

CAPTAIN PEARL R. NYE COLLECTION

AFC 1937/002

Guides to the Collections in the Archive of Folk Culture



**American Folklife Center, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
December 4, 2012**

Contact information: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/folklife.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2004447752>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/eadafc.af012006>

Prepared by Marcia K. Segal

Finding aid encoded by Marcia K. Segal, December 2012

Collection Summary

Title: Captain Pearl R. Nye Collection

Bulk Dates: 1937-1944

Call No.: AFC 1937/002

Creator: Archive of American Folk Song

Creator: Nye, Pearl R., 1872-1950

Extent (Manuscripts): 18 folders total (Folders 1-16 and Folder 18 in 1 box, plus Folder 17, oversize).

Extent (Sound Recordings): 22 sound discs : analog ; 12 in.

Extent (Graphic Materials): 7 photographic prints : black and white, color ; various sizes.

Language: Collection material in English.

Location: Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2004447752>

Summary: The collection is comprised of field recordings made in Akron, Ohio, by John A. Lomax (on June 27-28, 1937), and Alan Lomax and Elizabeth Lomax (on November 3, 1937), of songs performed by Pearl R. Nye related to life on the Ohio and Erie Canal, plus photographs of canal life (some hand-decorated by Nye), and correspondence between Nye and Harold Spivacke of the Library of Congress, and manuscript and typed transcriptions of song lyrics sung and collected by Pearl R. Nye.

Online Content: A substantial portion of the collection is available as "Captain Pearl R. Nye, life on the Ohio and Erie Canal," an online presentation compiled by the National Digital Library Program of the Library of Congress. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/collafc.af000019>

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Lomax, Alan, 1915-2002

Lomax, Alan, 1915-2002--Correspondence.

Lomax, John A. (John Avery), 1867-1948

Lomax, John A. (John Avery), 1867-1948--Correspondence.

Nye, Pearl R., 1872-1950

Nye, Pearl R., 1872-1950--Correspondence.

Waterhouse, Helen Stocking, 1892-1965--Correspondence.

Organizations

American Folklife Center.

Archive of American Folk Song

Library of Congress. National Digital Library Program.

Subjects

Ballads, English--Ohio.

Canals--Ohio--Songs and music.

Field recordings--Ohio.

Folk music--Ohio.

Folk songs, English--Ohio.

Folk songs, English--Texts.

Popular music--1931-1940.

Revival hymns--Ohio.

Places

Akron (Ohio) event place.

Akron (Ohio)--Social life and customs.

Ohio and Erie Canal (Ohio)--Songs and music.

Titles

Captain Pearl R. Nye, life on the Ohio and Erie Canal
Pearl R. Nye collection

Form/Genre

Correspondence.
Field recordings.
Interviews (Sound recordings)
Photographic prints.
Songs.
Sound recordings.

Arrangement

Organized by format into the following series: I. Manuscripts; II. Sound Recordings; III. Graphic Materials.

Acquisition

Subsequent to the field trips, the sound recordings were accessioned at the Library of Congress. Communications between Pearl Nye and Library of Congress staff accumulated as they were received at the Library (rather than being sent as a unit, at a later date). According to correspondence, in the 1940s Nye sent more transcriptions to the Library, which were microfilmed, then returned to him. These are presumed to be the documents on the microfilm reel.

Accruals

No further accruals are expected.

Processing History

The collection was processed by the American Folklife Center staff between 2003 and 2009. Marcia K. Segal revised and coded the collection finding aid in EAD format in December 2012.

Related Material

Autograph manuscript containing song texts by Pearl R. Nye, with a few letters to Alan Lomax and to Harold Spivacke is available on microfilm [Songs of the Ohio canal, 1938], Library of Congress Music Division, MUS-12.

