This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

INTRODUCTION

The Loman and Laura Cansler Collection represents a lifetime of collecting on Missouri’s folk song and folklore tradition. Cansler recorded and collected folk songs, proverbs, jokes, and home remedies, primarily in Missouri, but also in Kansas and Illinois. In addition to this large body of folk song and folklore material, the collection includes information on Cansler’s early life in Dallas County, Missouri, his WWII service, and his career as a school counselor at the Fayette and North Kansas City High Schools. The collection also includes slides and prints of Laura Cansler’s abstract expressionist artwork.

DONOR INFORMATION

Loman Cansler donated his folk song collection to the University of Missouri November 16, 1987 (Accession no. 4800). Additions to the collection were made by his wife, Laura, on February 12, 1993 (Accession no. 5259), May 19, 1993 (Accession no. 5297), October 28, 1993 (Accession no. 5372), August 26, 2002 (Accession no. 5372.01), and February 3, 2005 (Accession no. 5372.03). Barbara Magerl made an addition on November 5, 2003 (Accession no. 5372.02) and the Canslers’ children, Philip, Myra, and Joel, made an addition on October 24, 2007 (Accession no. 5372.04).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Loman Doyle Cansler was born September 6, 1924, to Pruitt H. Cansler and Nettie Broyles near Long Lane, Missouri, in Dallas County. He grew up on a farm in a family with seven children where singing was very much a part of the household. Cansler left school in the eighth grade and in 1944 he was drafted into the Navy. While serving in the South Pacific as a radio operator on the U.S.S. Attu, Cansler began work on a high school degree, taking correspondence courses at the American School in Chicago, Illinois. After the war, he was able to test into the University of Missouri, where he earned both a bachelor’s and master’s degree between 1946 and 1950.

After college, Cansler began his teaching and counseling career at Fayette High School. In June of 1952, he married Laura McElwain of Galesburg, Illinois. The couple soon moved to North Kansas City where Cansler worked as a high school counselor for the next thirty years and Laura embarked upon a career in art. She earned her bachelor’s degree at Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, in 1951, and a master’s degree at the Kansas City Art Institute in 1953. Laura also taught art workshops as an Artist in Residence and later painted sets for plays for the Bell Road Barn Players in Parkville, Missouri.

Cansler’s interest in collecting folk songs began in the late 1940s while he was in college and continued throughout his lifetime. In 1954, he bought his first tape recorder, which he and Laura carried around the state taping anyone willing to sing a song for them. Two albums were released from this material, Folksongs of Missouri in 1959, and Folksongs of the Mid-West in 1973. Loman and Laura Cansler had three children, Philip, Joel, and Myra. Loman died October 5, 1992, and Laura died September 25, 2007.
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Loman and Laura Cansler Collection consists primarily of Loman’s audio tapes and corresponding transcriptions of the folk songs he collected. Also included are his research files for his published articles and his collecting on other folklore genres. Many of the folk songs are available in their original handwritten version, the audio version, and Loman’s typed transcripts. A portion of the Cansler collection contains transcripts of folk songs for which there is no audio file. The Loman and Laura Cansler Collection is arranged into nine series: Folk Music and Folklore Correspondence; Personal and Professional Papers; Research and Writing; Books; Field Notebooks, Manuscripts, and Workbooks; Photographs; Folk Song Transcripts; Laura Cansler Artwork; and Audio Visual.

The Folk Music and Folklore Correspondence series is arranged in chronological order and includes the incoming and outgoing correspondence the Canslers had with people who wanted to share their songs, jokes, remedies and stories. This series also includes correspondence and information regarding Cansler’s career in folk music, such as his singing appearances, attendance at folklore workshops, and files regarding his folk song albums.

The Personal and Professional Papers series contains correspondence of a more personal nature with family and friends and his professional correspondence as a teacher and school counselor. Cansler’s early life in Dallas County, his time in the Navy, and the memo books he kept while attending the University of Missouri are also included here.

The Research and Writing series includes songs collected by Cansler, newspapers clippings regarding various aspects of folklore, note cards that include his collection of home remedies, jokes, and proverbs, and Cansler’s research materials supporting his published and unpublished writings.

The Books series consists of Cansler’s collection of published song books, hymnals, and party games. The books range in date from 1906 to 1987.

