



ARCHIVES

TRINITY COLLEGE

IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

***Description and Finding Aid***  
**GEORGE WHITAKER COLLECTION**  
**F2107**

Prepared by Christopher Hogendoorn, 2013

## GEORGE WHITAKER COLLECTION

### Dates of creation:

1810–[199-?]

### Extent:

0.58 m of textual records

4 photographs

### Biographical sketch:

George Whitaker, Anglican clergyman and educator, was born 9 October 1811 at the Manor Farm, Bratton, Wiltshire, England. He was from a large Baptist family, the eighth child of Philip Whitaker, a farmer, and Anne (née Andrews). His siblings included Alfred (b. 1799), Joshua (b. 1801), Edward (b. 1802), Philip (b. 1803), Emma (b. 1805), Anne (b. 1807), John (b. 1810), and Edwin Eugene (b. 1814).

He attended Frome Grammar School and Charterhouse School and matriculated at Queens' College, Cambridge 4 July 1829 as a pensioner. He graduated in 1833 with a first class Classical Tripos, with honours in classics and mathematics. He was made a Classical Fellow in 1834, a lecturer in classics in 1835, and received an M.A. in 1836. He became a member of the Church of England, and was baptised at Bratton Parish Church 11 October 1832. He was ordained deacon on 4 June 1837 and priest on 27 May 1838, both instances by the Bishop of Ely.

He left Queens' College in 1840 upon his appointment as vicar to the college living of Oakington, Cambridgeshire. He married Arundel Charlotte Burton, the daughter of the Rev. Richard Burton, a Baptist missionary, at the Parish Church of St. Saviour, Bath, Somerset 22 October 1844. They had at least eight children, of which George Herbert (b. 1847), Bertha (b. 1848), Ernest (b. 1849), Emma (b. 1850), Agnes (b. 1853), Margaret Ann (b. 1856), and Edith Dora (b. 1861) were known to have survived.

In 1851 Whitaker was selected to become the first Provost and Professor of Divinity at the University of Trinity College, Toronto by a panel of four eminent clergymen working at the behest of Bishop John Strachan, known as the Trinity College Committee in London. He arrived in Toronto in November of that year, and his appointment was officially confirmed on 8 December.

Whitaker became involved in the ongoing controversy between the high and low factions of the Anglican Church when his theological teachings were attacked in 1860 by Benjamin Cronyn, Bishop of Huron, on the grounds that they were anti-Protestant. While the accusations were rebuffed, Whitaker and Trinity College remained central in the various factional disputes throughout the 1860s and 1870s.

Whitaker was a candidate for coadjutor bishop to John Strachan in September 1866, but withdrew his name, leading to Alexander Neil Bethune's election. On 1 October 1875, Bethune appointed Whitaker archdeacon of York. He was a candidate for coadjutor bishop to Bethune in February 1878, but Bethune was ultimately forced to call off the election due to Evangelical lay opposition. In February 1879, upon the death of Bethune, Whitaker was again an unsuccessful candidate in the election to the Bishopric of Toronto. At the beginning of Michaelmas Term of that same year, he announced that he had been offered by the Bishop of Salisbury the rectorship of the parish of Newton Toney, Wiltshire, a living in the gift of his *alma mater*, Queen's College. Whitaker left Toronto for England 30 May 1881, and the Rev. Charles William Edmund Body took up the Provostship in October.

George Whitaker died suddenly 27 August 1882 at Devany House, The Close, Salisbury at the age of 70. He is buried at the Parish Church of St. Andrew in Newton Toney, Wiltshire.

### [Sources:

Headon, C. F. "Whitaker, George" in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 11 (Toronto, 1982)

Reed, T. A. (ed.) *A History of the University of Trinity College, Toronto, 1852-1952* (Toronto, 1952)

Reeves, M. E. "George Whitaker (1811-1882): A Forgotten Native of Bratton" in *Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine*, 72/73 (Devizes, 1980): 135-139

Westfall, W. *The Founding Moment: Church, Society, and the Construction of Trinity College* (Montreal & Kingston, 2002)]

**Scope and content:**

The collection contains records pertaining to George Whitaker's Provostship, as well as his final departure to England. It consists of vital records, correspondence, financial records, newspaper excerpts, tributes, manuscripts related to his theology teaching, and photographs.

**Notes:**

*Acquisition history:*

The collection is composed of material found in the Trinity College archives and donations from several individuals.

*Restrictions on access:*

There are no restrictions on access.

*Terms governing publication:*

The material is in the public domain.

*Accruals:*

No further accruals are expected.

