

Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador Folklore and Language Archive (MUNFLA)

Kenneth Peacock Fonds Description

Fonds description written by Anita Best under the co-sponsorship of the Canadian Council of Archives and the Association of Newfoundland & Labrador Archives. Reformatted by Renee Lawrence.

TITLE:

Kenneth Peacock Fonds

COLLECTION NUMBER:

Special Collection Number I.6
Accession Number 87-157

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

144 audio reels

DATES:

1951-1952; 1958-1961

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY/BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:

Kenneth Peacock (1922-2000) was born in Toronto and educated for a music career. By age 15 he had become an associate of the Royal Conservatory of Music and in 1941 he enrolled at the University of Toronto's School of Music, completing a B.A. in 1943. He

studied English and Philosophy and musical composition from 1944-1950 and embarked on a career as a composer-performer. In 1949, Peacock accepted the invitation of a former School of Music classmate, Margaret Sargent (McTaggart) to come to the National Museum of Canada (now the Canadian Museum of Civilization) where she worked, to hear the recordings of native music made in 1916 by folklorist Marius Barbeau. Peacock became fascinated with the music and created a series of compositions based on Barbeau's recordings.

In 1951 Peacock went to work for the Museum and took over its Newfoundland folksong research project started by Sargent the year before. In 1953, the Museum offered him a position as their musicologist, to transcribe the music from their previous collections and to undertake further collecting on their behalf. He left the Museum in 1954 and began to use some of his research in CBC radio broadcasts, folksong publications and commercial recordings in collaboration with Alan Mills and other Canadian folksong professionals. In 1962, Peacock returned to the Museum of Canada to undertake its first ethnic music survey.

By 1971, when he retired, the newly established Canadian Centre for Folk Culture Studies had amassed an impressive collection of Canadian folk music from almost 50 ethnic groups. Throughout the course of his career, he worked with Tom Kines, Edith Fowke, Helen Creighton, who hired him to transcribe most of her Nova Scotia collection, and Robert Klymasz whose major works on Ukrainian folksongs Peacock transcribed. In 1984 he was awarded the Order of Canada in recognition of his life's work in documenting this country's folk music.

[Source: Anna Kearney Guigné]

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

Fonds consists of audio cassette copies of field recordings done in Newfoundland and Labrador by Peacock in the summer months of 1951 and 1952 and at various times during the years 1958-1961, along with copies of Peacock's tape indexes. Much of this material was published in 1965 as *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports*, a 3-volume selection of

songs he culled from his collecting efforts in Newfoundland. This publication has served to acquaint numerous composers, folksingers and members of the general public with the traditional music heritage of Newfoundland.

Fonds is arranged into two series: 1. Songs E (87-157) comprises ca. 150 audiocassettes of songs in English; 2. Songs and tunes (99-139) comprises 18 audiocassettes of instrumental music and songs in Gaelic and French.

RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS:

No restrictions on access

FINDING AID AVAILABLE:

Audio indexes available

TERMS GOVERNING USE AND REPRODUCTION:

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LANGUAGE:

English

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Title based on creator and contents of fonds. Peacock's original recordings are housed in the Centre for Folk Culture Studies at the Canadian Museum of Civilization.