

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

MacEdward Leach 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:

MacEdward Leach Fonds

COLLECTION NUMBER:

Special Collection Number I.5
Accession Number 78-054

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

138 cm of textual records
102 audio recordings
89 photonegatives

DATES:

1949-1951, 1960

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY/BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH:

Leach edited standard editions of the romances *Amis and Amiloun* (1937) and *Paris and Vienne* (1957) as well as *The Ballad Book* (1955), *The Critics and the Ballad* (1961) with Tristram Potter Coffin and *Folk Ballads and Songs of the Labrador Coast* (1965). Just before he died, he completed the revised ballad bibliography for Wells's "Manual of the writings in Middle English, 1050-1400". Leach was dedicated to folklore and its development as an academic discipline, and expended much energy on

behalf of the American Folklore Society and its operations. From 1943 to 1960 Leach was Secretary-Treasurer of the Society and from 1960 to 1962, its President. During this time he almost single-handedly nurtured that organisation from near collapse to vigour, encouraging local societies as a foundation for the national one, inaugurating the Bibliographical and Special Series to generate revenue and giving his time whenever needed.

As early as 1949, and throughout his career, Leach collected folksongs, ballads, and instrumental folk music in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, Jamaica, and the Southern Mountains of the United States. In fact, he made several trips to Newfoundland during which he collected more than 600 songs and other folklore. Leach's first wife was Alice May Doan (Maria Leach), with whom he had a son, Donald; his second was Nancy Rafetto, with whom he had also a son, Douglas.

SCOPE AND CONTENT:

Fonds consists primarily of audio recordings and field notes made in Newfoundland, Labrador and Nova Scotia during Leach's field trips. They include 102 audio recordings made in 1949, 1950, 1951 and 1960. Included also are Leach's tape tables of contents; field notebooks with textual and musical transcriptions; index cards containing information on songs and singers and items of folklore of various genres; 89 b&w negatives of coastal scenes and individuals; photocopies of correspondence with various Newfoundlanders and Canadian officials regarding his proposed field trips, and from informants in Newfoundland.

Source: Article by T.P. Coffin in American Folklore- An Encyclopedia by Jan Harold Brunvandt.

RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS:

Access with permission of archivist; reference copies available

FINDING AID AVAILABLE:

Indexes to audio recordings and photographs are available

TERMS GOVERNING USE AND REPRODUCTION:

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LANGUAGE:

English

Gaelic

ACCOMPANYING MATERIAL:

Reference copies of audio recordings are available

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Title based on creator and contents of fonds. The University of Pennsylvania Research Annex has copies of the Newfoundland material as well as Leach's manuscripts and sound recordings from fieldtrips to other locations.