

University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections

Finding Aid - Mary Olga Park collection (MSS 380)

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Mary Olga Park collection

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Summary information

Repository: University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections

Title: Mary Olga Park collection

ID: MSS 380

Date: 2014 (date of creation)

Date: 2011 (date of creation)

Date: 1960-1985 (date of creation)

Date: [19-]-[20-] (date of creation)

Physical description: 0.1 metres of textual material, including 2 books

**Dates of creation,
revision and deletion:**

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Susan McCaslin (1947-) is a Canadian poet, and was professor of English and Creative Writing at Douglas College in British Columbia from 1984 to 2007.

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Brian Longhurst (1944-) is an English author and mystic who moved to Canada as a young man, and later moved back to England with his wife Theresa.

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

A spiritualist mystic and self-published writer on the subject, Mary Olga Park was born on February 24, 1891 in Gargrave, Yorkshire, England, immigrated to Vancouver at the age of 19 and was known for her pantheistic theological beliefs and the prophetic visions she experienced. As a child, Park showed an interest in nature, music and religion. Brought up a Wesleyan, Park had no qualms about crossing denominational lines, attending services at an Anglican church when her own shut down due to lack

of membership. The move to Vancouver was difficult for Park as it meant abandoning the connections she'd made in England surrounding her music career. At first, her father, Bruce Bracewell, worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway, but later became a dairy farmer in South Vancouver and was one of the organizers of the milk board. Park's dream visions began in 1914 and showed her visions of the soldiers' experiences in the First World War. The most rattling vision involved a powerful explosion that shook Park awake. Upon returning to sleep, she then dreamed of her father receiving a note, informing him that her brother, Maurice, a combatant in the war, was missing. Two weeks later, the family received such a letter and it was later discovered that Maurice was suffering from shell shock due to his experiences at Vimy Ridge. In 1917, Olga was married to James Fleming Park. They had two children: James Bruce Park and James Samuel Park. The latter passed away shortly after birth. Still interested in religion and spiritual growth, Park became a Sunday School teacher, but eventually became dissatisfied with the structured nature of church-based religion and its interpretations of Christian teachings, or "Churchianity", as she called it. This caused her to break ties with her church and, after her husband's death in 1959, she went to live with her son until 1964 when she moved to a small cottage in Port Moody. By this time, she had already self-published a book, *Between Time and Eternity*, which documented her spiritual "awakening". Her beliefs as expressed in her book began to spread by both the book itself and by word of mouth until a number of "seekers" were drawn to her and began an informal group of "learners" who sought spiritual guidance. Park continued to live alone at her cottage until 1978 when, after breaking a leg, it was necessary to move back to Vancouver. Park passed away in December, 1985, followed only a few years later by her son.

Custodial history

The two books by Mary Olga Park were donated in 2011 by the Survival Research Institute of Canada (SRIC) with Walter Meyer zu Erpen (President) acting as the transferring agent. Brian Longhurst and Susan McCaslin donated their books in 2015; Susan McCaslin also donated the remaining material at this time.

Scope and content

The collection consists of materials relating to Mary Olga Park, including her books "Between Time and Eternity" (1960) and "Man, the Temple of God" (1968), other spiritual and biographical writings, and records of the Service of Mystical Communion with Christ (S.M.C.C.).

Notes

Title notes

Restrictions on access

There are no restrictions on this material.

Conditions governing use

Users must abide by relevant copyright legislation.

Finding aids

Online finding aids are available at the links below:

"MSS 380 (A.11-71)": http://umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/archives/collections/complete_holdings/ead/html/Olga-Park_2011.shtml

Related material

For more materials related to and created by Park, see the University of British Columbia Library Rare Books and Special Collections' Mary Olga Park fonds (RBSC-ARC-1771).

Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
- **Description identifier:** MSS 380
- **Institution identifier:** University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections
- **Accompanying material:** Susan McCaslin also donated a copy of her book "Into the Mystic: My Years with Olga" (2014), which is part of the Rare Book Library. Brian Longhurst donated "Seek Ye First the Kingdom: One Man's Journey with the Living Jesus" (2011), which is also a part of the RBL.

Access points

- McCaslin, Susan
- Textual record (documentary form)

Series descriptions

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
Accession MSS 380-A2015-148: Mary Olga Park Accrual				
<u>Access points:</u>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textual record (documentary form) 				
<u>Publication status:</u>				
published				
File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container

MSS 380- A2015-148-001	File - S.M.C.C. materials	n.d., 1972
MSS 380- A2015-148-002	File - Mary Olga Park writings	n.d., 1977, 1985