The Field Notebooks, Manuscripts and Workbooks series was Cansler’s system of organizing information around each song collected. The field notebooks contain information about the people he collected songs from and other details about his visits. The collection is missing notebooks 15, 16, 19, and 22. The manuscript books contain handwritten versions of Cansler’s folk songs, some of which he captured on tape and others he copied from a variety of sources. In the workbooks, Cansler kept track of information about songs and donors that is not included elsewhere.

The Photographs series contains images from 1923 to 2004. The bulk of the photographs document Cansler’s family, his performances, and the many camps he attended either as a counselor or while on Baptist retreats. There are also photographs of his time spent in the Navy, his and Laura’s college graduations, and also images of Charlie Scott and Walter Dibbens, two folk singers heavily recorded and documented by Cansler.

The Folk Song Transcripts series represents the typed version of Cansler’s folk song collection. The transcripts coincide with the copy reel-to-reel audio tapes, numbers 1-68. There are no tape numbers 25 and 26, and there are no transcripts for tape numbers 20, 32-37, 39, 41, 55-56, 59-61, and 63. Cansler identifies the title of the song, provides contextual information about the singer, the words to the song, and at the bottom of the page indicates where on the reel the song can be found. At the end of this series is a section of songs in alphabetical order by title, for which no audio is available.

The Laura Cansler Artwork series includes two notebooks showing Laura’s paintings and quilts in either a color slides or photographs.
The **Audio Visual** series contains audio discs, both the original and copy reel-to-reel tapes, audio cassette tapes, and two video cassettes. The audio discs include recordings of Cansler and other well known and lesser known folk artists such as Woodie Guthrie, Pete Seeger, and Leadbelly. The original audio tapes are numbered 1-92 and include folk songs, interviews of folksingers conducted by Cansler, and other miscellaneous performances. The set of copy reel-to-reel tapes include numbers 1-68 and represent only the folk song collection. The typed transcripts are based upon this set of audio tapes. Because Cansler recorded the duplicates at a different speed than the originals, the numbering is somewhat off between the original and copy tapes. The copies are not reflected in the folder list.
FOLDER LIST

Folk Music and Folklore Correspondence Series

f. 1-11  Incoming and Outgoing Correspondence, 1946-1992
f. 12-13 Laura Cansler Correspondence, 1984-2005
f. 14   Laura Cansler Christmas Cards, n.d.
f. 15   Western Historical Manuscript Collection Correspondence, 1982-1993
f. 16-18 Cansler Public Appearances, 1955-1989
f. 19   Smithsonian Folk Life Festival, Correspondence, 1968
f. 20   Folklore Institute of America, Indiana, coursework, 1962
f. 21   Oral Tradition Workshop, March 4, 1978
f. 22   Missouri Folk Song Album, Correspondence, 1958-1969
f. 23   Illinois Folk Song Album, Correspondence, 1960
f. 24   Folk Songs of the Midwest Album, Correspondence, 1971-1973
f. 25   Folklore School-Bloomington, Indiana, Class Notes, summer 1962

Personal and Professional Papers Series

f. 26   Edith Miner Walker, Letters, 1920-1937
f. 27   Edith Miner Walker, Poems, songs, proverbs, n.d.
f. 28   Laura McElwain Cansler, Correspondence, 1951-1952
f. 29   Lillie McElwain, Correspondence, 1953-1962
f. 30   World War II, Correspondence, 1944-1945
f. 31   World War II, Papers, journal, certificates, 1944
f. 32   World War II, Miscellaneous documents- History of U.S.S. Attu, photographs of Cansler in the Navy
f. 33   Sherwood Eddy Seminar, Correspondence, European Trip, 1951
f. 34   Professional Correspondence, 1949-1963
f. 35   Professional Correspondence, Fayette Public Schools, 1952-1958
f. 37   Family papers, Genealogy, 1931-1953
f. 38   Bowen Country Club Newsletter, 1950
f. 39   Commencement program, 1950; Diplomas, undergraduate and master’s degrees
f. 40   Record of animals hunted and farm animals raised, Journals, 1935-1944
f. 41   Journals kept while a student at the University of Missouri in Columbia, 1946-1950
f. 42   Memo books, 1960s-1980s
f. 43   Fayette High School yearbook, 1951
f. 44   Through Fifty Years, North Kansas City High School Booklet, 1913-1963
f. 45   Scrapbook, newspaper clippings pertaining to the careers of Loman and Laura Cansler, 1950s-1980s

