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# Guide to the Bayard Taylor Collection 1850-1871



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## Descriptive Summary

<b>Identifier</b>	ICU.SPCL.TAYLORB
<b>Title</b>	Taylor, Bayard. Collection
<b>Date</b>	1850-1871
<b>Size</b>	0.25 linear feet (1 box)
<b>Repository</b>	Special Collections Research Center University of Chicago Library 1100 East 57th Street Chicago, Illinois 60637 U.S.A.
<b>Abstract</b>	Bayard Taylor (1825 –1878) American poet, literary critic, translator, travel author, and diplomat. The collection contains two autograph letters, a manuscript English translation of Goethe's Faust, part I, scene I, and an autograph manuscript of a Russian quotation.

## Information on Use

### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Citation

When quoting material from this collection, the preferred citation is: Taylor, Bayard. Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Special Collections Research Center, University of Chicago Library.

## Biographical Note

Bayard Taylor was born on January 11, 1825, in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. His parents, Joseph, a wealthy farmer, and Rebecca (née Way), were a Quaker couple and had three sons prior to the birth of Taylor. While apprenticing at a printer in West Chester, at the age of 17, Taylor was encouraged to write poetry by the influential critic and editor Rufus Wilmot Griswold. His first collection of poetry was subsequently published in 1844 and dedicated to Griswold.

Using the money from his poetry as well as an advance on promised travel articles, Taylor travelled Europe, making pedestrian tours through England, France, Germany, and Italy. His accounts of his travels were published in the Tribune, The Saturday Evening Post, and The United States Gazette. In 1846, he published a collection of his travel articles, and was offered a position of editorial assistant at Graham's magazine in 1848. Taylor then travelled West, at the request of Horace Greenley (editor of the New York Tribune), to cover the California gold rush. He returned by way of Mexico and published another collection of travel essays when

he returned in 1850. Taylor was briefly married to Mary Agnew in 1849 though she died of tuberculosis in 1850.

In 1851, Taylor travelled to Egypt, Palestine, and a few Mediterranean countries, writing and publishing accounts of his travels while he did so. 1852 found Taylor in Asia, travelling to China, India, and Japan. His accounts of these travels occupied three books published 1854-55. In 1855, Taylor travelled to Sweden, a trip which inspired his famous narrative poem, *Lars*. In 1857, he married Maria Hensen, and returned with her to the American West to lecture in San Francisco. In 1862, Taylor was appointed to the U.S. diplomatic service as secretary of legation at St. Petersburg. After the resignation of Ambassador Simon Cameron, he also served as acting minister to Russia for a brief period.

Taylor's first novel was published in 1863. He continued writing and travelling around the U.S., publishing another novel in 1870 about the life of the American Poet. It is also said to be America's first gay novel, with its alleged inspiration coming from American poets Fitz-Greene Halleck and Joseph Rodman Drake.

In March 1878, the U.S. Senate appointed Taylor as the United States Minister to Prussia. However, shortly after arriving in Berlin, Taylor died on December 19, 1878. His body was returned to the U.S. and buried in his hometown of Kennett Square. Taylor's obituary was featured on the front page of the *New York Times*.

### **Scope Note**

The Bayard Taylor Collection includes letters and manuscripts dating 1850 to 1871. The collection contains two handwritten, autographed letters written by Taylor. One letter, written to "Harry" (probably Harry Peterson, the editor and co-owner of *The Saturday Evening Post*), recommends the poet R.H. Stoddard for a correspondent position for the magazine. Also included in the collection is a signed manuscript of an Taylor's English translation of Goethe's *Faust*, part I, scene I, and an autograph manuscript of a Russian quotation.

The collection was previously part of the *Miscellaneous Manuscripts Collection*.

### **Related Resources**

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

<http://www.lib.uchicago.edu/e/scrc/findingaids/topics.php>

### **Subject Headings**

- Taylor, Bayard, 1825-1878
- Stoddard, Richard Henry, 1825-1903
- Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 1749-1832. Faust
- 
- 

## **INVENTORY**

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 1**

Bayard Taylor to Harry, March 17, 1850

- Autograph letter signed. Signed by Taylor. Taylor asks Harry if he would hire the poet R. H. Stoddard as a correspondent from New York.

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 2**

Russian quotation, November, 1863

- Autograph manuscript. Russian quotation, signed and in Taylor's hand.

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 3**

Bayard Taylor to unknown recipient, October 12, 1866

- Autograph letter signed.

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 4**

Goethe's Faust, English translation, February, 1871

- Autograph manuscript signed. English translation from Goethe's Faust, part I, scene I, Chorus of Angels.