Guide to the Elwyn A. Barron Papers 1877-1921

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Descriptive Summary

Identifier ICU.SPCL.BARRONEA

Title Barron, Elwyn A. Papers

Date 1877-1921

Size 30 linear feet (60 boxes)

Repository Special Collections Research Center
University of Chicago Library
1100 East 57th Street
Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.

Abstract Elwyn A. Barron (1855-1929) was a drama critic and playwright working in Chicago between 1877 and 1895. The Elwyn A. Barron Papers contain correspondence, memorabilia, dramatic criticism, and drafts of plays, novels, and poetry.

Information on Use

Access

The collection is open for research.

Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Barron, Elwyn A. Papers, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library

Biographical Note

Elwyn Alfred Barron was born in Lima, New York, in 1855. Educated at Robert College in Tennessee between 1868 and 1872, Barron worked at the Chicago Inter-Ocean in 1877. Until 1895 he was a drama critic and editorialist for this newspaper, which served as the primary source of news for the Midwestern and Western business community during this period. His work brought him into the orbit of many renowned American actors of the period; out of this experience he published an admiring biography of the actor Lawrence Barrett in 1889. In 1884, Barron married Harriet Lee Bird.

Barron also wrote plays, novels and poetry, including Robin Hood and Rosalind (1883, with A.S. Burt), A Moral Crime (1885, with fellow Chicago journalist Morgan Bates) and The Viking (1888). Barron’s work was dramatic and favored historical settings. He was comfortable with both comedy and tragedy: Robin Hood and Rosalind, termed "a perfect piece of work," by one reviewer, closed with a wedding chorus, while The Viking, set in what Lawrence Barrett called "the weird and mystical North," ended somewhat less happily.
After leaving Chicago, Barron lived in Paris and London. There he collaborated with the English playwright Wilson Barrett; together they published the novel In Old New York in 1900. Between 1900 and 1916 Barron copyrighted 11 dramatic works. His romantic drama A Mountain Pink, again with Morgan Bates, was staged in Chicago in 1900. He also published Manders: A Tale of Paris (1899, 1900) and Marcel Levignet (1906).

From 1907 Barron lived and wrote in New York City. He died in 1929.

**Scope Note**

The Elwyn A. Barron Papers are organized into two series:

Series I: Personal, contains correspondence and memorabilia, spanning 1885-1921.

Series II: Writings, contains criticism, plays, novels, and poetry written by Barron and others. These include clippings of reviews written by Barron while working for the Chicago Inter-Ocean, and drafts and printed copies of his non-critical writing. Material is largely undated but appears to span 1877-1921.

**Related Resources**

The following related resources are located in the Department of Special Collections:

http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/spcl/select.html

**Subject Headings**

- Barron, Elwyn Alfred, 1855-
- Drama -- History and criticism
- Theater -- Illinois -- Chicago
- Chicago (Ill.) -- Newspapers
- Novelists
- Playwrights

**INVENTORY**

**Series I: Correspondence and Personal**

This series contains correspondence and memorabilia. Material spans 1885-1921.

Box 1
Folder 1
    Calendar, 1885
Box 1
Folder 2
Cartoon, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 3**
- Correspondence, Wilson Barrett, 1891

**Box 1**

**Folder 4**
- Correspondence, "Lily," 1920

**Box 1**

**Folder 5**
- Correspondence, Harriet Lee Bird, 1921

**Box 1**

**Folder 6**
- Correspondence, Unidentified, 1921

**Box 1**

**Folder 7**
- Correspondence, Charles Scribner and Sons, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 8**
- Memorial, Joseph Hodges Choate, 1917

**Series II: Writings**

This series contains criticism, plays, novels, and poetry written by Barron and others. It is divided into five subseries:

Subseries 1: Criticism, contains clippings of editorials and reviews Barron wrote for the Chicago Inter-Ocean and other newspapers between 1877 and 1895. It includes criticism written by others and reviews of Barron’s own plays. Material is organized by actor, playwright, and genre, as arranged by Barron.

Subseries 2: Plays, contains drafts of plays written by Barron and two published copies of The Viking. Much of the material is undated; it appears to date from the 1880s and 1890s. Material is organized by title.

Subseries 3: Novels, contains drafts of novels written by Barron. These are incomplete and undated. Material is arranged by title.

Subseries 4: Poetry, contains drafts of poems written by Barron. It includes clippings of published poems. All but one poem is undated. Material is organized by title.

Subseries 5: Writings by Others, contains copies of poetry and short works written by others. Material is undated and organized by author.