Online Content

A substantial portion of the collection is available as "Captain Pearl R. Nye, life on the Ohio and Erie Canal," an online presentation compiled by the National Digital Library Program of the Library of Congress. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/collafc.af000019>

Access and Restrictions

Collection is open for research. To request materials, please contact the Folklife Reading Room at <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.afc/folklife.contact>

Preferred Citation

Captain Pearl R. Nye Collection (AFC 1937/002), Archive of Folk Culture, American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Collection Concordance by Format

Quantity	Physical Extent (original)	Item Numbers
Manuscript Materials		
17	folders	Box 1, Folders 1-16, 18
1	folder	Folders 17, oversize
Sound Recordings		
22	12-inch lacquer-coated aluminum audio discs	AFS 01001-01009, AFS 01603-01615
4	12-inch aluminum audio discs	AFS 01005_dupe, AFS 01007_dupe, AFS 01605_dupe, AFS 01606_dupe
Graphic Materials		
7	photographic prints : black and white, color ; various sizes	Box 1, Folder 18

Scope and Content

The Captain Pearl R. Nye Collection consists of materials that document the professional relationship between Pearl R. Nye and the Library of Congress, as well as the personal relationship between Nye and Alan Lomax. The collection is centered on Nye's documentation of and contribution to folk songs about the Ohio and Erie Canal. It includes sound recordings of Nye, recorded by John A. Lomax, and Alan and Elizabeth Lomax in Akron, Ohio in 1937, correspondence between the Library of Congress and Nye, and photographs of Nye at his home on the canal.

Nye's desire to collect canal folk songs and sing them for the Lomaxes stemmed from his childhood growing up on the canal, his own career as a canal captain, and his later years when traditional activities on the Ohio and Erie Canal were supplanted by more modern technologies.

Nye's transcriptions of song lyrics provide an invaluable research tool. These transcriptions include those songs he sang (included on the recordings), as well as songs he knew (and were not recorded). These lyrics reflect not only popular sentiments of the times, but enduring values and traditions, as they provide a snapshot of a way of life for trade and travel that was becoming obsolete through technological advances.

Biographical History

Pearl R. Nye was born on February 5, 1872 aboard the canal boat "Reform." He spent his life on canal boats on the Ohio and Erie Canal and researched and documented the songs and traditions of canal life. He died in 1950.

Description of Series

Container	Series <u>Series I: MANUSCRIPTS</u>
	<u>Series II: SOUND RECORDINGS</u>
BOX-FOLDER 1/18	<u>Series III: GRAPHIC MATERIALS</u>

Container List

Container	Contents
Series I: MANUSCRIPTS	
BOX-FOLDER 1/1	Collection finding aid 8 pp.
BOX-FOLDER 1/2	Documentation for sound recordings 6 pp.
BOX-FOLDER 1/3	Documentation for digitization of sound recordings 65 pp. Various documents detailing the digitization process, including hardware and software used, plus any problems with the source recordings.
BOX-FOLDER 1/4 digital ID : afc1937002_ms01	Correspondence, 1937
BOX-FOLDER 1/5 digital ID : afc1937002_ms02	Correspondence, 1938 (Folder 1 of 2)
BOX-FOLDER 1/6 digital ID : afc1937002_ms02	Correspondence, 1938 (Folder 2 of 2)
BOX-FOLDER 1/7 digital ID : afc1937002_ms03	Correspondence, 1939
BOX-FOLDER 1/8 digital ID : afc1937002_ms04	Correspondence, 1940-1941
BOX-FOLDER 1/9 digital ID : afc1937002_ms05	Correspondence, 1942
BOX-FOLDER 1/10 digital ID : afc1937002_ms06	Correspondence, 1944
BOX-FOLDER 1/11 digital ID : afc1937002_ms07	Correspondence, undated
BOX-FOLDER 1/12	Various correspondence, 1937 and undated 9 pp. Items of correspondence formerly alienated from the collection, which were returned to the collection but not digitized. The undated items may have been written in 1936.
BOX-FOLDER 1/13 digital ID : afc1937002_ms08	Transcriptions (Folder 1 of 4)
BOX-FOLDER 1/14 digital ID : afc1937002_ms09	Transcriptions (Folder 2 of 4)

Series I: MANUSCRIPTS

Container	Contents
BOX-FOLDER 1/15 digital ID : afc1937002_ms10	Transcriptions (Folder 3 of 4)
BOX-FOLDER 1/16 digital ID : afc1937002_ms11	Transcriptions (Folder 4 of 4)
FOLDER 17	Various manuscript materials 13 items Manuscript items formerly alienated from the collection, which were returned to the collection and subsequently treated by Conservation Division staff, but not digitized.

