

# A Guide to the George Fraser Papers

George Fraser Papers 1926-1991

1926-1991

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A Collection in the Special Collections Department 10553-w  
Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library  
1997

## History

**Processed by:** Special Collections Department Staff

**Date Completed:** 1997

**Encoded by:** Elizabeth Slomba

## Title Statement

A Guide to the George Fraser Papers

**Subtitle:** Fraser, George.

**Collection:** 10553-w

**Author:** Processed by Special Collections Dept. staff; machine-readable finding aid created by Elizabeth Slomba

**Sponsor:** Funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

## Publication Statement

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## Profile Description

**Creation:** Machine-readable finding aid derived from WordPerfect. [Date of source: 1997.]

**Language Usage:** Description is in English.

## Revision Description

**Feb 18, 2004** PUBLIC "-//University of Virginia::Library::Special Collections Dept.//TEXT (US::ViU::viu01857::George Fraser Papers)//EN" "viu01857.xml" converted from EAD 1.0 to 2002 by v1to02.xsl (sy2003-10-15).

**Feb 27, 2004** converted to conform to eadVIVA.dtd by vivastrict.xsl

## Descriptive Summary

**Collection Number**

10553-w

**Language**

English

**Collector**

American Rhododendron Society

**Extent**

70 items

**Repository**

University of Virginia. Library. Special Collections Dept.

Alderman Library  
University of Virginia  
Charlottesville, Virginia 22903  
USA

## Administrative Information

**Access Restrictions**

Collection is open to research.

**Use Restrictions**

See the [University of Virginia Library's use policy](#).

**Acquisition Information**

These papers were given to the Library on February 14, 1992, by the American Rhododendron Society, through Kendon Stubbs, Alderman Library, University of Virginia.

**Funding Note**

Funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities

**Preferred Citation**

George Fraser Papers, Accession 10553-w, Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library

## Scope and Content

This collection consists of about seventy items, [1926-1939], 1960 and 1988-1991, pertaining to the career of George Fraser (1854-1944) of Ucluelet, British Columbia (on the west coast of Vancouver Island), a pioneer rhododendron nurseryman and hybridizer. These items were collected by Bill Dale, Dr. Stuart Holland, and Miss Frances Gundry, a rhododendron study group whose purpose was to preserve the life and work of George Fraser.

Copies of letters from George Fraser to Joseph Gable, 1926-1939, with their accompanying transcripts comprise the largest portion of this collection. Only electrostatic copies of the Gable-Fraser correspondence are present in this collection; the originals are in the British Columbia Archives in Victoria. Since all of his botanical and horticultural notes and records at his home were destroyed after his death, these copies of his letters to Gable are important sources of information about his work. George Fraser Plantsman compiled by Bill Dale, Frances Gundry, and Dr. Stuart Holland has excerpts from Fraser's letters to Joseph Gable in Appendix A, pp. 55-69, arranged in four separate sections: rhododendron hybrids, general comments and observations concerning rhododendrons, comments about Fraser himself and his activities, and comments concerning trees.

The folder of miscellaneous correspondence also contains copies of three letters between Joseph B. Gable, Stewartstown, Pennsylvania, and Clive L. Justice, President of the British Columbia Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, about Gable's correspondence with George Fraser, which discuss how Fraser helped and influenced Gable's early work with rhododendrons (1960). Also present in the miscellaneous correspondence folder is a letter from Bill Dale to Caroline Gable concerning the project to preserve Fraser's horticultural work in British Columbia (1990 Feb 20).

There is a great deal of biographical information about George Fraser in this collection in the article by Bill Dale, "The Cornwall-Pennsylvania-British Columbia Connection" and George Fraser Plantsman compiled by Bill Dale, Frances Gundry, and Dr. Stuart Holland at the conclusion of their project to collect all available Fraser material.

Fraser was born at Draimie, Morayshire, Scotland, on October 25, 1854. At seventeen he began his apprenticeship at Gordon Castle with the gardener, John Webster, and continued working in Scotland until he immigrated to Canada in 1883. He first settled in Winnipeg, Manitoba, but moved to British Columbia in 1888. Fraser lived and worked in his nursery on Vancouver Island for the last fifty years of his life, carrying on a vast amount of correspondence with other rhododendron growers and hybridizers. He was a fellow of the Royal Horticultural Society in London.

# Container List

## **George Fraser to Joseph Gable - Copies**

**Unit Date** 1926-1939

**Extent** (5 folders)

## **Miscellaneous Correspondence**

**Unit Date** [1960] & 1990-1991

## **"The Cornwall-Pennsylvania-British Columbia Connection" by Bill Dale**

**Unit Date** n.d.

## **George Fraser Plantsman compiled by Bill Dale, Frances Gundry, and Dr. Stuart Holland**

**Unit Date** 1988

Special Collections, University of Virginia Library, #10553-w