*Related groups of records in different fonds:*

Records relating to Whitaker's time as provost can be found in the Office of the Secretary of Corporation fonds (F1001) and the Office of the Bursar fonds (F1004). Notes of lectures given by George Whitaker can be found in the Beverley Jones fonds (F2097).

**Provenance access points:**

Whitaker, George 1811-1882

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**Location / item listing:**

Reproduction of a copy of an entry into a Register of Marriages in the District of Bath between George Whitaker and Arundel Charlotte Burton in 1844. The copy is dated 26 February 1979.

- File 1

Reproduction of a copy of an entry into a Register of Deaths in the District of Alderbury of George Whitaker in 1882. The copy is dated 24 July 1978.

- File 1

Reproduction of a copy of an entry into a Register of Births in the District of Chesterton of George Herbert Whitaker in 1847. The copy is dated 24 July 1978.

- File 1

16 letters addressed to the Rev. Henry Roe and 1 addressed to the Bishop of Toronto written by George Whitaker between 1863 and 1881 discussing various aspects of theology and church governance. 65 pages of text.

- File 2

Transcription of 16 letters addressed to the Rev. Henry Roe and 1 addressed to the Bishop of Toronto written by George Whitaker between 1863 and 1881 discussing various aspects of theology and church governance. 43 pages of text donated and possibly arranged by Mrs. Elliot G. Strathy.

- File 3

4 letters addressed to George Whitaker written by Vincent Clemente in 1877 discussing the donation of an engraved portrait of Richard Porson to Trinity College. One letter contains a page entitled "Conundrums by Professor Porson," and another includes a letter from 1810 to Clemente's relative, Mr. Cleaver Banks, written by Sidney Hawes [Jr.?], Porson's nephew, describing Porson's early life and character. 19 pages of text.

- File 4

Receipt dated 24 April 1867 for a burial plot purchased by George Whitaker in St. James's Cemetery for £2.15.

- File 5

Deed dated 25 April 1867 for a burial plot purchased by George Whitaker in St. James's Cemetery for \$11.00.

- Oversize Box 2

Receipt dated 14 November [1877?] for the re-sodding of George Whitaker's burial plot at St. James's Cemetery for \$3.00.

- File 5

Receipt dated 20 May 1867 for the construction of a brick grave at George Whitaker's burial plot at St. James's Cemetery for \$10.25.

-File 6

Excerpt from *The Bucks Standard* dated 31 October 1931 recounting a memorial service at the Parish Church of Woughton-on-the-Green for George Herbert Whitaker.

- File 6

Excerpt from *The Canadian Ecclesiastical Gazette*, Vol. 7 No. 22 (15 November 1860) of a letter dated 13 November 1860, addressed to the Bishop of Toronto from George Whitaker responding to accusations made by the Bishop of Huron.

- File 7

Excerpt from *The Globe*, Vol. 38 No. 129 (31 May 1881), recounting George Whitaker and his family's departure from Toronto.

- File 7

Manuscript of an address concerning the establishment and contemporary financial and student situation of Trinity College. 6 pages of text. Undated [186-?].

- File 8

Minutes of the Incorporated Synod of the Diocese of Toronto upon the departure of George Whitaker for England. The synod met 8 – 11 June 1880.

- File 9

Notice of appreciation addressed to George Whitaker upon his departure for England from the Lower House of the Provincial Synod in Canada, dated 14 September 1880.

- Oversize Box 2

Minutes of the Corporation of Trinity Medical School upon the departure of George Whitaker. The corporation met 14 May 1881.

- Oversize Box 2

Letter addressed to George Whitaker upon his departure for England. Signed by college and church members. 4 pages of text. Undated [1880?].

- Oversize Box 2

Letter addressed to George Whitaker upon his departure for England, signed by thirteen students of Trinity College. Undated [1880?].

- File 9

Letter addressed to Mr. Charles Inglis and friends from George Whitaker expressing gratitude for their previous missive. Undated [1880?].

- File 9

Letter addressed to George Whitaker upon his departure for England, signed by five students of Trinity College. Undated [1880?].

- File 9

List of graduates from the Faculty of Divinity, Trinity College, between 1852 and 1867.

- File 10

"Questions and Answers on the Catechism" in 2 parts. Notebook, with the memorial bookplate of Edward Kaye Kendall, containing detailed notes of lectures given by George Whitaker. Undated [185-?].

- Files 11, 12

Photographs of George Whitaker's grave marker and the Parish Church of St. Andrew at Newton Toney, Wiltshire, England. [199-?]

4 photographs : col. ; 10 x 15 cm

- File 13