

**University of Toronto Archives
and Records Management Services**



Frederick Coates fonds

B1975-0015

B1979-0016

B1997-0020

B1997-0033

B1998-0035

B2000-0003

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Biographical note

Frederick Coates was born September 2, 1890 in Nottingham, England. The son of Frederick Charles and Abigail Dexter Coates, he was the eldest of four children. Around 1909 he attended Nottingham School of Art where he took courses in drawing and architectural history. After travelling to Paris, he returned to London in 1911 to enroll in the Royal College of Art where he received three years of instruction in sculpture and modelling in the space of a year, graduating as a sculptor. Fred emigrated to Canada in 1913 settling in Toronto where he shared a studio with a few other Toronto sculptors. In 1916, he enlisted as a private in the No. 2 Canadian Army Medical Corps as part of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and served at the Westcliffe Eye and Ear Hospital at Folkestone and at the Queen's Hospital in Sidcup. His talent as a sculptor was employed in constructing plaster models from photographs of a patient's face before and after injury. Doctors used these models to aid in facial reconstructions.

Following his discharge from the service in 1919, Coates returned to Toronto. His work as a sculptor and model-maker led to his work with theatre groups, such as Hart House Theatre at the University of Toronto where, in 1922-23, he prepared designs for costumes and stage settings. The success of this undertaking led to his appointment as Art Director for the Theatre. In 1922 he married Louise Brown (b. 1889), a talented painter and graduate of the Ontario College of Art. He returned as Art Director of Hart House Theatre for the 1929-1930 season. After resigning as Art Director he went on to teach model making at the School of Architecture at the University. He remained as a part-time instructor until his retirement in 1962.

In the 1920s Frederick and Louise built a house overlooking the Scarborough Bluffs that they named "Sherwood." The Coates were both actively involved in the arts and crafts movement and "Sherwood" was central to their artistic lives. Frederick Coates died in June 1965 and Louise in 1975. They willed their property to the University of Toronto in trust for the establishment of a scholarship at the Faculty of Architecture.

Scope and content

1867-1975

13.27 m of graphic and textual records and artifacts (42 boxes)

Consists of six accessions which include correspondence, notes, notebooks, sketchbooks, sketches, designs for stage sets, costume designs, photoprints and photonegatives, scrapbooks, memorial books and a will documenting the personal and artistic lives of Frederick Coates and Louise Brown. The photographs include images of

Frederick's family, military service in World War I, the process of creating facial prosthetics for injured soldiers, his studio and the Coates' house, dance and models of buildings. Material also includes a guest book for "Sherwood" with invitations to dramatic productions held therein; three letters between members of the Hoitt family (1867, 1885). Also included are watercolours of costume designs, five art deco works of art, consisting of Coates' three stage sets for 'Danse Fronds' (ca. 1929), 'Fashions' (ca. 1928), and 'The Storm Centre' (1927); a theatre design featuring a clown; and a still life entitled 'The Blue Plate' (1922). Artifacts include medals, printing blocks, pottery, 20 modelling tools and a sculpture.

Access: Open

Boxes:

Retrieval code (textual records)

B1975-0015/001-/012

B1979-0016/001

B1997-0033/001

Retrieval code (photographs and art)

B1975-0015/001P-/016P

B1997-0020/001P-/002P

B1997-0033/001P-/002P

B2000-0003/001P-/002P

Retrieval code (oversize)

B1975-0015/P

Retrieval code (objects)

B1997-0033/001ART, B1997-0033/002ART, B1997-0033/003ART

B1998-0035/001ART

Appendix

Accession B1975-0015 – Coates 1975 accession: Box list for works of art, photographs and negatives only

1906-1958

10.90 m of textual and graphic records (30 boxes and 3 oversized folders)

Custodial history: Donated to the Archives by the Coates' friend Thomas Howarth, Dean of the Faculty of Architecture.

