

***The Michael Cook Papers: First Accession and Second Accession...* Marlys Chevrefils (comp.), Apollonia Steele (ed.) and Malcolm Page (biographical essay).**

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## MELVIN BAKER

THIS IS ONE of a series of books published by the University of Calgary Press on the major archival holdings at the University of Calgary. Other existing publications include archival inventories of the papers of Earl Birney, Hugh Wood, Brian Moore and Alice Munro. Forthcoming publications include an inventory of the papers of Newfoundland writer Harold Horwood.

The Michael Cook selection follows a standard model for this publication series. A biocritical essay places Newfoundland playwright Cook within the national context of theatre developments in Canada over the past thirty years and provides insights into the themes of his plays about Newfoundland culture and history. The second essay in the collection explains how Cook's papers are organized, noting that only one file is restricted; that being Cook's financial records.

The bulk of Cook's papers consists of correspondence files, notebooks, manuscripts (of articles, unpublished novels, speeches, short stories, book reviews, letters to the editor, stage, radio and television plays, and radio and television documentaries), scrapbooks, columns published in the St. John's *Evening Telegram*, radio reviews read on various Canadian Broadcasting Corporation programs and reviews published in the Stratford *Beacon Herald*. The archival description is presented in a clear and straightforward manner.

The inventory provides interesting glimpses into Cook's life through the brief descriptions of the files, as well as through the detailed index to them. For example, the papers contain documentation on Cook's academic life at Memorial University, correspondence with colleagues at that university's English Department, the negotiations with the University of Calgary regarding the acquisition of his papers, and his applications for teaching positions in the theatre department at York University.

Cook was at the forefront of Newfoundland's cultural and literary life in the late 1960s and 1970s and the availability of his papers makes it possible for serious research to be undertaken into his role in modern Newfoundland theatre.