

# University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections

## Finding Aid - Donald K. Gordon Collection (MSS 216)

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Language of description: English

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# Donald K. Gordon Collection

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## Summary information

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<b>Repository:</b>	University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections
<b>Title:</b>	Donald K. Gordon Collection
<b>ID:</b>	MSS 216
<b>A [alternative]:</b>	2005-101
<b>Date:</b>	1968-2003 (date of accumulation)
<b>Date:</b>	1968-2003 (date of creation)
<b>Physical description:</b>	0.01 m of textual records.
<b>Language:</b>	English
<b>Dates of creation, revision and deletion:</b>	Inventory prepared by Jason Peters (December 1, 2005). Revised by N. Courrier (October 2018). Revised by M. Horodyski (June 2019).

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

A. J. (Alderman Johnson) Roden, "tailor poet," was born March 28, 1893 in Jamaica. His date and place of death are unknown, although he did live to be at least eighty-nine years old. On August 14, 1911, Roden moved to Limon, Costa Rica where he was educated at a preparatory school.. Recognized as a good student, Roden began writing poetry at age twelve and won a scholarship to attend St. George's College, but was prevented from attending by his father who disliked Catholicism. Instead, Roden became a tailor and set up shop in Port Limón, moving between Matina and Bataan as economic conditions necessitated. Unable to achieve his goal of publishing a collection of his poetry, in spite of gaining support from Professor Donald K. Gordon and the important Costa Rican writer Quince Duncan, Roden burnt most of his work. Some of his work had been published in the Costa Rican periodical *The American Advisor* between 1968 and 1971 and other poems were self-published.

Donald K. Gordon, in his article about Roden titled "Alderman Johnson Roden: The Tailor-Poet" (1983) describes Roden as "one of the earliest and strongest voices of protest against racism." Gordon also described Roden as a "rarity" as he wrote in English while living in a Spanish-speaking country.

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

Donald K. Gordon was born on September 27, 1935. He attended Calabar High School in Jamaica from 1948 to 1953. In 1969, Gordon recieved his Ph.D. from the University of Toronto in Spanish American

Literature and went on to be employed by the University of Manitoba from 1970 to 2001. Gordon became a Professor in 1984 and was named Professor Emeritus in 2004 after his retirement on July 1, 2001. His publications include *Language and Racism: Historicity* (2007), two books in Spanish on the subjects of Juan Rulfo and Quince Duncan, several chapters in books and numerous articles for both the scholarly and popular press. One notable article presented Alderman Johnson Roden's work for the first time in the North American journal, *Afro-Hispanic Review*.

## Custodial history

The collection was accumulated by Donald K. Gordon and donated to University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections in 2005.

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## Scope and content

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The collection consists of A.J. Roden's photographs, poems, as well as correspondence between A.J. Roden and D. K. Gordon.

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## Notes

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### Title notes

### Restrictions on access

There are no restrictions on this material.

### Finding aids

A finding aid can be downloaded from the fonds-level description by clicking on the "Download" link under "Finding Aid" on the right hand side of the screen.

### Accruals

No further accruals to this collection are expected.

### Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
- **Level of detail:** Partial
- **Status description:** Draft

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## Access points

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- (documentary form)

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## Series descriptions

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### Poems by A. J. Roden

Date: 1968-[c.1983] (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Poems published in The American Advisor including handwritten and typed poems.

Physical location: Room 18A (Blue): R-15

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)

Publication status:

published

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#### File / item list

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### Correspondence

Date: 1976-1983 (date of creation)

Scope and content:

Letters written by A.J. Roden to Donald K. Gordon

Physical location: Room 18A (Blue): R-15

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)

Publication status:

published

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#### File / item list

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### Photographs

<p><u>Date</u>: 1977 (date of creation)</p> <p><u>Scope and content</u>:</p> <p>Photographs of A.J. Roden</p> <p><u>Physical location</u>: Room 18A (Blue): R-15</p> <p><u>Access points</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Graphic material (documentary form)</li></ul> <p><u>Publication status</u>:</p> <p>published</p>
<b>File / item list</b>
<p><b>Secondary materials</b></p> <p><u>Date</u>: 1983-2003 (date of creation)</p> <p><u>Physical location</u>: Room 18A (Blue): R-15</p> <p><u>Access points</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Textual record (documentary form)</li></ul> <p><u>Publication status</u>:</p> <p>published</p>
<b>File / item list</b>