

# York University Archives & Special Collections (CTASC)

## Finding Aid - Margaret Laurence fonds (F0341)

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# Margaret Laurence fonds

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## Summary information

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**Repository:** York University Archives & Special Collections (CTASC)

**Title:** Margaret Laurence fonds

**ID:** F0341

**Date:** 1953-1987 (date of creation)

**Physical description:** 10.24 m of textual records  
260 photographs  
29 drawings  
4 postcards  
2 audio reels  
2 posters  
5 audio discs  
28 audio cassettes  
3 film reels : col. ; 16 mm  
1 Super 8 film cartridge  
2 videocassettes : VHS

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

Margaret Laurence (1926-1987), writer, was born in Neepawa, Manitoba and educated at United College in Winnipeg, Manitoba (BA 1947). Following her marriage to John Laurence (1947), she lived in Somaliland and the Gold Coast (now Somalia and Ghana), in the 1950s. Laurence returned to Canada in 1957. She moved to England in 1962 and returned to Canada in 1969. In 1974 she settled in Lakefield, Ontario. Laurence served as a writer-in-residence at the University of Toronto in 1969 and was named chancellor of Trent University (Peterborough, Ontario) in 1981. Laurence was a founding member of the Writers Union of Canada, but left the organization in a dispute over its acceptance of money from the Canadian government. Active in peace organizations and intensely interested in women's concerns, Laurence views and works did cause controversy. Her books drew criticism from certain elements in Laurence's adopted community. This group tried to have books removed from the school curriculum because of their alleged pornographic content.

Margaret Laurence was the author of five novels, including the Manawaka quartet (*The Stone Angel*, *A Jest of God*, *The Fire Dwellers*, *The Diviners*), short stories, essays, travel memoirs and children's books. She was named a Companion of the Order of Canada (1971) and was awarded the Molson Prize in 1975.

## Scope and content

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The fonds consists of Margaret Laurence's records pertaining to her activities as a writer and to her personal life. The fonds includes correspondence, financial records, manuscripts, printed material, personal files, graphic materials, sound recordings and moving image records.

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## Notes

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### Title notes

### Immediate source of acquisition

Acquired from Margaret Laurence and her family on various dates between 1980 and 1989.

### Restrictions on access

Researchers wishing access to the Margaret Laurence fonds must sign the Access and Use Agreement form before access is granted.

### Finding aids

Temporary inventory of materials available as pdf linked to this description.

### Related material

There are related groups of records in the McClelland & Stewart archives held at McMaster University Library (see: "<http://library.mcmaster.ca/archives/findaids/fonds/m/mcstew.htm>":<http://library.mcmaster.ca/archives/findaids/fonds/m/mcstew.htm>), and a selection of Laurence's personal library held at Trent University's Special Collections (see: "<http://www.trentu.ca/admin/library/archives/Bibl%20ML%20bibl%202012.pdf>":<http://www.trentu.ca/admin/library/archives/Bibl%20ML%20bibl%202012.pdf>).

A small collection of items from Laurence's personal library available in York's Special Collections, under call number ""MLL"":[https://www.library.yorku.ca/find/Search/Results?mylang=en&lookfor=MLL\\*&submit=Find&type=CallNumber](https://www.library.yorku.ca/find/Search/Results?mylang=en&lookfor=MLL*&submit=Find&type=CallNumber).

### Accruals

The fonds comprises the following accessions: 1980-001, 1982-002, 1984-004, 1986-006, 1989-039. No further accruals are expected.

### Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published

- **Level of detail:** Partial
- **Status description:** Revised
- **Description identifier:** F0341
- **Institution identifier:** ON00370

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## Collection holdings

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### **Series: S00006.00 - Correspondence**

Title: Correspondence

ID: S00006.00

Date: 1963-1987, predominant 1972-1987 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of correspondence to and from Margaret Laurence and is arranged in nine subseries:

S00006.01: Correspondence with friends and family

S00006.02: Business correspondence

S00006.03: Correspondence with other writers

S00006.04: Correspondence with artists

S00006.05: General correspondence

S00006.06: Subject files

S00006.07: Correspondence outward

S00006.08: Correspondence relating to the censorship controversy.

S00006.09: Correspondence regarding the death of Margaret Laurence

Physical description: 7.25 m of textual records

11 photographs : col. and b&w ; 10 x 15 cm or smaller

Finding aids:

A PDF file list for this series is attached to the description.

