

# University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections

## Finding Aid - Peter Hugh Aykroyd fonds (MSS 456)

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# Peter Hugh Aykroyd fonds

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## Summary information

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**Repository:** University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections

**Title:** Peter Hugh Aykroyd fonds

**ID:** MSS 456

**Date:** 1921-2009 (date of creation)

**Physical description:** 0.26m textual records

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

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

(Samuel Cuthbert) Peter Hugh Aykroyd was born in 1922 in Ontario, Canada. He was a policy advisor to the Pierre Trudeau government and has currently retired with his wife Lorraine to the house that his grandfather lived in on Lake Loughborough. He participated in some of the séances of his grandfather as a small child (1929 onwards) and has had a lifelong interest in Spiritualism and the supernatural. In the 1990s, he and his sister Judy discovered many of his grandfather's journals and other papers. Peter eventually wrote and published the book *A History of Ghosts* (2009) that is largely based on those papers and his own experiences. He is the father of actors Peter J. and Dan Aykroyd, both of whom are still connected with the paranormal – Peter created the TV series *PSI Factor* (1996-2000), while Dan, who also hosted the show, co-wrote and acted in *Ghostbusters* (1984), which was partly derived from childhood memories and stories.

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## Administrative history / Biographical sketch

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### Note

Dr. Samuel Augustus Aykroyd was born in 1855 near Kingston, Ontario. In 1884 he married Ellen Jane Wemp, and had two children, Lillian and Maurice. Initially a schoolteacher, he became a dentist in 1892 and remained so until his death in 1933. He came to Spiritualism in the early 1900s, and around 1908 made his first visit to Lily Dale, New York, where one of the largest fixed Spiritualist camps existed. From 1920 onwards, Dr. Aykroyd and his wife hosted numerous séances at their cottage near Lake Loughborough (and occasionally in Kingston and Toronto), often using a medium named Walter Ashurst (1890-?). These séances were also variously attended by his son and daughter-in-law (Marjorie), and later their children (Peter and Maurice Jr.). The séances often resulted in a variety of psychic phenomena such as table tipping and voices, including many regular spirit communicators such as Irishman “Mike Whelan”, Ming dynasty-era “Lee Long”, Egyptian prince “Blue Light”, and Native American “Broken

Arrow". Although they attempted to achieve materialization of spirits, the Aykroyd group was never successful in that regard.

## **Custodial history**

Samuel Aykroyd's records, dating from 1921-1934, were found in the 1990s in a locked trunk in the basement of his Toronto home by his granddaughter, Judy Harvie, and his grandson, Peter Hugh Aykroyd. Peter Aykroyd donated these and his own records to the University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections in 2014, with Walter Meyer zu Erpen as the transferring agent.

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## **Scope and content**

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This fonds is comprised of 1) materials pertaining to the donor's grandfather, Dr. Samuel Aykroyd, including correspondence and other notes, and his journals compiled by Peter Aykroyd; and 2) materials pertaining to the donor, Peter Hugh Aykroyd, including correspondence about and a copy of his book.

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## **Notes**

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### **Title notes**

### **Physical condition**

Some of the correspondence is quite fragile and in plastic sheets.

### **Arrangement**

This collection is arranged according to the donor's order where possible.

### **Restrictions on access**

There are no restrictions on access.

### **Conditions governing use**

Users must abide by the relevant copyright legislation.

### **Finding aids**

A finding aid can be generated from this description.

### **Related material**

This fonds is one of a series of fonds and collections transferred to the Archives by Walter Meyer zu Erpen, President of the Survival Research Institute of Canada. It is related to the various other Psychological

Research and Spiritualist Collections that the University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections has attracted since it acquired the Hamilton Family fonds.

This fonds is one of a series of fonds and collections transferred to the Archives by Walter Meyer zu Erpen, President of the Survival Research Institute of Canada. It is related to the various other Psychical Research and Spiritualist Collections that the University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections has attracted since it acquired the Hamilton Family fonds.

## Accruals

Further accruals are expected.

## Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
- **Level of detail:** Full
- **Status description:** Final
- **Description identifier:** MSS 456 (A14-44)
- **Institution identifier:** UMASC

## Access points

- Textual record (documentary form)

## Series descriptions

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
	File - Samuel Aykroyd – Correspondence to son Maurice & daughter-in-law Marjorie	1921-1926		A2014-044, Box 0001 File 0001
	File - Samuel Aykroyd – Transcriptions of séance messages	1933-1934		A2014-044, Box 0001 File 0002
	File - Samuel Aykroyd – “Usury”: draft(s) of letter “to the editor of the Globe”, handwritten by S. Aykroyd	n.d.		A2014-044, Box 0001 File 0003
	File - Samuel Aykroyd – Unbound, thematic portion of “The Journals of a Kingston Spiritualist”	n.d.		A2014-044, Box 0001 File 0004
	File - Samuel Aykroyd – Unbound, thematic portion of “The Journals of a Kingston Spiritualist”	n.d.		A2014-044, Box 0001 File 0005
	File - Samuel Aykroyd – Unbound, thematic portion of The Journals of a Kingston Spiritualist	n.d.		A2014-044, Box 0001 File 0006

	File - Samuel Aykroyd – “The Journals of a Kingston Spiritualist Vol. I” [compiled by P.H. Aykroyd]	2002	A2014-044, Box 0002 File 0001
	File - Samuel Aykroyd – “The Journals of a Kingston Spiritualist Vol. II” [compiled by P.H. Aykroyd]	2002	A2014-044, Box 0002 File 0002
	File - Peter H. Aykroyd – Correspondence re: researching/writing book; "A History of Ghosts" by Peter Hugh Aykroyd	2006; 2009	A2014-044, Box 0002 File 0003