annie Curren White. There are several photographs from the collection showing her holding a camera or photographing family members, while no such photographs exist of Dave White. There can be little doubt, however, that Dave White participated in the photographic process, particularly in the period from 1910 to 1917, when there are numerous photographs of Annie and the children.

On family motor trips, which began around 1917 and lasted until ca.1923, Dave and Annie's son Clifford appears to have shared photographic responsibilities. From this period on, Clifford and Annie, either one or the other, are the only family members who do not appear in group photographs. From this it is assumed that Dave White played a very minor roll as family photographer after 1918.

Photographs attributable to Peter Whyte begin to appear around 1920, but most of his photography appears to be more personal than of a family record variety. None of the photographs in the early part of the collection have been attributed to Lila or Jack (Dave Jr.) White.

After 1923, the point when the White children were grown and beginning

to move away from home, Annie White becomes the primary family photographer. In the late 1920s she appears to have experimented with a Graflex camera for a time, but by 1930 had returned to a smaller format roll film camera. She continued to take numerous family photographs, usually group poses of her children and grandchildren, after Dave White's death in 1940 until shortly before her own passing in 1955.

Also included in this section of the collection are a number of personal photographs generated by Clifford and Jackie (Dave Jr.) White. Around 1918, Clifford appears to have acquired his own camera which produced a 3 x 5 inch negative, and from that period until ca. 1923, he produced many images of activities shared with friends and brothers, including a number of photographs of early ski tours and ski jumping in the Banff area. One album bears Clifford's initials on nearly all photographs, and these images match with many of the 3 x 5 inch negatives found elsewhere in the collection. Photographs attributed to Jackie (Dave Jr.) date from the late 1940s and early 1950s and may have entered the collection prior to the death of Annie White.

Much of the dating of this collection from 1908 to 1920 was done by estimating the ages of various White children. Beyond that, the usual techniques were utilized, i.e. identification and dates noted on prints by family members, the depiction of specific historical events, changes in physical and cultural features, model dating of automobiles, reading of license plates, etc.

Processing Status: Processed

This material is presented as originally created; it may contain outdated cultural descriptions and potentially offensive content. [Read more.](#)