Publication status:

Published

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)
  - Graphic material (documentary form)
- 

### **Series: S00007.00 - Financial records**

Title: Financial records

ID: S00007.00

Date: 1961-1986 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of financial statements, correspondence with banks and insurance companies, royalty statements and other income statements, household budgets including mortgage statements and insurance payments, and extensive income tax information for each year including anything deemed by Margaret Laurence to be of relevance for tax purposes.

Physical description: 0.54 m of textual records

Finding aids:

A PDF file list for this series is attached to the description.

Publication status:

Published

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)
- 

## **Series: S00008.00 - Manuscripts**

Title: Manuscripts

ID: S00008.00

Date: 1953-1986 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of manuscripts by Margaret Laurence and manuscripts by other writers. The manuscripts by Margaret Laurence consist of notes and research for *The Diviners*, manuscripts and short stories, children's stories, articles, speeches and addresses, poetry, reviews, translations of Somali poetry, reviews of *A Tree for Poverty*, a music score for *For the Whaling Fleets*, drafts of introductions to other writers' books, and recommendations for other writers. Items written by other writers include articles about Margaret Laurence and other topics, short stories, essays, poems, speeches, MA theses and reviews. Included are a typescript for Sandy Stern's "And After This Summer" (a screenplay for *The Firedwellers*), a television script for *A Bird in the House* (adapted by P. Wilson) and a film script for *The Olden Days Coat* (screenplay by S. Marcus), a musical adaptation of *Jason's Quest* and an adaptation for the stage of *The Stone Angel*.

Physical description: 0.93 m of textual records

Finding aids:

A PDF file list for this series is attached to the description.

Publication status:

Published

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)
- 

**Series: S00009.00 - Printed material**

Title: Printed material

ID: S00009.00

Date: 1963-1987 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of documents by or about Margaret Laurence include articles written by other writers, journals and publications, newspaper clippings, articles from journals, book reviews, promotional material and other miscellaneous items.

Physical description: 0.97 m of textual records

1 photograph

Finding aids:

A PDF file list for this series is attached to the description.

Publication status:

Published

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)
- 

**Series: S00010.00 - Personal files**

Title: Personal files

ID: S00010.00

Date: 1965-1987 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of date calendars (1965-1987), address books, honorary degrees, curriculum vitae, miscellaneous notes and personal items.

Physical description: 0.55 m of textual records

Finding aids:

A PDF file list for this series is attached to the description.

Publication status:

Published

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)
- 

### **Series: S00011.00 - Graphic materials**

Title: Graphic materials

ID: S00011.00

Date: [196-?]-1987 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of photographs of Margaret Laurence, family snapshots and other various subjects, artwork consisting of illustrations for children's books, drawings sent to Laurence, postcards of artists' works, and posters. The photographs represent the majority of the photographs found among the Laurence papers; however, some photographs do appear in other series of the fonds.

Physical description: 248 photographs : col. and b&w ; 10 x 15 cm or smaller

29 drawings

4 postcards

2 posters

Finding aids:

A PDF file list for this series is attached to the description.

Publication status:

Published

Access points:

- Graphic material (documentary form)
- 

### **Series: S00012.00 - Sound recordings**

Title: Sound recordings



ID: S00012.00

Date: 1973-1987 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of sound recordings of readings, speeches and convocations addresses by Margaret Laurence, interviews with Laurence (includes interview with Helen Trotter re: the Censorship Controversy), tributes to Laurence, recordings of Songs From The Diviners, and other recordings of interviews and presentations of interest to Laurence. Two filmstrips accompany two of the audio cassettes.

Physical description: 5 audio discs : 33 1/3 rpm

28 audio cassettes

2 audio reels : 12.7 cm (5 inch)

Finding aids:

A PDF file list for this series is attached to the description.

Publication status:

Published

Access points:

- Sound recording (documentary form)
- 

**Series: S00013.00 - Moving image records**

Title: Moving image records

ID: S00013.00

Date: 1978-1987 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Series consists of an interview with Margaret Laurence on the TV news, Laurence receiving an honorary degree from Trent University in 1981, and tributes to Laurence.

Physical description: 3 film reels : col. ; 16 mm

1 Super 8 film cartridge

2 videocassettes : VHS

Finding aids:

A PDF file list for this series is attached to the description.

Publication status:

Published

Access points:

- Moving images (documentary form)
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