

Inventory of the

Bryant Family
Princeton, Illinois

Collection

In the
Regional History Center

RC 27

INTRODUCTION

Donald M. Murray and Robert M. Rodney, professors of English at Northern Illinois University, DeKalb, donated the Bryant Family Collection on June 28, 1967, to the Northern Illinois University Archives. University Archivist J. Joseph Bauxar transferred the collection to the Northern Illinois Regional History Center in May 1978.

Property rights in the collection belong to the Regional History Center; literary rights are dedicated to the public. There are no restrictions on access to materials in the collection.

Linear feet of shelf space: 2
 Number of containers: 2
 Northern Illinois Regional History Center
 Collection 27

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Bryant Family Collection is a three generation chronicle of the Bryant Family and their migration from Massachusetts to Illinois and Kansas. The materials collected document the family history from 1767-1912.

Boxes one and two contain photostat, microfilm, and typescript copies of Bryant family letters and diaries assembled from various sources. Box one, folder one contains the family genealogy chart, prepared in the archives based on information available in the collection. Also included in box one is biographical data and letters of the Bryant family, 1767-1912; notes from the diary of Sylvia Drake, 1821-1824, a close friend of the Bryant family; a watercolor of the original J.H. Bryant cabin; typescript copies of Sylvia Drake's Diary, 1821-1824; and Sylvia Drake's letters, 1784-1868. Box one also contains 28 folders of the Bryant Family Research Project including publications, reprints, manuscripts and the general notes of Donald M. Murray and Robert M. Rodney, dating 1960-1966. Box two contains letter on microfilm from the New York Public Library; notecards on Julian Bryant; a book of poems by John H. Bryant and a cardfile index of the Bryant letters. Most of the material in the Bryant Collection is photocopies of the original. The material is typed copy, either whole or excerpted and some is simply handwritten notes on letters. The original letters used in this collection are preserved in the Bureau County, Illinois Historical Society Museum at Princeton, Illinois, the New York Public Library and the Sheldon Historical Museum, Middlebury, Vermont.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Peter Bryant (1767-1820) was descended from one of the first members of the Plymouth Colony and was the father of the poet, William Cullen Bryant. He grew up in the North Bridgewater (now Brockton), Massachusetts. During his two years of apprenticeship, in the office of Dr. Lewis Lepritete, Bryant was trained in the medical field. He also fell in love with Sarah Snell (1768-1847) of Cummington, Massachusetts, and at this time, produced quite a quantity of poetry. Once licensed, Bryant started his own practice and in 1792 he married Sarah Snell. Their children were Austin (1793-1866); William Cullen, the famous poet (1794-1879); Cyrus (1799-1865); Sarah Snell (1802-1825); Peter Rush, later called Arthur (1803-1833); Louisa Charity (1807-1868); and John Howard (1807-1833)

Austin, Cyrus, Arthur, Louisa, John Howard, Sarah Snell and the matriarch of the family emigrated to Illinois in the early 1830's, with the Hamshire colony from Cummington. The second son, the poet, William Cullen Bryant, remained in New England. Once in Illinois, the family settled in Princeton, Bureau County, in the 1830's. Cyrus, Arthur and John Howard made a permanent home in Princeton as they took up claims in the township.

Peter Bryant (1837-1912) was the son of Cyrus Bryant and an original settler of Kansas territory and a citizen of Kansas during its first half century of statehood. Like his father, Peter caught the "westerling" fever in 1859. He became a prosperous farmer on his land claim near Holtan in northeastern Kansas. Julian Bryant (1836-1865) was the son of Arthur Bryant and he was commissioned lieutenant of the 33rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry. After serving his three years' term, he re-enlisted and was appointed colonel of a colored regiment. He died in the Gulf of Mexico.

The Bryant Family has deep roots in America with ancestors from both sides of the family having come over from England on the Mayflower. Dr. Peter Bryant was the fourth generation from Stephen Bryant and Abigail Shaw, of Plymouth, Massachusetts. Sarah Snell Bryant was a descendant of Josiah Snell who married Anna Aldens, granddaughter of John Alden and Priscilla Mullins, the couple immortalized by Longfellow.