Series II: SOUND RECORDINGS

disc: AFS 01001 digital ID : afc1937002_sr01	Recorded on June 27, 1937 Side A: [Spoken segment, no. 1] The House Carpenter [Spoken segment, no. 2] The Scioto Valley Mills Side B: Johnny and Molly [Spoken segment, no. 1] My horses ain't hungry, they won't eat your hay
disc: AFS 01002 digital ID : afc1937002_sr02	Recorded on June 27, 1937, in Akron, Ohio. Side A: Perry's Victory Side B: The Girl with the striped stockings on Barbara Allen
disc: AFS 01003 digital ID : afc1937002_sr03	Recorded on June 27, 1937, in Akron, Ohio. Side A: James Bird Side B: Hush-a-bye-baby [Spoken segment] The jolly boatman
disc: AFS 01004 digital ID : afc1937002_sr04	Recorded on June 27, 1937, in Akron, Ohio. Side A: Lord Vanifer's wife [Spoken segment, no. 1] When I was single [Spoken segment, no. 2] Side B: The bold bolster [Spoken segment, no. 1] Julianne Johnson
disc: AFS 01005	Recorded on June 27, 1937, in Akron, Ohio.

Series II: SOUND RECORDINGS

Container

Contents

digital ID :

afc1937002_sr05

Side A: We'll end this war down by the river
[Spoken segment, no. 1]
The resurrection car
[Spoken segment, no. 2]
Side B: [Spoken segment, no. 1]
Lord Vanifer's wife

disc: AFS 01005_dupe

Duplicate of recording made on June 27, 1937. Duplication date unknown.

digital ID :

afc1937002_sr06

Side A: We'll end this war down by the river
[Spoken segment, no. 1]
The resurrection car
[Spoken segment, no. 2]
Side B: [Spoken segment, no. 1]
Lord Vanifer's wife

disc: AFS 01006

Recorded in 1937, in Akron, Ohio.

digital ID :

afc1937002_sr07

Side A: [Spoken segment, no. 1]
Dutch jollification song
[Spoken segment, no. 2]
Edward Bold
[Spoken segment, no. 3]
[Edward Bold]
St. Peter at the gate
[Spoken segment, no. 4]
Side B: Keep that baby still
[Spoken segment, no. 1]
Over in the promised land
Oh, glory, hallelujah

disc: AFS 01007

Recorded in 1937, in Akron, Ohio.

digital ID :

afc1937002_sr08

Side A: Lord Lovele [sic]
[Spoken segment, no. 1]
Jones' hospital
Side B: Irish washerwoman
Dark-eyed sailor

disc: AFS 01007_dupe

Duplicate of recording made in 1937. Duplication date unknown.

digital ID :

afc1937002_sr09

Side A: Lord Lovele [sic]
[Spoken segment, no. 1]
Jones' hospital
Side B: Irish washerwoman

Series II: SOUND RECORDINGS

Container	Contents
disc: AFS 01008 digital ID : afc1937002_sr10	Dark-eyed sailor Recorded in 1937, in Akron, Ohio. Side A: Little red bird in the tree Old woman under the hill Side B: [Willy Reilly]
disc: AFS 01009 digital ID : afc1937002_sr11	Recorded on June 28, 1937, in Akron, Ohio. Side A: Mr. Frog [Spoken segment, no.1] Side B: Mary, don't you weep [Spoken segment, no. 1] Little Sally Waters [Spoken segment, no. 2]
disc: AFS 01603 digital ID : afc1937002_sr12	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain. Side A: The Clever Skipper Side B: Gentle Little Jenny (The Wife Wrapped in the Wether's Skin)
disc: AFS 01604 digital ID : afc1937002_sr13	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain. Side A: Take a Trip on the Canal If You Want to Have Fun [continued on Side B] Side B: Take a Trip on the Canal If You Want to Have Fun [continued from Side A; continued on AFS 01605a]
disc: AFS 01605 digital ID : afc1937002_sr14	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain. Side A: Take a Trip on the Canal If You Want to Have Fun [continued from AFS 01604b] William was a royal lover Side B: The Cumberland's crew
disc: AFS 01605_dupe digital ID : afc1937002_sr15	Duplicate of recording made on November 3, 1937. Duplication date unknown. Side A: Take a Trip on the Canal If You Want to Have Fun [continued from AFS 01604b] William was a royal lover Side B: The Cumberland's crew
disc: AFS 01606_dupe digital ID : afc1937002_sr16	Duplicate of recording made on November 3, 1937. Duplication date unknown. Side A: On the banks of Salee Side B: In the shade of a tree We'll outshine the sun
disc: AFS 01606 digital ID : afc1937002_sr17	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain.

