Queen's University Archives

Finding Aid - William Everett McNeill fonds (F00844)

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Language of description: English

William Everett McNeill fonds

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Summary information

Repository:	Queen's University Archives
Title:	William Everett McNeill fonds
ID:	F00844
Date:	1920-1947 (date of creation)
Physical description:	ca. 200 lantern slides, 0.08 m of textual records, 37 audio reels, 1 badge, 1 photograph : b&w
Physical location:	2999 (McNeill)
Physical location:	V022.1
Physical location:	SR47-SR83
Physical location:	SR87
Language:	English
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	Description created 2019-06-18. Archivist: Jeremy Heil

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

William McNeill was born in Lower Montague, Prince Edward Island and was educated at Acadia University and Harvard. After teaching at Bates College for three years, he returned to Harvard where he earned a PhD in English in 1909.

He joined Queen's English Department the same year as an Assistant Professor and quickly gained a reputation as a precise scholar. He served as acting department head in 1913-14 and was appointed department head in 1920, but only held the position for three weeks. Former principal Daniel Miner Gordon convinced the Board of Trustees that McNeill was a dull and uninspiring teacher and persuaded them to move him to the recently vacated position of Registrar and Treasurer.

It was a humiliating blow for McNeill, who never wanted to be anything but a scholar, but he buried his humiliation in work and soon demonstrated an unusual talent for administration and financial management. He proved himself so indispensable to the university that he was appointed Vice-Principal in 1930, but still held the position of Treasurer as well. Between 1930 and 1936, during the Principalship of William Hamilton Fyfe, McNeill virtually ran the university because Fyfe disliked administrative duties.

He urged the Trustees of Queen's to safeguard the University's endowment, and his wisdom was applauded during the Depression. He was known for his penny-pinching during these lean years, and although many resented his strict financial control, the Queen's community was proud of the fact that it did not reduce salaries during the Depression as most other universities did. McNeill produced a balanced

budget every year, and somehow managed to cut $100,000 from expenditures. He was known to count packets of 1000 envelopes to check if they were all there, and to turn down a professor's request for a pencil sharpener because there was already one on another floor in the same building.

It was largely to his credit that Queen's survived the Depression without drastic cutbacks. He remained Vice-Principal and a powerful figure at Queen's until his retirement in 1947, after which he served on the Board of Trustees.

McNeill was granted honorary degrees by three universities, including Queen's. He willed his house at 32 Queen's Crescent (now Bader Lane) to the university and it now serves as the Ban Righ Centre. McNeill House is named in his honour.

McNeill's wife, Caroline McNeill, was Queen's first Dean of Women and later a professor of Spanish and Italian.

McNeill is buried in the Cataraqui Cemetery.

Scope and content

The fonds consists of a letter (1947 Jan. 12), essays and addresses, and a catalogue of his personal sound recording collection, along with the sound recordings themselves. Note and delegate badge, with picture of his housekeeper. The slides depict views of Oxford, England, Western Canada schools, theatre, art, and lectures on Shakespeare.

Notes

Title notes

Immediate source of acquisition

Gift of Mr. O'Kane.

Location of originals

2999 (McNeill)
V022.1
SR47-SR83
SR87

Restrictions on access

Open

Conditions governing use

Public domain

Other notes

- **Publication status**: Published

Series descriptions

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
F00844-f1	File - Papers	1920-1947		2999(McNeill), File 1
F00844-f2	File - Note & delegate badge	1946		2999(McNeill), File 2
F00844-f3	File - Art	[ca. 1900]		V022.1
F00844-f4	File - Theatre	[ca. 1900]		V022.1
F00844-f5	File - Shakespeare	[ca. 1900]		V022.1
F00844-f6	File - Oxford views	[ca. 1900]		V022.1
F00844-f7	File - Western Canada schools	[ca. 1900]		V022.1
F00844-f8	File - Miscellaneous	[ca. 1900]		V022.1
F00844-f9	File - AMS Film Executive	23 Nov. 1947		SR47
F00844-f10	File - Poetry Reading by W.E. McNeill (c.1947)	1947		SR48
F00844-f11	File - Old Brush Tape (c.1947)	1947		SR49
F00844-f12	File - Christmas at Mr. Hays 1947; and New Years at Home 1948; and Members of Executive Committee of Trustees Speaking on Jan. 3, 1948	1948		SR50
F00844-f13	File - Summer School - 1948, 1950; Nuns - Sisters of Providence; Father Hanley - 1949; Summer School 1954	1954		SR51
F00844-f14	File - Mrs. Angus, Dr. Angus, Dr. Stevens, April 12, 1948, Mrs. and Dr. Stevens, 1951, Children of Dr. and Mrs. Robertson	12 Apr. 1948-1952		SR52
F00844-f15	File - In Memory of My Wife - 1948	1948		SR53
F00844-f16	File - Readings from Poems, Plays etc. by various people; Andre Beiler Talks about a Painting, 1948	1948		SR54
F00844-f17	File - President Roosevelt - Convocation Aug. 18, 1938, Queen's and Mrs. Roosevelt - AMS Lecture	18 Aug. 1938		SR55
F00844-f18	File - Davis, Elmer - Nov. 28, 1952; MacFarlane, John Calvin - March 7, 1953	1953		SR56
F00844-f19	File - Henel, Heinrich - Sept. 4, 1952; Kyte, Ernest Cockburn - Sept. 12, 1952; Healy, Kathleen - Dec. 14, 1952	1952		SR57
F00844-f20	File - La Chapelle, Nicole - Aug. 5, 1952; service at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church - June 1, 1952	1952		SR58
F00844-f21	File - MacPhail, Alexander - June 26, 1948; MacPhail, Mory St. John - July 20, 1952; Sermon	1952		SR59

