

BRONSON HOWARD, 1842-1908
Papers, 1852-1895
3 Linear Feet

The Billy Rose Theatre Collection
The New York Public Library

8-MWEZ
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n.c.
28,635-
28,642

April 1990 (MT)

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Introduction

The Bronson Howard Papers were given to the Wilton Library, Wilton, CT in 1979. The collection, unprocessed, was turned over to The Billy Rose Theatre Collection in 1989. The material was in good physical condition but in no obvious order. It has been separated into two general categories, family and non-family papers. The family papers are arranged alphabetically. The general papers are arranged alphabetically for frequent correspondents and chronologically for all others.

Biography

Bronson Howard, the "dean of American dramatists," was born 7 October 1842 in Detroit, Michigan. His father was a prominent business man who was elected mayor of Detroit in 1849. In 1858 Bronson Howard was sent to boarding school in Connecticut preparatory to entering Yale University. He experienced problems with his eyesight, however, and gave up plans to attend university.

At about the same time, Mr. Howard's mother died, and his father suffered financial reverses. Mr. Howard returned to the Midwest where he entered the business world under the tutelage of his brother-in-law, William Waterman. He seems not to have prospered and turned to journalism, writing a column for the Detroit Free Press.

While working as a journalist, Mr. Howard wrote his first play, FANTINE, which was produced in Detroit in 1864. In 1865 he moved to New York where he continued to support himself as a journalist while writing plays. His first success came in 1870 when Augustin Daly, manager of the Fifth Avenue Theatre, produced his SARATOGA. DIAMONDS (1872), MOORCROFT (1874), LILIAN'S LAST LOVE (1877), which was revised in 1878 under the name THE BANKER'S DAUGHTER, OLD LOVE LETTERS (1878), HURRICANES (1878), WIVES (1879), FUN IN A GREEN-ROOM (1882), YOUNG MRS. WINTHROP (1882), ONE OF OUR GIRLS (1895), MET BY CHANCE (1887), THE HENRIETTA (1887) and BARON RUDOLPH (1887) followed. In 1889 Charles Frohman produced Mr. Howard's SHENANDOAH which established his reputation as a playwright and brought him financial independence. His final produced plays were ARISTOCRACY (1892) and PETER STUYVESANT (1899).

In 1880 Mr. Howard married Alice Wyndham, sister of the English actor and manager Sir Charles Wyndham. After his sister, Ella, died in 1892, Mr. Howard acted as guardian to her children.

Mr. Howard is known as the first American playwright to support himself by his work. He was also instrumental in bringing works by American authors to the stage not only in the United States but also in England. He founded and was president of the American Dramatists Club through which he successfully lobbied congress for copyright protection for American playwrights.

Bronson Howard died at Avon-by-the-Sea, New Jersey on 4 August 1908.

Bibliography

American Dramatists and Composers Society. In Memoriam: Bronson Howard, 1842-1908. New York, 1910. (MWES (Howard, B.))

Boyle, Charles John. Bronson Howard and the Popular Temper of the Guilded Age. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1957. (*Z-1288)

Frerer, Lloyd A. Bronson Howard: Dean of American Dramatists. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, The University of Iowa, 1971. (MWES (Howard, B.))

Tower, Grace Hortense. "Bronson Howard--Dean of American Dramatists." The Theatre (January, 1906):99-102. (NBLA +)

Scope and Content

The Bronson Howard Papers are arranged in four series:

- I. Family Correspondence, 1852 - 1893 (1 linear foot)
- II. General Correspondence
 - Subseries 1. Chronological Files, 1857 - 1895 (1 linear foot)
 - Subseries 2. Alphabetical Files, 1860 - 1893 (1 linear foot)
- III. General Papers, 1858 - 1893 (.25 linear feet)

The papers consist primarily of correspondence but also include financial records and legal documents and one annotated script. Bronson Howard corresponded with a wide circle of family members, friends, and professional associates. The family correspondence documents Mr. Howard's personal life as well as family business and social activities. Correspondence with theatre associates, including actors, managers and writers give information about Mr. Howard's activities and about theater during the period. A number of letters, particularly from family members and school friends (see esp. Box 28,639, Folder 3, Bacon, Edward W.) discuss the Civil War.

