

Greville MacDonald:

An Inventory of His Papers at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center

Descriptive Summary

Creator	MacDonald, Greville, 1856-1944
Title:	Greville MacDonald Papers
Dates:	1905-1949
Extent:	6 boxes (2.52 linear feet)
Abstract:	The papers consist of holograph manuscripts, typescripts, notes and notebooks, correspondence, and clippings that help illuminate MacDonald's creative output as a writer of biography and fiction. They also include materials relating to Derrick Leon's <i>Ruskin, the Great Victorian</i> .
Call Number:	Manuscript Collection MS-02604
Language:	English.
Access	Open for research

Administrative Information

Acquisition	Purchase, 1967 (R3761)
Processed by	Christopher D. Filippi, 1995; completed by Joan Sibley, 1996
Repository:	Harry Ransom Center, The University of Texas at Austin

Biographical Sketch

Greville MacDonald was born in Manchester, England, on January 20, 1856. He was the eldest son of the notable Scottish poet and novelist, George MacDonald. His interest in literature is traced to his early childhood when his mother read him the finished manuscripts of *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, and the newly written fairy-tales of his father. His father invited some of the most notable British authors to his home including Matthew Arnold, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Lewis Carroll, and John Ruskin. Greville accompanied his father to the United States in 1872, and met such luminaries as Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Mark Twain, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and John Greenleaf Whittier.

Instead of following his father's path as a writer, Greville MacDonald decided to pursue a career in the medical profession. He enrolled in King's College School and Hospital as a medical student in 1876. He received his Bachelor of Medicine degree in 1877 from the University of London with honors in materia medica and pharmaceutical chemistry. He briefly served as an assistant to Joseph Lister where his main responsibilities were to clean and sterilize surgical instruments.

Greville MacDonald had a distinguished career as a throat specialist (1877-1904) and held positions such as Assistant Demonstrator of Anatomy at King's College (1885), Resident Medical Officer to the Hospital for Diseases of the Throat (1886-87), and Professor of Laryncology at King's College (1898-1904). He wrote numerous treatises on laryncology and drew large classes to his lectures. He belonged to numerous medical associations including Member of the Royal College of Physicians (1877), president of the throat section of the British Medical Association (1897), and a Corresponding Fellow of the American Laryngological Association. Lingering deafness prompted him to resign his offices in 1904 and retire to Haslemere, England.

Greville MacDonald spent the remaining forty years of his life writing novels for children and delving into biographical and autobiographical genres. He produced new editions of his father's compositions, including his fairy-tale *Phantastes*. Greville MacDonald was also an accomplished critic, which is evident in his analysis of his father's novels and poems in *The Life of George MacDonald and his Wife* (1924). Greville MacDonald died at his home in Haslemere on November 3, 1944.

Scope and Contents

The Greville MacDonald Papers, ca. 1905-1949 (bulk 1924-1944) consist of holograph manuscripts, original and carbon copy typescripts, notes and notebooks, correspondence, and clippings that help illuminate his creative output as a writer of biography and fiction between 1905 and 1944. The papers are arranged in three series: I. Works, 1905-1924; II. John Ruskin Material, 1944-1949, and III. Clippings, 1905-1915.

The first series represents MacDonald's endeavors in the genres of biography and fiction. Materials relating to *The Life of George MacDonald and his Wife* (1924) form the bulk of this collection. MacDonald relied on his father's papers and his own personal experience for his research material, both of which provided a unique perspective for the critical analysis of his father's poetry and juvenile literature. There are three drafts of this work in the collection, all reflecting his working process through extensive holographic revisions. Several drafts of "Pieces of Silver" (n.d.) represent an unpublished short story. Sixty pages of holographic notes on William Blake (ca. 1905-1907) record Blake's views on evolution, natural history, as well as an analysis of Milton. These notes may have been incorporated into a later work, *The Sanity of William Blake* (1908).

The John Ruskin Materials in the second series concern the publication of *Ruskin, the Great Victorian* (1949) by Derrick Leon. Leon, a close friend of MacDonald's, was allowed to make use of MacDonald's extensive collection of John Ruskin correspondence. Included are research materials (most notably Leon's letter books containing his transcriptions of Ruskin correspondence, 1863-1873), holograph and typescript drafts of the work, and correspondence. As both MacDonald and Leon died in 1944 after the completion of the first draft, Mary MacDonald continued her father's efforts to prepare the manuscript for publication. Her correspondence with the publisher, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. (1948-1949), documents the publication of this work in 1949, virtually unchanged from the first draft.

The final series gathers clippings from newspapers and British periodicals. Included are reviews of four of MacDonald's works: *The Child's Inheritance* (1910), *The Magic Crook* (1912), *Trystie's Quest* (1912), and *Jack and Jill* (1913). Also present are clippings of articles from *The Country-Side* (1905) and *The Educational Times* (1915) which reflect MacDonald's interests in natural history, botany, recreation, and pedagogy.

The HRHRC Art Collection contains examples of illustrations from Greville MacDonald's books. These illustrations include 45 original pen drawings by Arthur Hughes for the book *The Magic Crook* (1911), and an album of 59 mounted proof pulls of woodblocks by G. Blount, M. Norris, and M. Rhys that were possibly used for "The Vineyard."

Series I. Works, 1905-1924

The Life of George MacDonald and his Wife, 1924

Early typescript draft with holograph revisions, n.d.

box 1
folder 1-8

Incomplete typescript draft with holograph revisions, 1924

box 2
folder
1-11

Incomplete carbon copy with additional holograph revisions, 1924

box 3
folder
1-10

"Pieces of Silver," n.d.

Working notes and preliminary typescript draft

box 4
folder 1

Early holograph and typescript drafts with holograph revisions

folder
2-3

Later (probably final) typescript with revisions

folder 4-5

Notes on William Blake, 1905-1909

Quarto manuscript notebook

box 5 folder 1

Loosely inserted holographic and typescript notes

folder 2

Series II. John Ruskin Material, 1944-1949

Ruskin, the Great Victorian, 1949

Derrick Leon's letter books containing transcriptions of John Ruskin correspondence

1863-1868

box 5 folder 3

1868-1873

folder 4

Letter from Charles Goodspeed to Derrick Leon, 10 Feb. 1944

folder 5Transcript of holograph letter from John Ruskin to Lady Mount Temple, 8 Sept.
1870**folder
6**

Correspondence of Mary MacDonald to her publishers, 1948-1949

folder 7

Holograph bibliographic lists of Derrick Leon

folder 8

Holograph manuscript, first draft, 1944

**folder
9-12**

Holograph manuscript, first draft, 1944

**box 6 folder
1-4**

Later typescript version of Book VI, 1944

**folder
5**

Miscellaneous typescript pages with holograph revisions, n.d.

folder 6

Series III. Clippings, 1905-1915

Newspaper reviews of four books by MacDonald, 1910-1913

box 6
folder 7

Periodical clippings and an obituary of Charles Edward Maurice, 1905-1915

folder 8