Research and Writing Series

f. 46   Folk Song indexes, by title and first line of song
f. 47   Sheet Music, 1901-1932
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<td>“Last of the Big Cattle Drives,” manuscript and correspondence, 1973</td>
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<td>“Missouri Folksong Heritage,” manuscript and correspondence, 1975</td>
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<td>“Boyhood Songs of My Grandfather,” manuscript and correspondence, n.d.</td>
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**Books Series**

f. 86  *The Nightingale; A Choice Collection of Songs, Changes and Hymns, Designed for the use of Juvenile Classes, Public Schools, and Seminaries.....* published by
Oliver Ditson: Boston, 1860


f. 88 Ballads and Ballad Poems, by Guy N. Pocock, n.d.; Christmas Carols; Scotch Songs; National 4-H Club Song Book, n.d.; Let's Sing, Missouri 4-H Song Book; Jimmie Macgregor's folk songs of Scotland, n.d.; Knox County Home Bureau Song Book; Weaver's School Songs, n.d.; The One Hundred and One Best Songs for Home, School and Meeting, 1913

f. 89 Fifty Favorite Songs for Girls and Boys, 1935; Folk Song USA, by John and Alan Lomax, 1966; The Everybody Sing Book; for Home, School and Community; Treasure Chest of Home Spun Songs, 1935; Treasure Chest of Old Time Song Hits, 1935; Treasure Chest of World-Wide Songs, 1936; American Cowboy Songs, 1936; Army Song Book, 1941; Old, Old Folk Songs, compiled by Fred High of Berryville, AR; Songs of All Time, 1946

f. 90 An Ivar Book of Ballads from Puget Sound, 1953; Songs of All Time, 1957; Reprints from the People's Songs Bulletin, 1946-1949

f. 91 Albert E. Brumley’s Songs of the Pioneers; A Collection of Songs and Ballads of the Romantic Past, 1970; Albert E. Brumley’s Songs of the Pioneers No. 3; A Collection of Songs and Ballads of the Romantic Past, 1984; Little Boxes and Other Handmade Songs, by Malvina Reynolds, 1964; The Good Old Songs; The Cream of the Old Music, compiled by Elder C. H. Cayce, 1963

f. 92 Missouri Conservation Melodies, compiled by Dixie Calvert Fine, Missouri Department of Conservation, 1982, includes one audio cassette tape


f. 94 Hymns of Praise, Number Two: For the Church and Sunday School, 1931; The Chapbook; hymns, fun songs, worship resources, 1959; Rocky Mountain Methodist Youth Camp Song Book, n.d.; Crusader Hymns and Hymn Stories, by the Billy Graham Team, 1967

f. 95 Southern Singing Games, 1939; Play Party Games, 1932; Suggestions for Stunt Night, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, 1938; Games for Girls: Manual of Games for Girls 4-H, Dept. of Agricultural Economics, 1938; Play-A-While: Activities for the Home Bureau Unit Recreation Leader, Extension Service in Agriculture and Home Economics, 1937; Suggestions for Stunt Night, Dept. of Agriculture Economics, 1938


f. 97 Something to Sing About! The Personal Choices of America's Folk Singers, by Milton Okun, 1968

f. 98 Best Loved American Folk Songs, collected and arranged by John and Alan Lomax, 1947
**Field Notebooks, Manuscripts, and Workbooks** Series– Missing notebook no. 15, 16, 19, 22

f. 99  Field Notebooks no. 1-3, 1954-1958
f. 100  Field Notebooks no. 4-7, 1958-1959
f. 101  Field Notebooks no. 8-10, 1958-1962
f. 102  Field Notebooks no. 10a-12, 1960-1962
f. 103  Field Notebooks no. 13-14, 1961-1962
f. 104  Field Notebooks no. 17, 18, 20, 1962-1967
f. 105  Field Notebooks no. 21, 23, 24, 1966-1988
f. 106  Field Notebooks no. 24a, 25, 25b, 25c, 1972-1990
f. 107  Folk Song Manuscript no. 1, 1954
f. 108  Folk Song Manuscript no. 2, 1954
f. 109  Folk Song Manuscript no. 3, 1954-1955
f. 110  Folk Song Manuscript no. 4, August 1955
f. 111  Folk Song Manuscript no. 5 & 6, 1955-1956
f. 112  Folk Song Manuscript no. 7, 1956-1958
f. 113  Folk Song Manuscript no. 8, 1959-1960
f. 114  Folk Song Manuscript no. 9, 1960
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f. 116  Folk Song Manuscript no. 11, 1961-1968
f. 117  Folk Song Manuscript no. 12, 1965-1970
f. 118  Folk Song Manuscript no. 13, 1959-1978
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f. 121  Workbook no. 1
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f. 127  Jump Rope Rhymes, research, by Myra Cansler, 1965