Series II: SOUND RECORDINGS

Container

Contents

	Side A: On the banks of Salee Side B: In the shade of a tree We'll outshine the sun
disc: AFS 01607 digital ID : afc1937002_sr18	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain.
	Side A: Riding on the elevated railroad The cruel ship carpenter [continued on Side B] Side B: The ship's cruel carpenter [continued from Side A] Lord Ullin's daughter
disc: AFS 01608 digital ID : afc1937002_sr19	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain.
	Side A: Between me and the wall Side B: Between me and the wall Pretty Sally [continued on AFS 01609a]
disc: AFS 01609 digital ID : afc1937002_sr20	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain.
	Side A: Pretty Sally [continued from AFS 01608b] The Jew's daughter/The Butcher boy Side B: The gospel chariot The dying cowboy
disc: AFS 01610 digital ID : afc1937002_sr21	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain.
	Side A: The roving gambler Erin's green shore Side B: Dandy Jim of Caroline
disc: AFS 01611 digital ID : afc1937002_sr22	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain.
	Side A: The old skipper Side B: Early in the spring
disc: AFS 01612 digital ID : afc1937002_sr23	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain.
	Side A: Rosin the bow My father's broke the ice and gone Side B: Who killed Cock Robin I won't marry at all
disc: AFS 01613 digital ID : afc1937002_sr24	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain.
	Side A: I owed ten dollars to O'Grady Boys, keep away from the girls I say [continued on Side B]

Series II: SOUND RECORDINGS

Container	Contents
	Side B: Boys, keep away from the girls I say [continued from Side A] Just one penny
disc: AFS 01614 digital ID : afc1937002_sr25	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain.
	Side A: We're going to pump out Lake Erie In the storm at sea A canal dance (One Night in Cleveland) Side B: Moonlight Dance (Yellowbud gals) Canal boat wedding Down the river
disc: AFS 01615 digital ID : afc1937002_sr26	Recorded on November 3, 1937; location uncertain.
	Side A: The gospel train When the old sun was a-crawlin' Jawbone (Jawbone walk, jawbone talk) Side B: The banks of the sweet Dundee
BOX-FOLDER 1/18	Series III: GRAPHIC MATERIALS
digital ID : afc1937002_ph01	Portrait of Captain Pearl R. Nye
	Black-and-white photographic print (3" x 4.5")
digital ID : afc1937002_ph02	Captain Pearl R. Nye with B.F. Goodrich buildings in background
	Black-and-white photographic print; hand-tinted, with a collage effect, plus a manuscript item affixed to the lower back edge of the item (4.5" x 3.5" for the photo; 2" x 3.5" for the manuscript item)
digital ID : afc1937002_ph03	Captain Pearl R. Nye at Camp Charming (view from water)
	Black-and-white photographic print (5.5" x 3.5")
digital ID : afc1937002_ph04	Captain Pearl R. Nye at Camp Charming (view from land)
	Black-and-white photographic print (5.5" x 3.5")
digital ID : afc1937002_ph05	Captain Pearl R. Nye at Camp Charming (view from water, at a distance)
	Black-and-white photographic print (5.5" x 3.5")
digital ID : afc1937002_ph06	Captain Pearl R. Nye at Camp Charming (view from water, at a distance)
	Black-and-white photographic print (5.5" x 3.5")
digital ID : afc1937002_ph07	Portrait of Captain Pearl R. Nye outdoors, with women in the background
	Color photographic print, incorporated in a collage on top of an outline of a moose (3.25" x 4.75")