

MS-2762  
R.M. Patterson  
Originals 1918-1984 75 cm

Raymond Murray Patterson was born in County Durham, England, on May 13, 1898. He was educated at Rossall School, and in 1917 went directly from school into the British army. He served as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Royal Field Artillery, was captured in the spring of 1918, and spent the remainder of the war in a Prisoner-of-War camp in Silesia. After the war, he attended Oxford University and then joined the Bank of England as a cadet.

In 1924, Mr. Patterson came to Canada. After working briefly on a dairy farm in the Fraser Valley, he homesteaded in the Battle River area of the Peace River District of Alberta. In the summer of 1927, he made the first of the northern journeys which formed the subject of much of his later writings. Travelling by way of Fort Simpson, he spent the summer on the South Nahanni River, returning south by way of a difficult journey via the Fort Nelson River and Fort St. John. He returned to the South Nahanni in the spring of 1928 and remained there with his partner, Gordon Matthews, until the spring of 1929.

Mr. Patterson returned to England to be married in 1929. Until 1946, he and his wife and family lived in Alberta, first sheep ranching in the Bow River Valley, and then running the Buffalo Head Ranch in the Highwood River Valley in the Alberta foothills. The Pattersons moved to Vancouver Island in 1946, living first near Sidney and after 1962, in Victoria. R.M. Patterson died in Victoria in 1984.

In the late 1940s, Mr. Patterson made two more northern trips, again largely by canoe. In 1948, he travelled from Wrangell up the Stikine River to Telegraph Creek and then down the Dease to Lower Post. In 1949, he went from Prince George via the Crooked River to Finlay Forks and then up the Finlay River. Along with his experiences on the South Nahanni, these trips formed the basis for three of his books.

In the 1940s, R.M. Patterson began to publish articles in magazines such as *The Beaver* and *Blackwoods* based on his experiences as homesteader and his northern travels. In 1954, *The Dangerous River*, the first of his five books, was published. It was based on his experiences on the South Nahanni River, 1927-1929. This was followed by *The Buffalo Head*, 1961, which was partly about his early life in England but mainly about his life in the Alberta foothills. *Far Pastures*, published in 1963, consisted of articles previously published in magazines with additional chapters on homesteading and later travels in the north. In *Trail to the Interior*, 1966, and *Finlay's River*, 1968, R.M. Patterson used his journeys on the Stikine and Dease in 1948 and on the Finlay in 1949 as a framework to write about the history of those rivers. In addition to his own books, R.M. Patterson wrote the introduction to the Hudson's Bay Record Society's edition of the *Journals of Samuel Black*, published in 1955.

The records consist largely of correspondence, diaries, and notebooks. They also include book reviews by R.M. Patterson, correspondence and accounts with publishers and book dealers, some accounts re orders made for the Buffalo Head Ranch, and copies of selected documents and correspondence relating to Patterson's army service.

The correspondence is divided into four series: correspondence inward, general correspondence inward, fan mail, and correspondence outward. Series 1, correspondence inward, consists of letters from frequent correspondents, filed by the writer's name. Many of these people are mentioned in Patterson's books. The letters from Gordon Matthews are almost all written from Aklavik and describe life there, and the visit of the Governor General, Lord Tweedsmuir, in 1937. Series 2, general correspondence inward, consists of chronologically arranged letters from people who only wrote one or two letters. The letters in this series cover a variety of subjects. They tend to emphasize wilderness canoe travel, the history of the South Nahanni and Finlay Rivers, and hunting and fishing. Many are from readers and friends writing to Patterson for advice about canoes, camping equipment and travel routes, or to reminisce about early days in the North. Series 3, fan mail, consists of letters of appreciation from readers, thank-you notes, and letters of congratulations on the publication of his various books. Series 4, correspondence outward, consists primarily of letters written in the 1920s to his mother, Lady Scott, and to his boyhood friend, Edwin "George" Fenwick.

Selected military papers were photocopied and returned to the donor. Photograph albums were microfilmed and returned. Microfilm copies are in Visual Records accession 198908-1. Forty-seven photographs ca. 1937-1983 which include views of the Ross River, Nahanni River, Peace River, Hamilton Inlet, Buffalo Head, and Europe were also transferred to accession 198908-1. Maps were transferred to the Maps, accession M89-038. Included is a map of Flat River (Too Naga) N.W.T., made by Patterson in August to September 1928, and an accompanying booklet, *The Flat River Country: North West Territories of Canada* (London: R.M. Patterson, 1933). A second copy of this booklet has been transferred to the BC Archives Library.

Ninety of the letters in this collection were borrowed for microfilming in 1978 and are described as MS-0957 [A00953(1)]. The originals are interfiled in Series 1 correspondence inward of MS-2762.

His papers were presented to the Archives by his wife, Marigold, in 1989.