**Photographs** Series

f. 128  Cansler Family, 1930s-1970s
f. 129  World War II, U.S.S. Attu, 1944-1945
f. 130  Camps and vacations, Ontario, Canada; Green Lake, WI; Pelican Lake, Ontario; Lake Superior; Lake Michigan; Lake of the Ozarks Retreat, 1946-1950
f. 131  Loman Cansler graduation from the University of Missouri, June 1949
f. 132  Loman Cansler as a student at the University of Missouri with friends, 1949-1950; John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC, 1950
f. 133  Bowen Country Club, Waukegan, IL, 1950
f. 134  Christmas party, either Fayette Public Schools or a church function, c. 1950
f. 135  Laura McElwain Cansler Graduation from Stephens College, 1951
f. 136  Walter Dibbens, folklorist, 1955
f. 137  Scott family photos, folklorist, 1923-1956
f. 138 Publicity photos, Leroy Van Dyke, Dean Mathis
f. 139 Loman Cansler portraits, shots taken while performing, 1950s-1980s
f. 140 Miscellaneous photos, unidentified wedding portraits and group shots
f. 141 Negatives, family photos, Walter Dibben; University of Missouri, 1940s-1950s
f. 142 Negatives, camp life, Lake of the Ozarks retreat; Loman Cansler graduation; Ontario, Canada; Wisconsin and Michigan trips, 1946-1950
f. 143 Negatives, John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, NC, 1950
f. 144 Negatives, World War II, U.S.S. Attu
f. 145 Negatives, Bowen Country Club, Waukegan, IL, 1950
f. 146 Negatives, unidentified family photos, 2004

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f. 147 Transcripts of folk songs by title- no audio tapes
f. 148 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 1, side 1 to copy 9, side 2
f. 149 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 9, side 2 to copy 15, side 2
f. 150 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 15, side 2 to copy 17, side 2
f. 151 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 18, side 1 to copy 22, side 2
f. 152 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 22, side 2 to copy 27, side 2
f. 153 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 22, part 2, side 1 to copy 31, side 2
f. 154 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 31, side 2 to copy 38, side 2
f. 155 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 40, side 1 to copy 48, side 1
f. 156 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 48, side 2 to copy 62 and 64, side 2
f. 157 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 65, side 1 to copy 68, side 2
f. 158 Partial index to audio tapes
f. 159 Transcripts of folk songs, copy 1, side 1 to copy 1, side 2
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Transcripts of folk songs, alpha order by title, no tapes, p-r
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Transcripts of folk songs, alpha order by title, no tapes, u-z

**Laura Cansler Artwork** Series

Color photographs of Laura Cansler quilts and paintings
Color photographs of Laura Cansler paintings
Color slides and prints of Laura Cansler paintings
**Audio Visual Series**

