

ROBERT F. NIXON

PAPERS

ADDITIONS 1991

COLL. 5087

Arranged and described

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Robert Fletcher Nixon is a well known figure in Ontario political circles. He followed his father, former Ontario Premier Harry Nixon, into politics and together father and son represented the riding of Brant (now Brant - Haldimand) for over seventy years.

Born 17 July 1928, Mr. Nixon was raised on the family farm in St. George, Ontario, and educated in St. George and Brantford high schools. He received a B.Sc. (Hons.) in Chemistry and Biology from McMaster University, and in 1966 was awarded an Honourary LL.D. from the same University. From McMaster he went on to further studies at the Ontario College of Education before starting a teaching career at Sault Ste. Marie. He returned south to teach in Toronto and later at all three Collegiates in Brantford. During this period he was District President of the District Secondary School Teacher's Federation and for five years was Superintendent of the St. George United Church Sunday School.

Following his father's death in 1961, Robert Nixon resigned his teaching position to contest successfully the by-election of Jan. 18, 1962. That same year he became President of the Ontario Liberal Party and was its education critic in the Legislature. At the same time, he was running the family farm and a herd of 30 Holsteins.

Mr. Nixon was re-elected to the Ontario Legislature in 1963, 1967, 1971, 1975, 1977, 1981, 1985, 1987, and 1990. He was Leader of the Ontario Liberal Party, Opposition House Leader and Treasury, Revenue, and Management Board Critic from 1967 to 1976. His Senior Cabinet Posts include Treasurer of Ontario and Minister of Economics, Minister of Financial Institutions, Minister of Revenue, Acting Chairman of Management Board and Government House Leader 1985 - 1987. He was Deputy Premier, as well as for a second term, Treasurer and Minister of Economics between 1987 and 1990. With the fall of the Liberal Government in the 1990 election, and with the resignation of Mr. David Peterson as Party Leader, Mr. Nixon assumed the role of Interim House Leader until a successor to Mr. Peterson could be named. In 1991 Mr. Nixon, upon accepting the appointment of Agent General for the Province of Ontario in London, England, resigned his seat in the Ontario Legislature.

Mrs. Nixon, the former Dorothy Loveless has been active in Church and Women's Institute affairs at St. George. The couple have four children, John, Jane, Sara, Bob, and a number of grandchildren.

PROVENANCE

These papers were donated to Queen's University Archives by Robert F. Nixon.

RESTRICTIONS

Access to these Papers is currently RESTRICTED. Permission, in writing must be obtained from Robert F. Nixon, or his designate.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PAPERS

The 1991 Additions to the Robert F. Nixon Papers represent the culmination of a thirty year political career. These are the papers of a successful working politician, and therefore there is very little of a personal nature among them. Series I - "Personal Files" (12 cm.) contain, for example, mostly financial statements and the like, reflecting the need for politicians to ensure that their financial transactions must be seen to be "above board". There is though, a file among these that celebrates Mr. Nixon's twenty fifth anniversary in politics and an interesting transcript from an extended interview given by Mr. Nixon to Mr. Joe Wiseberg between 1978 - 79.

Series II - "Speeches" (23 cm.) is a very short series, considering the number of speeches a man of Mr. Nixon's position would be expected to make. Researchers should review the files of audio tapes for further material of this kind.

Series III - "Liberal Party" (12 cm.) contains documents, pamphlets, campaign hand books and the like. These items are much the kind of material one would expect from a politician of Mr. Nixon's stature who was so important to the Ontario Liberal Party. There is one file, 'Planning File', that gives some hint of Mr. Nixon's involvement with Mr. Jean Cretien's bid for the leadership of the Federal Liberal Party.

Series IV "Schedules" (17 cm.) are just that, kept in daily appointment books.

Series V "Correspondence" (2.5 m.) does not contain all the correspondence dealt with by Mr. Nixon's office. A great deal has found its way into the "Research Notes" and "Constituency" Series as well. No attempt has been made to re-arrange the files, or to take material from one file to another. These are the files that were kept as correspondence in Mr. Nixon's office at Queen's Park. Most of the material here is of a routine nature and reflects the day to day correspondence of the office, much of it handled by the staff. The files labelled 'Personal' appear to contain the letters Mr. Nixon took a personal interest in and drafted answers to himself. These are probably the most interesting files of the Series.

Series VI - "Research Notes" (17.5 m.) are simply the working files used by Mr. Nixon and his staff to make the day to day decisions in the office. Not a little correspondence has found its way into this Series, as well as petitions, and very often these files directly duplicate ones in Mr. Nixon's constituency offices. They have been kept much as they were when they came to Queen's University from Queen's Park and thus they are in four parts. The first sub-series "Ministerial Research Notes A" (9.5 m.), were established between 1985 and 1990 while

Mr. Nixon held various cabinet offices. As they became a little unwieldy to use, a new series was established, "Ministerial Research Notes B" (2.5 m.), between 1990 and 1991. When the Liberals were voted out of office, a third series was established, "Opposition Research Notes" (3.5 m.), for Mr. Nixon's period in opposition. These cease when he resigned his seat in 1991. Somehow a part of this material became mixed in with other files. Rather than trying to impose a false order on the whole Series, these files were put into a separate sub-series, "Miscellaneous Research Files" (2 m.). Together these files contain a wide range of subjects, from prayer in school, to economics, from abortion to gravel pits and roads.

The same range of material is evident in the files from Mr. Nixon's two constituency offices. Series VII "Constituency Files" (3.5 m.) provide researchers with a very good idea of the kind of issues dealt with on a daily basis by a politician in a largely rural South Western Ontario riding. Along with prayer in schools, taxes, roads and the like it is interesting to note how very often Workman's Compensation Board problems required attention. This Series is in two sections as it came from two different offices, one in Dunnville and one in Paris.

"Multi media" is now very much a part of a politicians files and much of the rest of this material reflects this fact. There

are forty six audio cassettes, sixteen mini audio cassettes, nine video tapes, and seven films along with a 33 1/3 RPM recording disc, .5 M of computer discs and a large collection of photographs.

The Folio material, Series XII, consists of photographs, plaques and souvenirs in short the detritus of a long political career that are too bulky to be included in standard archival boxes.

This Fonds should be consulted in conjunction with Coll. 2176; Coll. 2176.1; Coll. 3621.5; Coll. 3746; and Coll. 5002. All these Collections have Inventories available in the Archives Reference Room.

GENERAL OUTLINE OF THE RECORDS

SERIES I	PERSONAL FILES
SERIES II	SPEECHES
SERIES III	LIBERAL PARTY
SERIES IV	SCHEDULES 1986 - 1990
SERIES V	CORRESPONDENCE
SERIES VI	RESEARCH NOTES <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Ministerial Research Notes AB. Ministerial Research Notes BC. Opposition Research NotesD. Miscellaneous Research NotesE. News Clips
SERIES VII	CONSTITUENCY FILES <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Paris 1985-1991B. Dunnville 1985-1991
SERIES VIII	SOUND RECORDINGS <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Standard Audio CassettesB. Mini Audio CassettesC. Audio Disc
SERIES IX	MOVING IMAGE <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Video CassettesB. Films
SERIES X	PHOTOGRAPHS
SERIES XI	COMPUTER DISCS
SERIES XII	FOLIO MATERIAL