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# Guide to the Fanny Bristol Murdock and Sarah Bristol Family Papers 1836-1866



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## **Descriptive Summary**

<b>Identifier</b>	ICU.SPCL.BRISTOLMURDOCK
<b>Title</b>	Murdock, Fanny Bristol and Sarah Bristol Family. Papers
<b>Date</b>	1836-1866
<b>Size</b>	2 linear feet (2 boxes)
<b>Repository</b>	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
<b>Abstract</b>	These papers contain the personal correspondence of Fanny Murdock, her mother Sarah Bristol, and other family members in the mid-19th century. They document the family life and war-related difficulties of a Mississippi family. Material in the collection dates from 1836 to 1866.

## **Information on Use**

### **Access**

The collection is open for research.

### **Citation**

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Murdock, Fanny Bristol and Sarah Bristol Family. Papers, Crerar MS 247, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

### **Biographical Note**

Sarah Bristol was born in Connecticut in 1781. She married William Bristol, and they had at least three children, William, Albert, and Frances (Fanny). Sarah lived in New Haven, CT until her death in 1866. She corresponded extensively with her daughter Fanny and Fanny's children.

Frances Louisa Bristol (Fanny) was born in Connecticut in 1819. In 1840, she married John Murdock (b. 1813), a Mississippi planter, and took up residence at Cane Mount, his plantation in Claiborne County. Fanny and John had 6 children: William, John, Frances (Fannie\*), Sarah (Sallie), Essie, and Dora. The children corresponded extensively with their grandmother, and occasionally with other family members, including William Bristol's son Louis. The younger Fannie, particularly, was an avid letter-writer.

John Murdock died in 1861, and Fanny remained at Cane Mount through the end of the Civil War. However, in the fall of 1865, she and the children left for an extended trip to Europe, travelling there for over a year. The trip is well documented in letters to Sarah from Fanny and the children. It is not clear whether the family returned to Mississippi after their travels, or perhaps to Connecticut where some of Fanny's family remained. Fanny died in 1875.

Many of the letters in the collection were saved by Sarah Bristol. Fanny's letters to her mother contain details about her family: the looks and temperament of her children, their schooling and accomplishments. She also discusses plantation business, the national political situation, and war news. The letters stop at the end of 1866, just before Sarah's death.

\*A note about spelling: The spelling of Fanny/Fannie is not consistent for mother or daughter. The older Fanny spelled her name almost exclusively with a "y," but the younger Fannie used both spellings. However, the "-ie" spelling appears more often than the "-y" in letters from the daughter, and so to avoid confusion it is used consistently here to refer to her.

### **Scope Note**

The collection is divided into two series: Correspondence and Oversize. Series I, Correspondence, contains letters and a few items of ephemera. There are about a dozen family members represented in the correspondence, but most letters are written to or by Fanny Murdock or her mother Sarah Bristol. Due to the number of persons represented, the letters are arranged first by correspondent, as follows:

-Correspondence between Fanny (Bristol) Murdock and Sarah Bristol

-Correspondence between Fanny and other family members

-Correspondence between Fanny and friends/acquaintances

-Correspondence between Sarah Bristol and her grandchildren (mostly Fanny's children, including many letters from daughter Fannie)

-Correspondence between Sarah Bristol and other family members

-Correspondence between Sarah Bristol and non-family members

-Correspondence between other family members (not Fanny or Sarah)

-Fragments or otherwise unidentifiable family correspondence

-Correspondence between other Bristol and Murdock family members and non-family

-Other correspondence (a letter about a cotton shipment, possibly to John Murdock, letters of introduction for William Bristol)

-Ephemera

Within each category/folder, items are arranged chronologically.

Series II, Oversize, contains a few letters housed in Mylar that must, due to their condition, be stored open.

## **Related Resources**

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

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

Carter, Henry Kendall. Papers

Fannie A. Murdock kept a diary during the years 1861-1863. It is housed in Special Collections at the University Library at Virginia Tech:

Frances A. Murdoch Journal, Ms2009-132 - Special Collections, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

<http://ead.lib.virginia.edu/vivaxtf/view?docId=vt/viblbv00520.xml>

## **Subject Headings**

- Plantation life--Southern States--History--19th century
- United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1865--Personal narratives, Confederate.

## **INVENTORY**

## **Series I: Correspondence**

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 1**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Fanny Bristol (Murdock), 1836-1838

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 2**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Fanny Bristol Murdock, 1841

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 3**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Fanny Bristol Murdock, 1845-1849

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 4**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Fanny Bristol Murdock, 1856-1860

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 5**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Fanny Bristol Murdock, 1861-1863

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 6**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Fanny Bristol Murdock, 1865-1866

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 7**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Fanny Bristol Murdock, undated

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 8**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Fanny Bristol Murdock (Fragments), undated

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 9**

Correspondence – Fanny Bristol Murdock and Family, 1840-1866

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 10**

Correspondence – Fanny Bristol Murdock and Friends/Acquaintances, 1841-1864

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 11**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Grandchildren, 1854-1859

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 12**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Grandchildren, 1860-1866

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 13**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Other Family, 1842-1864, undated

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 14**

Correspondence – Sarah Bristol and Friends/Acquaintances, 1861-1863, undated

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 15**

Correspondence – Other Bristol and Murdock Family, 1847-1866, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 16**

Correspondence – Bristol/Murdock Family and Friends, 1857-1865, undated

**Box 1**

**Folder 17**

Letters of Introduction for William B. Bristol, 1862-1863

**Box 1**

**Folder 18**

Photograph and Ephemera, 1861, undated

**Series II: Oversize**

**Box 2**

**Folder 1**

Correspondence – Fanny and Fannie Murdock to Sarah Bristol, 1849-1866