**Audio Discs**

**a.d**. 1  *Old-Time Fiddler's Repertory, Historic Field Recordings of Forty-One Traditional Tunes*, 1975

**a.d**. 2  *Ballad of the Boonslick*, Cathy Barton & Dave Para, 1982

**a.d**. 3  *Fiddle Tunes I Recall*, by Lyman Enloe

**a.d**. 4  *Old Time American Harmonica, Bones, and Hickory Leaf Playing*, 1977

**a.d**. 5  *Ozark Folksongs and Ballads* sung by Max Hunter of Springfield, Missouri, 1963


**a.d**. 7  *Missouri Folk Songs* Sung by Loman D. Cansler, 1960

**a.d**. 8  *Folksongs of the Midwest* by Loman D. Cansler, 1973

**a.d**. 9  Loman Cansler speech

**a.d**. 10  *Park Hill Bands 1969-70*

**a.d**. 11  *Park Hill Bands 1970-71*

**a.d**. 12  *Park Hill Bands 1971-72*

**a.d**. 13  *Park Hill Bands 1972-73*

**a.d**. 14  *University of Portland 1981-82 Bands*, Philip T. Cansler-Conductor

**a.d**. 15  *Festival of American Folklife*, The Smithsonian Institution

**a.d**. 16  *Take this Hammer, Leadbelly Legacy Number One*

**a.d**. 17  *Leadbelly's Legacy Vol. 3*

**a.d**. 18  *Easy Rider Leadbelly Legacy Volume Four*

**a.d**. 19  *Rock Island Line*, Leadbelly

**a.d**. 20  *Texas Gladden Sings Blue Ridge Ballads*

**a.d**. 21  *Stephens Memories by the Stephens Concert Chorus and Orchestra*

**a.d**. 22  *12 String Guitar! Vol. 2*, The Folksingers

**a.d**. 23  *Ballads with guitar*, Burl Ives, 1959

**a.d**. 24  *The Weavers at Carnegie Hall*

**a.d**. 25  *Jimmie Driftwood Sings Newly Discovered Early American Folk Songs*, 1958

**a.d**. 26  *Oscar Brand and Jean Ritchie*, Archive of Folk Music

**a.d**. 27  *The Folk Song Tradition*, Tradition Records, 1960


**a.d**. 30  *Dust Bowl Ballads Sung by Woodie Guthrie*, Folkways Records, 1964

**a.d**. 31  *Bound for Glory*, The Songs and Story of Woodie Guthrie, Folkways Records, 1956


**a.d**. 34  *American Ballads and Folksongs*, sung by Joan O’Bryant, Folkways Records, 1958


**Audio Tapes**

**a.t**. 1  James Broyles, Dallas County, MO, April 18, 1954
a.t. 2  Clara Trumbo, Livingston County, MO, April 25, 1954

a.t. 3  Bill Williams, Dallas County, MO, May 30, 1954; Charlie Scott, Dallas County, MO, August 24, 1959

a.t. 4  Walter Dibben, Dallas County, MO, June 1, 1954; Alex Fletcher, Knox County, IL, August 14, 1954

a.t. 5  Etta Conover, Peoria, IL; Jollie Lindsey, Alex Fletcher, Millie Bright, Dell Sniff, Knox County, IL; James Broyles, Dallas County, MO, June 1954

a.t. 6  Walter Dibben, Dallas County, MO, June 1, 1954 and July 8, 1956; Bill Williams, Dallas County, MO, May 30, 1954

a.t. 7  Charlie Scott, Dallas County, MO, July 9, 1954

a.t. 8  Charlie Scott, Dallas County, MO, July 9, 1954 and July 16, 1954

a.t. 9  Charlie Scott, Dallas County, MO, July 16, 1954

a.t. 10  Charlie Scott, Dallas County, MO, July 16, 1954 and July 11, 1956

a.t. 11  Joe Preston; Nettie and Pruitt Cansler; Maurice Trumbo

a.t. 12  Alonso Randleman, Dallas County, MO, April 10, 1955; Wayne Randleman, 1955; Charlie Scott, Dallas County, MO, August 13, 1958; Levi Marks, Buchanan County, MO, July 18, 1958; Clara Smith, Laclede County, MO, August 13, 1958


a.t. 14  Charlie Scott, August 5, 1955; Donna Evans Shewey, August 7, 1955

a.t. 15  Florence Browning, July 30, 1955; Henrietta Black, August 5, 1957; Charles Goodman; Lillie Dame, June 22, 1958; Aurelia Hooten, August 12, 1958; Emma Barnes, August 14, 1958

a.t. 16  German songs by Melvin and Nadine Leiker, Aegedus Munsch and friends, March 31-April 1, 1956

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a.t. 25-26  Not included in Cansler’s numbering system

a.t. 27  Dora Clark, August 7, 1960; Nannie Butler, August 8, 1960; Caltha Campbell, August 24, 1960; Effie Anderson, October 29, 1961; Ollie Wilson, August 8, 1960; Lora Wilson Lee


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a.t. 30  Fiddle session, March 16, 1961, at John Ritchie’s house in Kansas City, MO: John Journagan; J. E. Maloney; Roy Enloe; John Huntsholtz; Ed Davis

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a.t. 32  Fiddle session, June 3, 1961: Jim Yost, Willie and Johnson Street; Mary Sue Goans

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