**Subseries 1: Criticism**

**Box**

**Folder 9**
Mary Anderson

Box
Folder 10
  - Wilson Barrett, Bouicciault, E.H. Sothern

Box
Folder 11
  - Bernhardt, Coquelin-Hading, Elenora Duse

Box
Folder 12
  - Fanny Davenport, Langtry, Mrs. Potter, Daly Company

Box
Folder 13
  - Florence Jefferson, Irving Terry

Box
Folder 14
  - James Wainwright, Helen Modjeska

Box
Folder 15
  - Julia Marlowe, Carter

Box
Folder 16
  - Margaret Mather, Jannescheck, Miln, Wyndham Company, the Kendals

Box
Folder 17
  - John McCullough, Slaving, Clara Morris, Rhea

Box
Folder 18
  - Palmer Company, Halliard

Box 2
Folder 1
  - Rosina Vokes

Box 2
Folder 2
  - Miscellaneous actors, burlesques and farces

Box 2
Folder 3
  - Lyceum Company, "Die Muenchener," Possart, Steele MacKaye

Box 2
Folder 4
  - Dramatic essays, John Drew, W.H. Crane, Morris, Goodwin, Sol Smith Russell

Box 2
Folder 5
  - Sunday leaders, new plays

Box 2
Folder 6
  - The Viking
Box 2
Folder 7
  Specials
Box 2
Folder 8
  Scraps
Box 2
Folder 9
  Contributions to the New York Mirror, Intercepted Letters, miscellaneous criticism
Box 2
Folder 10
  Editorials, distinguished men
Box 2
Folder 11
  Scraps in verse and prose
Box 2
Folder 12
  Editorials, miscellaneous topics
Box 2
Folder 13
  General
Box 2
Folder 14
  Politics
Box 3
Folder 1
  New plays
Box 3
Folder 2
  Stars
Box 3
Folder 3
  Personal
Box 3
Folder 4
  A Moral Crime
Box 3
Folder 5
  Foreign productions
Box 3
Folder 6
  John McCullough
Box 3
Folder 7
  General criticism
Subseries 2: Plays

Box 4
Folder 1
   The Duke’s Wife, undated
Box 4
Folder 2
   The King’s Mate, undated
Box 4
Folder 3
   A Moral Crime, synopsis, with Morgan Bates, circa 1885
Box 4
Folder 4
   Playing the Game, undated
Box 4
Folder 5
   Robin Hood and Rosalind: A Comedy in Two Acts, with A.S. Burt, circa 1883
Box 4
Folder 6
   Triangles, undated
Box 4
Folder 7
   Unidentified
Box 4
Folder 8
   Unidentified, Act II
Box 4
Folder 9
   Unidentified, Act II and III
Box 4
Folder 10-11
   The Viking, 1888
Box 5
Folder 1
   The Viking, Act II
Box 5
Folder 2
   The Viking, Act III
Box 5
Folder 3
   The Viking, Act IV
   • Folder 4: The Viking, p. 20
Box 5
Folder 5
   When Bess Was Queen, circa 1894

Subseries 3: Novels
Box 5
Folder 6
   The Applebee Family
Box 5
Folder 7
   A Brat O’ Darkness
Box 5
Folder 8
   In The Dusk of the Old South
Box 5
Folder 9-10
   A Soul’s Adventure
Box 6
Folder 1
   Tu N’es Plus Rien?

Subseries 4: Poetry
Box 6
Folder 2
   "An Appreciation"
Box 6
Folder 3
   "Art vs. Artichokes"
Box 6
Folder 4
   "The Bow Carver"
Box 6
Folder 5
   "The Builder"
Box 6
Folder 6
   "Chrono to Cotytto"
Box 6
Folder 7
   "The Failure"
Box 6
Folder 8
   "For a Box of Smokes"
Box 6
Folder 9
   "Fortune’s Lord"
Box 6
Folder 10
   "The Harbinger"
"In Re the Day's Beneficence"
Box 6
Folder 12
"The Legend of Tululah"
Box 6
Folder 13
"On Receiving a Casket of Tea," 1921
Box 6
Folder 14
"Opportunity"
Box 6
Folder 15
"Our Boys in the War"
Box 6
Folder 16
"Pietro Loquilor"
Box 6
Folder 17
"The Rueful Fate of Tommy Brown"
Box 6
Folder 18
"The Show-me Choice"
Box 6
Folder 19
"Stone Mountain Memorial"
Box 6
Folder 20
"The Two Messengers"
Box 6
Folder 21
Printed poems, circa 1890s
Box 6
Folder 22
Untitled drafts

Subseries 5: Writings by Others

Box 6
Folder 23
Jefferson, C.E., "The Cause of the War," undated
Box 6
Folder 24
Macbeth and Conway, The Great Fright, dust jacket, undated
Box 6
Folder 25
"A Short Tale of a Pursuit in Tracing the History of a Rubens," undated
Box 6
Folder 26

Wobern, Raynal, poems