

Papers of John Law

Bell founder

Inventor of various oil related innovations

London ON

In order to improve access to more of the existing holdings of Western Archives copies of a number of preliminary finding aids are being made available. These preliminary finding aids, some of which were prepared many years ago, vary in degrees of completeness, detail and accuracy. Some provide only basic box listings of the contents of a fonds or a collection, while others provide additional background material. All are intended to be the starting point for access to the records and they should not be considered a definitive source of information on the full nature and contents of the fonds or collection.

Questions about the information provided in the preliminary finding aids should be directed to archives.services@uwo.ca

John Law was born in Leeds, England in 1821, according to information from Industries in Canada and the back of a photograph in the collection labelled "Witnesses at the Trial".

Les Bronson's article on John Law provides further details on his life and is in the case file. Law's death date has not yet been ascertained and he may have moved either to New York to his son-in-law's, T.B. Cryer's (he is listed as a London Old Boy and photographed in the family photos) or perhaps to his property in Currie. His daughters' deaths, Bessie and Louise are documented in administrations in the 1920s which John Law (presumably his son) applied for according to Middlesex County Administrations data. His son, John S. Law is listed in the city directories during the 1890s as being a fireman with the railways. Other John Laws appear in the city directory-particularly those listed at Horton St. The John Law who was the Bell founder lived at 121 Clarence St. This listing continues until 1915 and a listing for John Jr. continues until 1917. However, these may be listings for John Law's son, John and a possible grandson, John Law as well as by 1915- John Law would have been 94 years old. There is not administration for John Law or will listed in Middlesex County documents during the relevant period, 1890-1930. His grandson is probably the John Gordon Law Cryer photographed in the collection along with his probable son-in-law, T.B. Cryer in New York. There is also a letter from a J.L. to Master Gordon Cryer written in 1906.

The papers of John Law have been reorganized from the time they were received by Fanshawe. A preliminary checklist prepared by the Fanshawe is included in the case file. Tick marks are beside those items listed that were actually located in the collection some items were found unlisted and others were not located in the collection when it was catalogued in August 1982. Fanshawe deposited the records here in the fall of 1981.

Current listing and organization is an attempt to reconstruct "respect des fonds" all materials related to one things have been placed in the same folder-and labelled and listed. Chronological order has also been followed within each folder. The listing follows the pattern patents and related documentation, technical material related to inventions, financial documents, property matters, (with militia papers and photo), business cards, letters, photographs and miscellany.

John Law, Listing of Documents

Box 5407

1. Oil and Spirit Can Patent, Affidavit and diagram 1870
2. Tar and petroleum burner, Patent, Affidavit, Diagram, 1872
3. Improvements on sinks, patent, agreement, affidavits, diagram, 1879
4. Jar and oil burner materials, letters, materials and diagram
5. Oil burner materials, c. 1870-1880
6. Diagrams and sketches, re: various inventions, 13 pieces
7. Financial documents, 1899- 2 pieces
8. Hill Street and Clarence Street property materials, c. 1896-1898
9. Militia, letter and photograph
10. Papers relating to military grant of land near Currie, 1904-1914
11. Business cards, John Law
12. Letter from John Cameron re: John Law's position with London Advertiser 1898
13. Personal and family letters, To "Aunt" from T.B. Cryer, New York, March 24 1896
To Law, from John Carling, 1902
To Master Gordon Cryer, from J. Law, 1906
14. Papers re: estate, Bessie Law, 1 letter and 2 papers with figures, 1928
15. Photographs, inventions 11
16. Photographs, buildings, John Law's home and shop, Canada Smelting and Refinery, John Wrigley's home.
17. Photographs, Family and People
John Law, John Law and family, trial witnesses, 1894, Old Boys in New York, 1906. Mr. carson, school teacher
18. Miscellany, Programme and reception, Prince of Wales, 1919
Mr. Bowman's letter re: Prince of Wales, 1905
Knights of Columbus Adoption of America, London, 1979
Directions for Using S. Brown's Sewing Machine, undated.