Reference number: MLMSS 3354

Guide to the Papers of the Neilson family

Mitchell Library,
State Library of New South Wales

Contact information:

The Curator of Manuscripts,
State Library of New South Wales,
Macquarie Street, Sydney
New South Wales, Australia.
Phone: +61 2 9273 1506
Fax: +61 2 9273 1248
Email: manuscripts@sl.nsw.gov.au
URL: http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au

Original finding-aid prepared by:

Manuscripts Section

Encoded by:

Susan Lloyd

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Summary

Creator: Neilson family
Title: Papers of the Neilson family, ca. 1880 - 1972
Date range: 1880 - 1972
Reference number: MLMSS 3354
Extent: 7 boxes & 1 folder of Ms., typescript, processed typescript, newscuttings, printed
Repository: Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales
Abstract: The collection comprises literary manuscripts, correspondence and papers of John Shaw Neilson; literary papers and correspondence of Frank Neilson; and papers of John Neilson and Maggie Neilson.

Biographical Note

John Shaw Neilson, poet, was born at Penola, South Australia, in 1872, eldest son of bush poet John Neilson (1844-1922) and Margaret, nee McKinnon. Neilson's formal education was limited and he spent much of his working life as an itinerant rural labourer. Later in John Shaw Neilson's life defective eyesight made it increasingly difficult for him to write down his own poetry and he often dictated it to fellow workmen. A.G. Stephens, as literary editor of the Bulletin, encouraged John Shaw Neilson in his work and later became his literary agent. During his lifetime Neilson published a number of volumes of poetry including Heart of Spring (1919), Ballad and Lyrical Poems (1923), New Poems 1927, Collected Poems edited by R.H. Croll (1934), and Beauty Imposes (1938). Further volumes were published after Neilson's death in 1942.

Three volumes of poetry of John Neilson (1844-1922) have been published although much of his work was lost. The published volumes are Poem for Recitation: Love's Summer in the Snow(1893), The Men of the Fifties (1938) and The Song of the Shearer(1960)

Administrative Information

Access
Collection is open to research.
Restrictions on Use
Copyright of materials described in this guide is governed by copyright law in Australia.

Preferred Citation
[Name of item], Papers of the Nielson family, ca.1880-1972, MLMSS 3354, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales.

Provenance
This collection was acquired from Mr. R.J. McKimm, J.S. Neilson's nephew, in 1977.

Access Terms

Personal Names
- Franklin, Miles, 1879-1954
- Gilmore, Mary, Dame, 1865-1962
- Neilson, Frank
- Neilson, John, 1844-1922
- Neilson, John Shaw, 1872-1942
- Stephens, A.G. (Alfred George), 1865-1933

Subjects
- Poets, Australian -- 19th century.
- Poets, Australian -- 20th century.

Series List and Descriptions

I. John Shaw Neilson, 1892-ca.1941

A. Correspondence, 1906-ca.1941 (Box MLMSS 3354/1)

Correspondents include Frank Neilson, 1931-1941, John Neilson, father of John Shaw Neilson, 1919-1922, A.G. Stephens, 1906-1931, Miles Franklin, 1940, Dame Mary Gilmore, 1937, William
Neilson, 1941, Constance Stephens, ca.1923-ca.1925 and R.J. McKimm, 1941

B. Literary manuscripts, ca.1892-1942 (Box MLMSS 3354/2-3)

i. Fragments from notebooks, ca.1892-ca.1935 (Box MLMSS 3354/2)
   (Reel CY 1087)

   In 1949 the bulk of the Neilson notebooks together with leaves from these
   notebooks and miscellaneous material were acquired from Frank Neilson. These items are filed at A3036-A3038. Prior to their acquisition by
   the Mitchell Library, Frank Neilson had extracted leaves from some
   notebooks and pasted them into other books. These leaves have now been
   separated by the Mitchell Library and remain loose in the books into which
   they were pasted, and are at A3038. Further leaves from these notebooks
   which have been removed by Frank Neilson and which were not acquired
   in 1949 were acquired from Mr. R.J. McKimm, John Shaw Neilson's nephew, in 1977 and are filed here. Ruth Harrison, J.F. Burrows and Clifford Hanna have reconstructed the notebooks by piecing
   together parts of the 1949 collection with the McKimm collection to form a
   series of intact notebooks. The result of their work is on microfilm at

   ii. Poems, ca.1907-ca.1941
       Ms. typescript and printed (Box MLMSS 3354/3)
       (Reel CY 1087)

       With some by amanuenses.

C. Miscellaneous papers, 1915-1942 (Box MLMSS 3354/3)

   Include legal and financial papers.

II. Frank Neilson, ca.1889-1972

A. Correspondence, 1908-ca.1961 (Box MLMSS 3354/5)

   Correspondents include John Shaw Neilson, 1917-ca.1942, John Neilson, father of John Shaw Neilson, 1917-1922, William Neilson, 1920-

B. Literary papers, 1889-ca.1938 (Box MLMSS 3354/6)
Include his own poetry, n.d., a poem by Maggie Neilson, 1889, transcribed by Frank Neilson, and poems and short stories by John Shaw Neilson, ca.1893-ca.1938 and John Neilson, father of John Shaw Neilson, ca.1890, transcribed by Frank Neilson.

C. Miscellaneous papers, 1920-1972 (Box MLMSS 3354/7)


III. Miscellaneous papers, ca.1880-1972
(Box MLMSS 3354/8/1-6)


IV. Associated papers, 1942-1972
(Box MLMSS 3354/8)

Include copy of an address on John Shaw Neilson by Flora Eldershaw given at the opening of the children's library at Footscray, Victoria, 1946 and newscuttings, 1942-1972

V. Pictorial material, n.d.
Pic. Acc. 4559

The collection includes pictorial material located at Pic.Acc. 4559.