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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
Series I. Family Correspondence, 1852-1893			
28,635	1	Howard, Alice	n.d.
	2	Howard, Alice	1885-1893
	3	Howard, Charles and Margaret	n.d.
	4	Howard, Charles and Margaret	1852-1859
	5	Howard, Charles	1861-1866
	6	Howard, Charles	1872-1879
	7	Howard, Charles	1880-1883
	8	Howard, Charles - Estate	1885-1886
	9	Howard, Orin	1877-1883
	10	Howard, William and Albert	1865-1893
	11	Miscellaneous Family	1862-1893
	12	Waterman Family	n.d.
	13	Waterman Family	1858-1863
	14	Waterman Family	1864
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28,636	1	Waterman Family	1865
	2	Waterman Family	1866-1871
	3	Waterman Family	1872-1873
	4	Waterman Family	1874
	5	Waterman Family	1875-1876
	6	Waterman Family	1877-1878
	7	Waterman Family	1879
	8	Waterman Family	1879

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BRONSON HOWARD PAPERS
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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
	9	Waterman Family	1880-1882
	10	Waterman Family	1883
	11	Waterman Family	1884
/	12	Waterman Family	1885-1891
	13	Waterman Family	1892-1893
	14	Waterman, Joshua	1874-1891
	15	Waterman, W. J. - Estate	1885

Series II. General Correspondence
Subseries 1. Chronological files, 1857 - 1895

28,637	1	Unidentified material	n.d.
	2	Correspondence	n.d.
	3	Correspondence	1857-1862
	4	Correspondence	1863
	5	Correspondence	1864-1865
	6	Correspondence	1866
	7	Correspondence	1867-1869
	8	Correspondence	1870-1871
	9	Correspondence	1872
	10	Correspondence	1873
	11	Correspondence	1874
	12	Correspondence	1875
	13	Correspondence	1876
	14	Correspondence	1877
	15	Correspondence	1878

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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
	16	Correspondence	1879
28,638	1	Correspondence	1880
	2	Correspondence	1881
	3	Correspondence	1882
	4	Correspondence	1883
	5	Correspondence	1884
	6	Correspondence	1885
	7	Correspondence	1886
	8	Correspondence	1887
	9	Correspondence	1888
	10	Correspondence	1889
	11	Correspondence	1890
	12	Correspondence	1891
	13	Correspondence	1892
	14	Correspondence	1893-1896

Subseries 2. Alphabetic Files, 1860-1893

28,639	1	Albaugh, John W.	1864-1875
	2	Albery, James	1865-1884
	3	Bacon, Edward W.	1860-1866
	4	Chipman, M.H.	1865-1867
	5	Dittenhoefer, A.J.	1882-1887
	6	Dauvray, Helen	1885-1889
	7	Fawcett, Edgar	1880-1891

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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
	8	Field, Kate	1875-1889
	9	Field, R.M.	1872-1879
	10	Frohman, Charles	1887-1893
	11	Frohman, Daniel	1889
	12	Hayman, Al	1893
	13	Hennequin, Alfred	1886-1892
	14	Hoddinott & Davis	1886
	15	Hotham, E.S.	1861-1889
	16	Hoxsey Family	1872-1876
	17	Isham, James	1861-1873
	18	Keena & Lightner	1892-1893
	19	Knight, George S.	1883-1893
	20	Lloyd, David D.	1879-1885
	21	Marston, R. Westland	1875-1887
	22	Matthews, J.B.	1883-1888
	23	McVicker, J.H.	1872-1888
	24	Palmer, A.M.	1874-1892
	25	Phillips & Dyer	1886-1889
	26	Quinby, William E.	1876-1888
	27	Robson and Crane	1886-1891
	28	Runkle, L.G.	1879-1886
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28,640	1	Samuel French and Son	1874-1878
	2	Samuel French and Son	1879

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BRONSON HOWARD PAPERS
Folder List

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
	3	Samuel French and Son	1880-1884
	4	Samuel French and Son	1885-1888
	5	Samuel French and Son	1889-1893
	6	Wyndham, Sir Charles	1871-1879
	7	Young, Sir Charles	1876-1884

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Series III. General Papers, 1858 - 1893

	8	Autograph List	n.d.
	9	Check Stubs	1886-1892
	10	Clubs, etc.	1874-1891
	11	Collegiate and Commercial Institute	1858-1860
	12	Creative Material	n.d.
	13	Family Notes	1860
	14	Letters of Introduction A-N	1875
	15	Letters of Introduction P-Z	1875

28,641	1	Personal Business	1880-1893
	2	Receipts	1865-1889
	3	Receipts	1890-1893
	4	THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL - Script	n.d.
	5	Stock Receipt	1889

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Series IV Oversized Material, 1861 - 1892

28,642	1	Correspondence, etc.	1861-1892
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<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>
	2	Family Records	1881-1892
	3	Housing Repairs	1884-1892
	4	Law Suits	1882-1887
	5	Samuel French and Son	1874