Box	File	Contents	Date
		1. Correspondence inward	
1	1	George and Agnes Ball	1947-1964
1	2	Adolph Baumgart	1938
1	3	Marshall Bond	1966
1	4	Bart Brebner	1953-1955
1	5	Dick Corless, Jr.	1949-1956

1	6	Robin Dalziel	1958-1970
1	7	Albert Faille	1955-1959
1	8	Ida Goulter and W.D. Addison, about Bill Langham	1969-1970
1	9	Fenley Hunter	1931-1951
1	10	Ernest C.W. Lamarque	1955-1965
1	11	Gordon and Mollie Matthews	1931-1933
1	12	Gordon and Mollie Matthews	1934-1954
1	13	Sir Edward Peacock	1941-1962
1	14	George Pocaterra	1937-1960
1	15	Carl Rungius	1944-1945
1	16	Curtis Smith	1950-1955
1	17	Frank Swannell	1966-1967
1	18	Dick Turner	1955-1982

2. General correspondence inward 1932-1984

2	1	General correspondence inward	1932-1947
2	2	General correspondence inward	1948-1951
2	3	General correspondence inward	1952-1954
2	4	General correspondence inward	1955
2	5	General correspondence inward	1956-1959
2	6	General correspondence inward	1960-1964
2	7	General correspondence inward	1965-1966
2	8	General correspondence inward	1967-1969
2	9	General correspondence inward	1970-1975
2	10	General correspondence inward	1976-1979
2	11	General correspondence inward	1980-1984
2	12	General correspondence inward	no date

3. Fan mail

3	1	Fan mail	1954-1959
3	2	Fan mail	1960-1964
3	3	Fan mail	1966-1983
3	4	Fan mail	1966-1983

4. Correspondence outward

3	5	Lady Scott	1924
3	6	Lady Scott	1925-1926
3	7	Lady Scott	1927-1928
3	8	General letters outward	1950-1978
3	9	Edwin "George" Fenwick	1925-1930
3	10	Edwin "George" Fenwick	1931-1934
3	11	Edwin "George" Fenwick	1935-1939

3	12	Edwin "George" Fenwick	1940-1943
		Diaries and notebooks	
4	1	Diary, Nahanni	7 Jun 1927-23 Oct 1927
4	2	3 manuscript maps: copy of Jack Stanier's map of the Flat River; Flat River to Caribou Creek; and Caribou Creek to Canyon of Flat River, includes portions of day paddled Aug 31 – Sept 11 and average distances [removed from 1927 Nahanni diary]	1927
4	3	Diary, Nahanni	17 Mar 1928-29 Jan 1929
4	4	Diary, includes notes on the history of the Stikine/Dease area	2-29 Aug 1948
4	5	Diary, Finlay's River, includes notes from early writers on the Finlay	19 Jul-26 Sep 1949
4	6	Diary, South Nahanni	13 Jul-17 Sep 1951
4	7	Diary, Flat River, NWT, (12 Jul 1955 - 21 Jul 1955), Peace River (6 Sep 1955 - 4 Oct 1955), Shuswap 1-15 Oct 1956	1955-1956
4	8	Notes on the Big Bend gold rush and the route via Shuswap Lake [removed from 1955 diary, entry for July 21]	1955
4	9	Notebook, "J.M. McLeod's 1824 Nahanni Expedition", containing notes and extracts from McLeod's journal	
4	10	Notebook, "J.M. McLeod, 1823 Nahanni trip" containing notes on McLeod's trip and extract and notes from his journals	
4.	11	Notebook "Liard River notes", containing notes on the Liard and Skeena Rivers	
4	12	Notebook, "Stoney Indian words; Samuel Black: Notes and correspondence with Miss Johnson"	
		Subject files	
5	1	Buffalo Head Ranch	
5	2	Oxford University	
5	3	Hunting permit	1935
5	4	Membership in Royal Geographical Society	
5	5	List of standard camp food rations and equipment	
5	6	Bills and correspondence re clothing, furniture, canoes and camping equipment	
5	7	Copies of letters not written by or addressed to R.M. Patterson, including: Angus Sherwood to R.M.	

Anderson, National Museum, 1947, about barren land caribou; Gus Kraus, Game Warden C.J. Shattuck, and Dean Acheson to Curtis Smith, 1950-51, about equipment and transportation requirements for Smith's planned 1951 trip up the Nahanni River; Robert Tomlinson to Annie and Walter Moberley, 1956, about the extremely cold winter of Mrs. Moberley's birth in 1880; Roland Skog to P.G. Lewis, 1969-70, about life in Skog's wilderness cabin

5	8	Correspondence with booksellers and map dealers	
5	9	Documentation regarding MS-0957	1934-1977
5	10	Correspondence and documents relating to Patterson's military career	ca. 1918
5	11	Miscellaneous	

#### Publications and related material

6	1	Canada. Parks Canada. <i>Nahanni National Park Historical Resources Inventory</i> . Vol. 1: Interviews with R.M. Patterson, Willy McLeod, plus appended documents. Produced by W.D. Addison	1975
6	2	<i>Finlay's River</i> rough draft	Aug 1967
6	3	William Morrow and Company "Books for summer and early fall, 1961", listing <i>The Buffalo Head</i>	1961
6	4	Magazine and newspaper articles, "The Liard - forgotten river of B.C.", by R.M. Patterson in <i>Victoria Daily Colonist</i>	21 Nov 1954
6	4	Magazine and newspaper articles: "The mystery of Dead Man's Valley", by Philip H. Godsell in <i>The Wide World</i>	Dec 1954
6	4	Magazine and newspaper articles: "McLeods' missing millions", by T.W. Paterson in <i>Canadian Treasure</i> , Vol. 3, no.1, Spring 1975	1975
6	4	Magazine and newspaper articles: "The Thundering Herd", by E. Lamarque in <i>Forest and Outdoors</i> , Vol. 28, no. 11, November 1932	1932
6	5	Letters and royalty account statements from publishers	1947-1949
6	6	Research notes and correspondence with Hudson's Bay Record Society and others regarding R.M. Patterson's introduction to the <i>Journals of Samuel Black</i> . [See also letters from Bart Brebner in Box 1]	

#### Book reviews

6	7	<i>The Buffalo Head</i>
6	8	<i>Dangerous River</i>

6	9	<i>Far Pastures</i>
6	10	<i>Finlay's River</i>
6	11	Book reviews authored by R.M. Patterson