F00844-f22	File - Clark, G.H. - Oct. 17, 1941	1941	SR60
F00844-f23	File - Pratt, E.J. - Jan. 21, 1948 and Aug. 17, 1948; MacLeish, Archibald - Oct. 18, 1948; McKellar, Phoebe Erskine - Oct. 19, 1948	1948	SR61
F00844-f24	File - Harrison, F.L. - Aug. 21, 1950; Queen Elizabeth II 1953; MacKintosh, W.A. - 1953	1953	SR62
F00844-f25	File - Dunning Trust Lecture - Jan. 21, 1948	21 Jan. 1948	SR63
F00844-f26	File - Eliot, T.S.; MacDonnell, James MacKerras - Oct. 31, 1948; Provost Seeley and President Moore - Jan. 10, 1951; President Gilmour - March 5, 1951.	1951	SR64
F00844-f27	File - "I Can Hear it Now"; "Othello"	1948	SR65
F00844-f28	File - MacKay, Keiller - Nov. 18, 1948; Adams, Dorothea Graves March 28, 1952; McLennan, James L. - May, 1952	1952	SR66
F00844-f29	File - Robertson, J.K. - June 6, 1951; Clarke, George Herbert and Clark, A.L. and Etherington - Nov. 1951	6 Jun. 1951-Nov. 1951	SR67
F00844-f30	File - Queen's University. Installation of Principal William Archibald Mackintosh (Oct. 19, 1951)	19 Oct. 1951	SR68
F00844-f31	File - Queen's University. Installation of Principal William Archibald Mackintosh (Oct. 19, 1951)	19 Oct. 1951	SR69
F00844-f32	File - Queen's University. Installation of Principal William Archibald Mackintosh (Oct. 19, 1951); MacKintosh, William Archibald: New Year's Address (for 1956, 1957, and 1958)	19 Oct. 1951-1958	SR70
F00844-f33	File - Queen's University. Retirement Dinner for Principal Robert Charles Wallace (1951)	1951	SR71
F00844-f34	File - Queen's University. Adelaide Hall - Oct. 24, 1952; St. Laurent, Prime Minister L.S.	24 Oct. 1952	SR72
F00844-f35	File - Queen's University. Convocation (Jan. 8, 1948); Brockington, Leonard Walter (March 22, 1949)	8 Jan. 1948	SR73
F00844-f36	File - Queen's University. Dunning Trust lectures, excerpts - 1950, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955	1950-1955	SR74
F00844-f37	File - Queen's University. Dunning Trust Lectures - 1956, 1957, 1961, 1962	1956-1962	SR75
F00844-f38	File - Agnes Etherington Art Centre (Queen's University) and Canadian Art - 1957; Queen's University. Opening of Synchrotron - 1950.	1950-1957	SR76
F00844-f39	File - Fyfe, William Hamilton - 1949 and Sept. 10, 1954; Wallace, Robert Charles - 1951; Mackintosh, W.A. - 1958	[Copied ca. 1958] (originally	SR77

		created 1949-1958)	
F00844-f40	File - Visitors to Queen's University - 1948 to 1955	1955	SR78
F00844-f41	File - Whitton, Charlotte Elizabeth - March 21, 1953; Graham, Gerald S. - Aug. 20, 1954; Farrell, James Macalister; McLeod, Hugh Alexander - Dec. 20, 1945; Humphrey, George - Aug. 21, 1949	1949	SR79
F00844-f42	File - Queen's University - Chancellor - Installation (John Stirling)	20 Oct. 1960	SR80
F00844-f43	File - "Have you anything to declare?" - 1947	1947	SR81
F00844-f44	File - Address on the Occasion of receiving an Honourary Doctor of Laws Degree, Queen's University on May 6, 1936; "The Story of Queen's" - Address at the centennial celebration, Queen's University on Oct. 1941	1936-1941	SR82
F00844-f45	File - Douglas, Alice Vibert. "Forty Minutes with Einstein" - Oct. 1957; "Fundamental Theory of Eddington" - Oct. 1957.	1957	SR83
F00844-f46	File - Queen's University. Dunning Trust Lectures 1960, 1963	1960-1963	SR87