SUBJECT TRACINGS

Bryant Family
Diaries, 1820-1839
Family Life, History
Journals, Travel
Princeton
Travel Journals

COLLECTION INVENTORY

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>
1	1	Bryant Family Genealogy Chart
	2	Dr. Peter Bryant, biographical data, 1767-1820
	3	Dr. Peter Bryant, poems and letters
	4	Sarah Snell Bryant, letters, 1768-1847
	5	Sarah Snell Bryant, diary, 1768-1847
	6	Sarah Snell Bryant, correspondence
	7	Elisha L. Fish, letter, 1814
	8	Charity Bryant, letters, 1777-1851
	9	William Cullen Bryant, biographical data, 1784-1878
	10	McDowell on W. Cullen Bryant, juvenilia
	11	William Cullen Bryant correspondence, 1865-1874
	12	Lampoons by Cullen and schoolmate (photostat)
	13	Cyrus Bryant, biographical data, 1798-1865
	14	Cyrus Bryant, correspondence, 1859-1863
	15	Julia E. Bryant correspondence, 2 letters, 1866-1875
	16	C.F. Eichaker, 4 letters to Cyrus, 1863-1865
	17	Sarah S. Bryant, letters, 1802-1825
	18	Arthur Bryant, biographical data, 1803-1883
	19	Arthur (Peter Rush) Bryant letters
	20	Charity Louisa Bryant, 1805-1868
	21	Justin Olds, letters, 1836
	22	John Howard Bryant, letters, 1807-1902
	23	Ed Brown of Elmwood to John Howard Bryant, 2 letters, 1889-1890
	24	Whittier to John Howard Bryant, letter, 1807-1902
	25	Historical background for Peter Bryant, 1837-1912
	26	Kit Bryant correspondence, 2 letters, 1865
	27	Peter Bryant, list of his letters, 1837-1912
	28	Peter Bryant correspondence, 1837-1912
	29	Peter Bryant, verifax letters
	30	Peter Bryant, occasional writings
	31	Frank Pomeroy to Peter, 1837-1912
	32	Julian Bryant, biographical data, 1836-1865
	33	Julian Bryant correspondence
	34	Julian Bryant, 1 letter, 1864
	35	Marcus Bryant correspondence, 2 letters, 1861
	36	Melissa Everett Dawes, 1820-1893
	37	Francis Dawes
	38	Bryant Letters (Ephemera) verifax copies
	39	Notes from Diary of Sylvia Drake, 1821-1824
	40	Watercolor J.H. Bryant
	41	Drake Diary, pages 1-88
	42	Drake Diary, pages 89-187
	43	Drake Diary, pages 188-238
	44	Drake Diary, pages 239-315
	45	Drake letters, 1784-1868

<u>BOX</u>	<u>FOLDER</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	4	
1	46	Bryant Family, history and genealogy		
	47	Bryant Family photographs		
	48	Bryant Family reunions		
	49	Notes on all Bryants from the <u>Bureau County Republican</u>		
	50	Books from Cyrus Bryant Collection		
	51	Bryant - Ephemera		
	52	Bryant Family Project - research phases (April 1957-)Murray and Rodney		
	53	Bryant Chronicle Project: Prospectus, Publicity, Publication and Correspondence		
	54	Articles and reprints by Murray and Rodney, 1960-1966		
	55	U.S. History - Mass. Medical Society Records, historical background for Dr. Peter Bryant		
	56	Godwin's <u>Life of William Cullen Bryant</u>		
	57	Introductory Essay, "Letters of a Kansas Farmer"		
	58	"Julian Bryant of Illinois", raw materials, first drafts		
	59	Julian Bryant's sketches		
	60	Bryant Material: lists of manuscripts and papers		
	61	Maps of Bureau County- historic and present		
	62	Kansas Historical background		
	63	Illinois Early History		
	64	Princeton, Illinois		
	65	Owen <u>Lovejoy</u>		
	66	Illinois - Early Travel		
	67	Illinois - Homesteading		
	68	Illinois - Projects of the New Country		
	69	Illinois - Construction of houses, barns, churches, mills, wells, smithies, etc.		
	70	Illinois - Productiveness of the land, crops, etc.		
	71	Illinois - churches, ministers		
	72	Illinois - health, conditions, doctors, diseases, nostrums, etc.		
	73	Illinois - economic conditions: Prices, wages, etc.		
	2		Letters on microfilm from the New York Public Library: Sarah S. Bryant, 1836, 1840, 2 letters Justin Olds, 1836, 2 letters C.F. Eicheker, 1863-1864, 3 letters E.R. Brown, 1889, 1890, 2 letters Notecards on Julian Bryant Book of Poems by John Howard Bryant	
			Cardfile index of Bryant letters included in boxfile: Newberry Library, New York Public Library and Allusions in Peter's letters	