Box/File number	Box/File title	Date range
Works of art:		
B1975-0015/001P	Album containing hand drawn and painted greeting cards from friends and menus designed by Coates	
	All paintings below done by Coates	
B1975-0015/002P	Costume designs for skaters	
B1975-0015/003P	Costume designs for skaters Costume designs, unidentified production	
B1975-0015/004P	Costume designs for Hart House Theatre - * The Knight of the Burning Pestle	
B1975-0015/005P	The Hyppolytus	
B1975-0015/006P	The Dragon	
B1975-0015/007P	The Witch The Rivals	
B1975-0015/008P(01)	Set Designs - "Pool of Heart's Desire"	[ca. 1925]
B1975-0015/008P(02)	Oriental theatre set design.	n.d.
B1975-0015/008P(03)	"The Cherry Orchard"	1925
B1975-0015/008P(04)	Geometric mountains set design,	[ca. 1926]
B1975-0015/008P(05)	"Love of one's neighbour"	1925-1926
B1975-0015/008P(06)	"Tillion"	n.d.
B1975-0015/008P(07)	Egyptian theme	
B1975-0015/008P(08)	"A dream ballet" [ice show set design]	
B1975-0015/008P(09)	Peer Gynt	1930
B1975-0015/008P(10)	Untitled [Salon set design]	
B1975-0015/008P(11)	Untitled [Kitchen set design]	
B1975-0015/008P(12)	"Dr. Knock Act I Scene I"	
B1975-0015/008P(13)	"Faust"	1932-02-22
B1975-0015/008P(14)	Faust	[1932?]
B1975-0015/009P	Sketches of nudes	
Photoprints		
B1975-0015/009P - /011P	Photographs documenting F. Coates work as an artist and designer as well as his personal life: includes family snapshots; photos of models designed by Coates; images of Coates at work in the studio and outdoors;	

Box/File number	Box/File title	Date range
	photographs taken by Coates that are part of the body of his artistic works ie. plants and foliage	
B1975-0015/012P - /013P	Hart House Theatre - Scenes of plays.	
Negatives		
B1975-0015/014P – /015P(01-58)	2x3 negatives taken by Coates, each envelope identified 1938-1946: mainly artistic photographs and images of his work; some images of people; and images of Coates' house, Sherwood.	1938-1946
B1975-0015/015P(59-102)	Negatives of various sizes including 4x5 glass negatives - many images relate to those in boxes 009 - 011P; a few images of Hart House productions; and some of construction of Sherwood.	
B1975-0015/016P	5x7 Glass negatives of Coates applying plaster masks, of models and of reliefs.	

Accession B1979-0016 – Coates 1979 accession: Box list

0.07 m of textual records (1 box)
 1867-1975, predominant 1922-1975

Box number	Box title	Date range
B1979-0016/001	Guest book for "Sherwood House", the residence of Frederick and Louise Coates (1922-1975), with invitations to dramatic productions held therein; three letters between members of the Hoitt family (1867, 1885).	1867-1975, predominant 1922-1975

Accession B1997-0020 - Coates 1st 1997 accession: Box list

0.50 m of graphic records (2 boxes)
 1895-[194-]

Box number	Box title	Date range
B1997-0020/001P- /002P	Photographs and art work documenting the work of Frederick Coates and his wife, Louise Brown, including photos of Coates sculpting, the building of their home "Sherwood", and scenes of Hart House theatre plays including 2 taken by Allan Sangster. Also included are water colours of costume designs.	1895-[194-]

Accession B1997-0033 - Coates 2nd 1997 accession: Box list

0.46 m of textual and graphic records and artifacts (6 boxes)
 [ca.1905]-1975

Records created by and relating to Frederick and Louise Coates

File number	File title	Date range
B1997-0033/001	Textual records including official, correspondence, greetings, gradient notes and memorial books for Fred and Louise Coates	
B1997-0033/001P	Photographs and slides including photographs of Fred Coates, Louise Coates, friends and family including an album of Fred's family home in Nottingham; images, interior and exterior of Sherwood, Coates home on Chine Dr., Scarborough; artistic photoprints, mainly of plants and flowers presumably taken by the Coates.	
B1997-0033/002P	Artistic works by Fred and Louise Coates, includes: designs for Christmas greeting cards; oil painting and sketch book of Louise Brown;	

	personal book plate designs; examples of calligraphy.	
B1997-0033/001Art	Artifacts: medals and engraved woodblock printing plates for book plates	
B1997-0033/002Art	Artifact: 2 pottery	
B1997-0033/003Art	Artifact: Sculpture of a horse's head by Fred Coates	

Accession B1998-0035 - Coates 1998 accession: Box list

1 box of artifacts
 [ca. 1900-1975]

Box number	Box title	Date range
B1998-0035/001ART	Twenty modelling tools that originally belonged to Frederick Coates.	[ca. 1900-1975]

Accession B2000-0003 - Coates 2000 accession: Box list

1.24 m of graphic records (2 boxes)
 1922-[ca. 1929]

Box number	Box title	Date range
B2000-0003/001P- /002P	Five Art Deco works of art by Frederick Coates, consisting of three stage sets for 'Danse Fronds' (ca. 1929), 'Fashions' (ca. 1928), and 'The Storm Centre' (1927); a theatre design featuring a clown; and a still life entitled 'The Blue Plate' (1922).	1922-[ca. 1929]