

**University of Victoria Special Collections**  
**Graham, W. S. (William Sydney), 1918-1986**  
**SC135**

**Title**

W.S. Graham fonds

**Dates**

1949-1994

**Extent**

35 cm of textual records  
22 photographs  
11 drawings

**Biographical Sketch**

W.S. Graham was born in Greenock, Scotland. He was generally known as Sydney to his friends, but occasionally used the name "Jock". He began his working career as a journeyman engineer before becoming a full-time poet. He married Nessie Dunsmuir in 1954. Among his most important works are "Cage Without Grievance" (1942); "The Nightfishing" (1955); and "Implements In Their Places" (1977). He died in Cornwall, where he had resided for many years.

**Scope and Content**

The fonds consists primarily of typescript from "The Nightfishing" used for a radio broadcast; poetry worksheets for "Implements In Their Places", "Malcolm Mooney's Land", and "The Nightfishing"; correspondence with Crieff Williamson and Robin Skelton; and four notebooks, together with Robin Skelton's research notes. Also included is a typescript of "Aimed At Nobody", which was published posthumously, together with related publishing documents and correspondence. The final items are two folders of Graham's artwork and a silk screen portrait of Graham by William Featherston.

**Finding Aids**

File list available.

**Title Source**

Title based on the contents of the fonds.

**W.S. Graham**  
**Scottish poet, writer**

**Accession 97-027**

**1950-55**

**Poetry**

- Mostly extracts from "The Nightfishing" used for a poetry reading on the radio
- File 1.1 a) Introduction to "The Night Fishing":  
recording at 1900 to 1915 in Studio 3A  
tss, holo. corr. 2 l.
- b) Extracts from the poem "The Night Fishing"  
tss, holo. corr. & directions 18 l.
- c) Proposed note of introduction to 1st section  
tss, holo. notes, dated June 1955 1 l.
- d) Extracts from "The Night Fishing"  
Carbon tss, 16 l.
- e) "The Ballad of Baldy Bane"  
tss, corr. 5 l.
- f) "The Ballad of the Broad Close"  
tss, holo. notes 4 l.
- g) "As Brilliance Fell"  
tss, signed 1 l. (2 copies), holo. note on 2nd copy  
dated 7/ 9/ 50 this item only not from "The Nightfishing"

**Accession 97-029**

**1973**

**Location: S/04/11**

**Artwork**

Head and shoulder silk screen portrait of W.S. Graham  
- by William Featherston

**Accession 97-040**

**1949-94**

**Correspondence**

- File 1.2 To Crieff Williamson from W.S. Graham, (signed "Jock")  
14 tls, 6 hls (photocopies) 1949-50  
plus: holo. return address of WSG 1 l.  
holo. note to Alan from WSG 1 l.  
hls to Sylvia Skelton from Rosemary Courtney  
1 l. 21 May 94  
signed permission note from WSG to Robin Skelton - allowing  
copies to be made of all his mss.  
1 l. 15/ 4/ 70
- File 1.3 To Robin Skelton from W.S. Graham  
hls, 9 tls, handpainted xmas card 1955- 1958  
To Robin Skelton from Nessie Graham  
hls 1958  
To Robin Skelton from Margaret Snow  
tls 1994
- 1.4 To Robin Skelton from W.S. Graham

