

Royal Ontario Museum

Finding Aid - Helen Fernald fonds (SC4)

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Language of description: English

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<https://www.rom.on.ca/en/collections-research/library-archives>

<https://archeion.ca/helen-fernalds-manuscript-on-chinese-tomb-figures-at-rom>

Helen Fernald fonds

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Summary information

Repository:	Royal Ontario Museum
Title:	Helen Fernald fonds
Title [Helen Fernald's manuscript on Chinese Tomb Figures at the ROM] :	Helen Fernald's manuscript on Chinese Tomb Figures at the ROM
Reference code:	SC4
Date:	1951-1964 (creation)
Physical description:	5.1 centimeters of textual records
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	08/22/2023 E. Thomas. Creation.

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

Helen Elizabeth Fernald (1891-1964) was the Keeper of the East Asian Department of the Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology from 1948 until her retirement in 1960. She came to the ROM in 1944 to assist Bishop White, then Keeper of the East Asian Department, and to teach in the School of Chinese Studies at the University of Toronto. H.E. Fernald was born in December 1891 in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A., where her early education was directed by her father, who was a professor of entomology. She got her B.A. in 1914 at Mount Holyoke, and continued her education at Columbia University Teachers College, principally studying art and zoology. She worked as an artist and technician for the Columbia Zoology Department. Her interests moved away from zoology and she went to Bryn Maur College, where she became an instructor in art. Her interests again shifted, this time toward public education, and she then became Head of the Education Department at the University of Pennsylvania Museum, where in 1925 she was appointed Curator of Far Eastern Art and remained there for 10 more years, during which time she travelled widely to learn more about her field. In 1935 she moved to England and became a student at the Courtauld Institute of Art. She travelled and became a freelance writer for nearly four years after her studies concluded. In 1943 she became engaged by the Office of Strategic Services in Washington to prepare maps for Sicillian battlegrounds, and later she was transferred to the China unit mapping service. In 1944, Fernald was appointed Assistant Keeper in the East Asian Department at the ROM and Special Assistant to Bishop W.C. White. She was Acting Keeper while Bishop travelled to China from 1946 to 1947 and Assistant Professor at the School of Chinese Studies. When Bishop White retired in 1948, she took over his position. During her tenure she made surveys of the collection, prepared special exhibitions and catalogues, and wrote over 40 articles and papers on Chinese art and Court Costume. She became

gravely ill and retired in 1960 to New England. She died on August 20, 1964 in Wilmington, Delaware, U.S.A.

Scope and content

Fonds consists of the unfinished manuscript for Fernald's book 'Chinese Tomb Figures in the ROM,' including a list of the figures to be documented in the book as well as 215 pages of plate descriptions. In addition, this fonds contains related correspondence dealing with this project, as well as the issues that arose due to Miss Fernald's ill-health, which made it impossible for her to finish her work.

Notes

Immediate source of acquisition

Unknown

Restrictions on access

Open

Finding aids

None

Note [General]

Biographical information from: Museum Board Meeting Minutes November 19, 1964 Resolution moved by Prof. W.E. Swinton and Seconded by Prof. F.V. Winnett.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** published
-

Collection holdings

File: SC4-1 - Correspondence re: Fernald manuscript

Title: Correspondence re: Fernald manuscript

Reference code: SC4-1

Box number [alternative]: 1

Date: 1958-1964 (date of creation)

Scope and content: File consists of correspondence related to Helen Fernald's unfinished manuscript. It includes a list of items to be documented in the manuscript.

Physical description: 1 folder of textual material

Publication status:

published

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)
-

File: SC4-2 - Correspondence re: Fernald manuscript & edited draft of the manuscript

Title: Correspondence re: Fernald manuscript & edited draft of the manuscript

Reference code: SC4-2

Box number [alternative]: 1

Date: [ca. 1963] (date of creation)

Scope and content: File consists of correspondence related to Helen Fernald's unfinished manuscript and an edited draft of the manuscript.

Physical description: 1 folder of textual material

Publication status:

published

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)
-

File: SC4-3 - Plate descriptions

Title: Plate descriptions

Reference code: SC4-3

Box number [alternative]: 1

Date: [before 1964] (date of creation)

Scope and content: File consists of plate descriptions from Helen Fernald's unpublished manuscript.

Physical description: 1 folder of textual material

Publication status:

published

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)
-

File: SC4-4 - Plate descriptions

Title: Plate descriptions

Reference code: SC4-4

Box number [alternative]: 1

Date: [before 1964] (date of creation)

Scope and content: File consists of plate descriptions from Helen Fernald's unpublished manuscript.

Physical description: 1 folder of textual material

Publication status:

published

Access points:

- Textual record (documentary form)
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