

Guide to the Rankin family papers, 1885-1934

Summary Information

Collection No.:	MS 2024.003
Title:	Rankin family papers
Inclusive Dates:	1885-1934
Author:	Nancy Martin
Repository:	Peters Township Public Library 616 East McMurray Road McMurray, PA 15317
Creator:	Rankin family
Extent:	1 box (0.21 linear feet)
Language of materials:	All materials are in English.
Abstract:	Records consist of legal, financial and labor documents of farmers William and Martin Rankin and of Martin's sons. The records relate to farm property and labor in Union Township and the village of Hackett in Washington County, Pennsylvania.

Biography/History

Martin Rankin (1840-1916) was a landowner and farmer in Union Township, Washington County, Pennsylvania. Martin married Appolonia Stilley (1843-1924) and together they had 6 children: Albert S. Rankin (born 1864), Edward W. Rankin (born 1868), Sarah Rankin (born 1868), Louis Rankin (born 1873), George C. Rankin (born 1876), and John C. Rankin (born 1878). At the time of Appolonia's death in 1924, only Albert, Edward, George and John were living.

In 1885, Martin bought 49 acres of farmland in Union Township. The Rankin farm was sold in a sheriff's sale on February 9, 1934 at the Washington County courthouse after First National Bank foreclosed on the property.

Albert Rankin married Eva Emma Aber on December 4, 1887. He was the only Rankin child to marry.

Brothers George and John Rankin worked as wage laborers and lived together in a rented house in the village of Hackett in Washington County, Pennsylvania. They rented the house from the School family. John died on June 12, 1946 and George on August 24, 1950.

Collection Scope and Content Note

The collection documents the work of farmers and day laborers in Washington County between 1885 and 1934. The collection consists of two photographs and legal, financial and day labor records of the Rankin family. The financial records include IOUs, promissory notes, and receipts. The legal documents include land deeds, oil and gas leases, papers relating to Appolonia Stilley Rankin's estate, and rental agreements. The day labor records record the daily work performed by Albert Rankin and the amount he was owed for this work.

The majority of the collection consists of the records of Martin Rankin. The collection includes a few records of William Rankin, a farmer in Snowden Township, Allegheny County and a presumed relation of the Martin Rankin family.

Arrangement

The papers are arranged in 5 series:

- Series I. Photographs, circa 1900
- Series II. Legal documents, 1885-1934
- Series III. Financial records, 1892-1920
- Series IV. Albert Rankin's day labor records, 1896-1912
- Series V. Miscellaneous documents, 1894-1920

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions:

No Restrictions.

Acquisition Information:

Gift of Beverly Schultz School and Edwin School on December 11, 2023.

Custodial History:

Records arrived at the Archives as a donation from Beverly Schultz School whose family rented a house located in Hackett to brothers John and George Rankin.

Accruals note:

No further accruals are expected.

Preferred Citation:

Rankin family papers, 1885-1934, Collection MS 2024.003, Peters Township Public Library

Processing Information:

This collection was processed by Nancy Martin in March, 2024. In the absence of a usable original order, the archivist imposed the arrangement of the papers during processing.

Copyright/Conditions Governing Use:

None.

Rights Statement for this Archival Description:

Except where otherwise noted, the guide to the Rankin family papers by the Peters Township Public Library Archives is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

Contents List

Series I. Photographs, circa 1900

Series Scope and Content Note: Series consists of two photographs. The unconfirmed subjects of the photos are Martin and William Rankin. This unconfirmed identification is based on the fact that the photographs were accompanied by an envelope on which was written: “William and Martin Rankin Records now Mervin Drive, Hackett, PA about 1900”.

Box 1	
Folder 1:	2 photographs of [Martin and William Rankin?], circa 1900

Series II. Legal documents, 1885-1934

Series Scope and Content Note: Series consists of legal documents including an 1885 mortgage agreement between F.M. Finley and Martin Rankin for a 49-acre tract of land in Union Township, Washington County, an 1886 deed recording the sale of a lot from the property, an 1887 land sale agreement for another lot from the property, an 1891 quit-claim deed involving Martin Rankin, two copies of a 1926 article of agreement to rent Rankin Farm, and a 1931 agreement to lease part of the Rankin Farm in Union Township, Washington County. Series also includes oil and gas leases, a 1925 “Certificate for Electricity” and a 1929 insurance policy, both in the name of J. C. Rankin, a 1925 document relating to the distribution of Appolonia Stilley Rankin’s estate and 1934 legal documents relating to First National Bank’s foreclosure on the Rankin farm.

Box 1	
Folder 2:	Land sales and rental agreements, 1885-1891, 1929, 1931
Folder 3:	Oil and gas leases and pipeline rights of way, 1892, 1923, 1930
Folder 4:	Certificate for Electricity, 1925; insurance policy for the property of J.C. Rankin, 1929
Folder 5:	Schedule of distribution for the estate of Appolonia Stilley Rankin, 1925; mortgage foreclosure document, First National Bank of Monongahela City versus C.W. Woody, executor of the will of Appolonia Stilley Rankin, and John, Albert, Edward and George Rankin, 1934; Plaintiff’s statement and affidavit of claim and affidavit as to real owners, 1934

Series III. Financial records, 1892-1920

Series Scope Content Note: Series consists of handwritten IOUs, promissory notes, records of pasturing fees, weigh scale receipts, county tax receipts, a 1905 receipt of payment of \$50 for the sale of William’s Snowden Township farm, and general receipts documenting the farm products sold by the Rankin family and the goods and services they purchased.

Box 1	
Folder 6:	Financial records of William Rankin, 1892-1906; an undated letter to William from his nephew Lawrence
Folder 7:	Promissory notes, 1892-1920
Folder 8:	Martin Rankin's cow pasturing notebook; a letter from J. R. Curry concerning a missing horse and saddle, 1902; Martin Rankin's coal account, 1907-1908
Folder 9:	Receipts for products sold and purchases made, 1900-1907
Folder 10:	Receipts for the payment of school and road (county) taxes, 1898-1916
Folder 11:	Weigh scale receipts, 1898-1904
Folder 12:	Triennial real estate assessment of the Rankin farm, 1928

Series IV. Albert Rankin's day labor records, 1896-1912

Series Scope and Content Note: Series consists of notebooks and papers documenting the daily labor performed by Albert Rankin in exchange for payment. The information recorded includes the name of the employer, the number of days worked, the type of work performed and the amount owing or paid to him. Series also includes records of Albert's expenditures.

Box 1	
Folder 8:	Records of day labor and expenditures, 1908 (found inside of Martin Rankin's cow pasturing notebook)
Folder 13:	Records of day labor and expenditures, 1896-1912

Series V. Miscellaneous documents, 1894-1920

Series Scope and Content Note: Series consists of miscellaneous records of the Rankin family including a sketch, the pedigree of a St. Bernard dog bred by E. Jagdmann, tickets for a Greentree Volunteer Fire Department drawing, a registry return receipt from 1920 and a card advertising a Carnival of Fun for merchants and miners.

Box 1	
Folder 14:	Miscellaneous documents