

# Victoria University Archives

## Finding Aid - Donald and Rhena Robson Fonds (2191)

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# Donald and Rhena Robson Fonds

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## Summary information

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<b>Repository:</b>	Victoria University Archives
<b>Title:</b>	Donald and Rhena Robson Fonds
<b>Reference code:</b>	2191
<b>Date:</b>	1925-1976 (date of creation)
<b>Physical description:</b>	17 cm of textual materials 81 b&w photographs
<b>Dates of creation, revision and deletion:</b>	Created by JT Dec 8 2023

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

DO Robson was a respected Professor of Classics, born in Fenelon Falls, Ontario and raised there and in Toronto. He completed his undergraduate degree at Victoria in 1928, winning the Edward Wilson Gold Medal in Classics. Upon graduation he was named a Fellow and continued with his education, earning his MA in 1929 and PhD in 1932 (his thesis was "The Samnites in the Po Valley").

Robson taught at Western for seventeen years before returning as an Associate Professor of Latin at Victoria in 1947. He retired in 1975. Robson was not known for publishing, but instead believed that his most important function was teaching. In 1971, when he retired as Chairman of the Department of Classics, he said, "The greatest reward a teacher can reap is the love and trust of his colleagues and students."

Generous to Victoria, Robson made many financial donations to the University. In 1931, Robson married Rhena Victoria Kendrick, also a Victoria graduate.

Victoria University Positions Held:

Fellow in Classics 1928-1930

Associate Professor of Latin 1947-1956

Professor of Latin 1956-1960

Professor of Latin; Chairman of Department of Classics 1960-1971

Professor of Latin 1971-1975

Professor Emeritus of Classics 1975

## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

Rhena Robson (nee Kendrick) was a Victoria University graduate, class of 1923, and gold medalist. Robson continued her education at Bryn Mawr and the University of Chicago before returning to Toronto to teach in Classics at Victoria. Rhena married Donald Robson in 1931.

Awards won as a graduating student in 1923:

Governor-General's Gold Medal

The Edward Wilson Gold Medal in Classics

Teaching Positions held at Victoria:

Instructor in Ancient History, 1928-1929

Lecturer in Classics, 1929-1931

### Custodial history

2023.07V: Records were inherited by the donor from the creator where they remained until being donated to Victoria University.

2023.19V: Unknown. Transferred from Victoria University Library Special Collections in 2023.

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## Scope and content

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Contains correspondence, postcards and travel and academic photographs, travel diaries, family research, as well as scholarly research and lectures.

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## Notes

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### Title notes

### Immediate source of acquisition

Gift of Larry Pfaff

2023.07V

Transferred from Victoria University Library Special Collections

2023.19V

### Arrangement

Arranged by Archivist.

## Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published

## Series descriptions

Reference code	Title	Dates	Physical description
2191-2023.07V1-1	<b>File - Research Notes and Lectures</b> <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains research and speaking notes from Donald and Rhena covering Greek and Roman music, women in Athens, The Saturnalia, and Cicero.	1941-1973	
2191-2023.07V1-2	<b>File - Letters to Larry Pfaff, 1972</b> <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains letters and cards sent to Larry Pfaff from DO and Rhena Robson.	1972	
2191-2023.07V1-3	<b>File - Letters to Larry Pfaff, 1973</b> <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains letters and cards sent to Larry Pfaff from DO and Rhena Robson.	1973	
2191-2023.07V1-4	<b>File - Letters to Larry Pfaff, 1974</b> <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains letters and cards sent to Larry Pfaff from DO and Rhena Robson.	1974	
2191-2023.07V1-5	<b>File - Postcards</b> <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains postcards of various locations in Europe both sent and received by the Robsons.	1929-1973	
2191-2023.07V1-6	<b>File - Travel Diaries</b> <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains two travel diaries regarding trips to Europe. Mostly written by Rhena Robson, with some contributions by DO Robson.	1929-1932 n.d.	
2191-2023.07V1-7	<b>File - Travel Ephemera</b> <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains ephemera from trips to Italy.	1929	
2191-2023.07V1-8	<b>File - Blank Postcards</b> <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains 22 blank postcards from England, France, Italy, and Greece. These were selected by the Archivist from the many blank postcards that the Robson's collected on their travels.	n.d.	22 blank postcards
2191-2023.07V1-9	<b>File - Travel Photographs</b> <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains a selected group of undated travel photographs from a variety of countries documenting grounds, buildings, people, and other features that primarily relate to the Robsons' academic work in classics. The Archivist selected these from a larger set of travel images.	n.d.	79 photographs
2191-2023.07V1-10	<b>File - Photocopies of Family History Research</b>	n.d.	

	<i>Scope and content:</i> Contains photocopies of research notes relating to Rhena Robson's family history.
2191-2023.07V1-11	<b>File - Memorabilia</b> 1976 1930 n.d. <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains a report card from Athens High School and a grades report for summer 1930 from the University of Chicago (both for Rhena Robson). Also includes Senate memorial resolution for DO Robson on his death.
2191-2023.19V1-1	<b>File - Thesis Work: The Samnites in the Po Valley</b> 1932 <i>Scope and content:</i> For Doctor of Philosophy degree, University of Toronto, 1932. Contains annotated typescript of thesis, carbon copies, and related materials, including notes, hand drawn maps, and programme for oral examination.
2191-2023.19V1-2	<b>File - Lectures</b> 1938-1973, predominant 1950-1965 <i>Scope and content:</i> Typed and handwritten lectures and addresses. Includes 1960 dinner program for a Victoria dinner in honour of Hartley Robertson and William Staples. Also includes addresses to the Victoria Classics Club, and several memorial resolutions for deceased Victoria faculty: Norman Wentworth DeWitt (1876-1958); Charles Bruce Sissons (1879-1965); John Charles Robertson (1862-1956).
2191-2023.19V1-3	<b>File - Correspondence and Offprints</b> 1934-1940 <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains correspondence with academics and editors as well as offprints and journals: Terriolis Etrusca Illyrica der vorchristliche geographische Wortschatz Tarols / Alois Maria Schoen-Pontarra, 1940; The foundations of Roman Italy / by Joshua Whatmough, 1938; The nationality of the poet Caecilius Statius, 1938; The Samnites in the Po Valley, 1934; [Review of ? / Livy].
2191-2023.19V1-4	<b>File - In Memoriam: Professor Emeritus Donald O. Robson</b> 1976 <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains photocopy of memorial resolution from the Board of Regents.
2191-2023.19V1-5	<b>File - Photographs: Classics Club</b> 1954-1955 1949 2 photographs <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains 2 photographs of DO Robson with the Victoria Classics Club, ca. 1950s. Both list the names of students on the back.
2191-2023.19V1-6	<b>File - Essays by Rhena Kendrick Robson</b> 1930 1925 <i>Scope and content:</i> Contains 2 essays by Rhena Robson (nee Kendrick): Contamination in The Amphitruo of Plautus, 1925; Cleon the Democrat, 1930.