- |      |  |         |
|------|--|---------|
|      | 3 hls, 5 tls   | 1959    |
| 1.5  | To Robin Skelton from W.S. Graham<br>4 hls   | 1967-68 |
| 1.6  | To Robin Skelton from W.S. Graham<br>4 tls, 5 hls  | 1970-71 |
| 1.7  | To Robin Skelton from W.S. Graham<br>5 hls, 5 tls  | 1972    |
| 1.8  | To Robin Skelton from W.S. Graham<br>7 hls, 5 tls  | 1973    |
|      | To Robin Skelton from Nessie Graham<br>2 hls   | 1973    |
|      | plus: 4 holo. notes to Skelton family  |         |
| 1.9  | To Robin Skelton from W.S. Graham<br>2 hls, 11 tls   | 1974    |
| 1.10 | To Robin Skelton from W.S. Graham<br>8 tls, p.c.   | 1975-78 |
| 1.11 | To W.S. Graham from Robin Skelton<br>6 tlc   | 1968-73 |
|      | plus: hls to Robin Skelton from Kathleen ?   | 1975    |
|      | tls to                   "                   from Alan ?   | 1972    |
|      | copy of cable from RS to WSG   | 1968    |
|      | tls to RS from Edward Lucie-Smith  |         |
| 1.12 | Photographs of W.S. Graham<br>13 photos (9 by Michael Snow, 4 by Philobibliion??)<br>plus 2 photos of Featherston silkscreen of WSG<br>-owned by SC (see Accession 97-029 above)<br>and used for a cover of Malahat Review |         |
| 1.13 | Unsorted<br>-mostly to Robin Skelton from W.S. Graham 1970-84<br>plus some photocopies from WSG notebook<br>plus 2 tls to Kath   | 1977    |
| 1.14 | Various to Robin Skelton<br>-re posthumous WSG publication   | 1992-93 |
| 1.15 | Various from Robin Skelton<br>-re posthumous WSG publication   | 1992-96 |

### Poetry-Worksheets

- |      |                                     |   |                       |
|------|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
|      | <u>"Implements In Their Places"</u> |   |                       |
| File | 1.16                                | A. Various poems<br>-tss, holo. corr.   | 33 l. 1970-76         |
|      | 1.17                                | B. Mr. Simpson<br>-mss; tss, holo. corr. 15 l.<br>plus notebook; plus corrected galley proofs | 1969-71               |
|      | 1.18                                | C. Implements<br>-tss, holo. corr.<br>plus holo. index; plus corrected galley proofs          | 35 l. 1958-70         |
|      | 1.19                                | Unpublished poems<br>-mss; tss, holo. corr.<br>plus tss of prose poem                         | 57 l. 1955-75<br>2 l. |

- 1.20 "Malcolm Mooney's Land"  
 A. Various poems  
 -mss; tss, holo. corr. 27 l. 1958-70
- 1.21 B. Clusters Travelling Out  
 tss, holo. corr. 45 l. 1960-69  
 plus watercolour painting on verso of one leaf
- 1.22 "The Nightfishing"  
 -mss; tss, holo. corr. 11 l.
- 1.23 Correspondence re submissions to "The Malahat Review"  
 W.S. Graham to Robin Skelton hls 1979  
 Robin Skelton to WSG 6tlc 1975-80  
 plus tss, holo. corr. 3 l.
- 1.24 "DEOSIC/ Dawnwind"  
 -mss 2 l. 1952  
 plus photocopies of the mss.
- 1.25 "Aimed At Nobody" (posthumous work)  
 correspondence (RS with Faber)  
 -4 tls 1991  
 tss 63 l.  
 contract with Faber 14 l.  
 memorandum of agreement 13 l.  
 correspondence re: book  
 6 hls, 23 tls 1991-92  
 plus 27 l. tss; photocopies; photocopy of review
- 1.26 general correspondence 1977-89
- 1.27 -page proofs

### Miscellaneous items

- File 1.28 a) "Penguin Modern Poets 17: David Gascoyne, W.S. Graham, Kathleen Raine"  
 -galley proofs
- b) "Malcolm Mooney's Land"  
 -uncorrected proof copy
- c) "The Nightfishing"  
 -text of six poems included in a reading, May 1957
- d) "  
 -the text of seven poems, as c. with 1 poem added
- e) "What Is The Language Using Us For?"  
 -Malahat Review offprint
- f) Punter, David  
 "W.S. Graham Constructing A White Space"  
 -Malahat Review offprint
- g) poster for George Barker/ W.S. Graham poetry reading  
 -4 copies
- h) brochure for Poetry Book Society  
 -1975
- i) Alan Hancox book catalogue  
 -with W.S. Graham items

**Notebooks**

Notebook 1

-dated 1954, some loose drawings & mss

Notebook 2

-ca. 1955, date on 1 drawing

Notebook 3

-ca. 1964-67

Notebook 4

-ca. 1967-71

**Robin Skelton's research notes on W.S. Graham**

1972

1973

**Folder of miscellaneous artwork**

(17 items)

**1 folder of artwork in o/s**