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Abbey, Henry Eugene, 1846-1896	28,638 #1	5/26/81
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Abbey, Henry Eugene, 1846-1896	28,637 #16	1/10/79
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Albrey, James, 1838-1889	28,639 #2	1865-1884
Allen, Viola, 1869-1949	28,637 #2	n.d.
Archer, William, 1856-1924	28,638 #12	3/30/91
Archer, William, 1856-1924	28,638 #12	4/2/91
Archer, William, 1856-1924	28,638 #1	11/23/80
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Barnard, Charles, 1838-1920	28,638 #13	2/16/92
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Byron, Oliver Doud, 1842-1920	28,637 #15	8/3/78
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Campbell, Bartley, 1843-1888	28,638 #2	4/28/82
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Cecil, Arthur, 1843-1896	28,638 #6	1/29/85
Cecil, Arthur, 1843-1896	28,638 #5	12/1/84
Cecil, Arthur, 1843-1896	28,638 #5	6/28/84
Celli, Frank H. d. 1904	28,640 #10	6/18/91
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Clark, Frederick, d. 1916	28,638 #15	1/24/78
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Clayton, John, 1845-1888	28,638 #5	9/6/84
Collette, Charles H., 1843-1924	28,640 #10	6/18/91
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Conried, Heinrich, 1855-1909	28,638 #10	11/2/89
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Dietz, Linda, d. 1920	28,637 #16 12/15/79
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Dixon, Gerald, d. 1879	28,637 #16 4/79
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Dixon, Gerald, d. 1879	28,637 #15 11/5/78
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Gunn, Michael, d. 1901	28,638 #6 3/3/85
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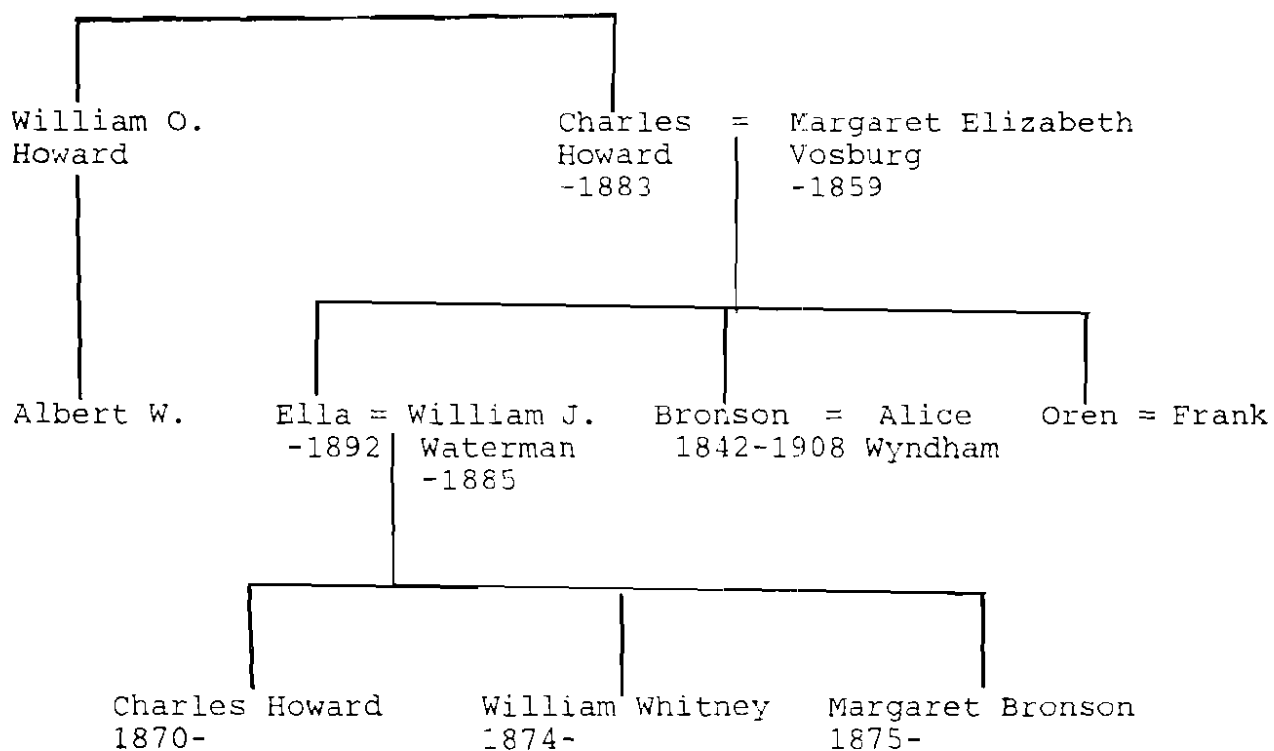
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Marsden, Fred, d. 1888	28,637 #11 10/17/74
Marsden, Fred, d. 1888	28,637 #16 12/20/79
Marsden, Fred, d. 1888	28,637 #16 1/14/79
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Howard Family Tree¹



¹The information for this family tree was abstracted from the correspondence and has not been verified against external sources.