

The Filson Historical Society

**Shelby-Bruen family
Papers, 1761-1916**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for these papers, contact the Collections Department.

Size of collection:
4 cu. ft. and 1 vol.

Location Number:
Mss./A/S544e

Shelby-Bruen family Papers, 1761-1916

Scope and Content Note

The collection documents the lives of Shelby and Bruen family members, with a focus on Amanda Bruen Shelby of Fayette County, Kentucky. The 1844 marriage of Amanda Bruen and Evan Shelby, grandson of former Kentucky Governor Isaac Shelby, connected the two families. While the collection contains letters of Isaac Shelby and other Shelby and Bruen men, most of the correspondence, diaries, and other personal papers are authored by female family members and friends who lived in Lexington, Louisville, and other parts of Kentucky, as well as in Arkansas, Missouri, and Colorado. Their writings and keepsakes provide information about courtship and social life, female education, Episcopal religious activities, slavery, travel, and sicknesses and deaths. Included in the collection are Shelby Susan "Sue" Scherer Clark's transcriptions of original documents (available as PDFs on the finding aid on the Filson's web site), genealogical materials, and supplemental information.

Folders 1-4 contain late 1700s-early 1800s correspondence of Isaac Shelby, Col. Thomas Hart, Shelby family members, and Dr. Richard Pindell's family. In the 1780s, Isaac Shelby writes to Hart primarily about disputed land claims and the sale of tobacco, land, and enslaved African Americans, particularly in reference to the ongoing settlement of the debts and estate of his father-in-law (and Thomas Hart's brother) Nathaniel Hart. After Nathaniel Hart's wife Sarah died in 1785, Shelby writes of the education needs of the Harts' sons. His 1789 letters discuss the land claims of Thomas Hart Benton and Daniel Boone. Thomas Hart's letters from acquaintances and family members discuss family news, debts, and slavery. Included are letters from his son-in-law James Brown at his plantation near New Orleans. Among the personal papers of Shelby and Pindell family members are poems written by Susannah Hart Shelby Shannon, some reflecting on the death of her 16-year-old daughter from yellow fever in Guatemala in 1832, and a letter from Gen. James Shelby to his wife during his military service in the War of 1812.

Folders 5-25 hold correspondence and papers of Bruen family members from the 1830s-1840s. The majority consist of young Amanda Bruen's letters, autograph albums, and journals. Amanda's school journals are filled with lessons and short compositions. Passports, correspondence, pressed flowers, and Amanda's travel journals document a trip to Europe taken in 1841 by Amanda, her father Joseph Bruen, her sister Elizabeth Bruen Ingels, and architect John McMurtry. A ledger for Joseph Bruen's iron store lists accounts with individuals and businesses; the account book later became a scrapbook for his children and/or grandchildren. There are a small number of Elizabeth Bruen Ingels's letters, as well as letters and poems from Evan Shelby to Amanda Bruen leading up to their marriage in May 1844.

Folders 26-42 hold correspondence and journals of Amanda Bruen Shelby and other family members from 1844 through the deaths of Evan and Amanda Shelby five months apart in 1853.

Shelby family letters address politics, family tensions at Gen. James Shelby's home Richland in 1845, and the birth of Evan and Amanda's daughter Mary Pindell Shelby in November 1845. Amanda's prescription and account books provide information about medical treatments and the purchase of household items. Amanda's daily journals and correspondence document the 1849 cholera epidemic in Lexington, social events and visits, stays at nearby springs, household activities, church attendance, and the lives and deaths of enslaved African Americans in Kentucky as well as in Helena, Arkansas. Letters mourn the deaths of Joseph Bruen Jr. in 1846, Joseph Bruen Sr. and Gen. James Shelby in 1848, Susan Hart Shelby Carter's husband William Grayson Carter in 1849, and Margery Parker Bruen and Evan Shelby in early 1853. There is a lock of Amanda's hair saved after her death on July 31, 1853.

Folders 43-66 consist primarily of letters and other personal papers of Mary Pindell Shelby, as well as an autograph book and journal belonging to Sarah "Busy" Bruen Cronly. Included are a school journal, phrenological readings, and miscellaneous papers and keepsakes. Letters between Mary Pindell Shelby and John Stallcup lead up to their marriage in 1880 in Kirkwood, Missouri, where Mary's aunt, Susan Hart Shelby Carter Magoffin, lived. Stallcup, who lived in Denver and ran for Colorado attorney general on the Democratic ticket in 1880, writes about state and national political elections and about anti-Chinese mobs. Correspondence after 1880 includes cards and letters sent to Mary and John Stallcup's daughter Margery Bruen Stallcup.

Folders 67-75 consist of correspondence and genealogical notes from 1890-1915, as Mary Pindell Shelby Stallcup gathered information about the Bruen, Pindell, and Shelby families.

Folders 76-89 contain supplemental materials assembled by Shelby Susan "Sue" Scherer Clark, whose great-great-grandmother was Amanda Bruen Shelby. They include information about Shelby and Bruen family members, modern-day photographs of Shelby and Bruen family homes and Kalorama, indexes of letters, and photocopies of wills and other documents. The photocopies of records from other archives are kept in the collection for reference purposes only. *Researchers using the photocopies of records from other archives must cite the original repository.*

Volume 90 is a scrapbook assembled by Mary Pindell Shelby Stallcup to display family documents, photographs, and clippings dating from ca. 1761-1914.

Arrangement Note: Upon arrival at the Filson Historical Society, a large portion of the Shelby-Bruen papers were housed in three-ring binders. Original documents and their transcriptions and photocopies were removed from binders and foldered for ease of use; photocopies of supplemental information and records were put at the end of the collection.

Related Collections:

Two Shelby-Bruen family bibles and two books of common prayer in the library collection.

Shelby-Bruen family photograph collection (020PC32).

Shelby-Bruen museum objects (2020.25.1-16).

Shelby-Bruen family Papers, 1761-1916

Biographical Note

Isaac Shelby (1750-1826) was the first and fifth governor of Kentucky and served in the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. He married Susannah Hart (1764-1833), the daughter of Nathaniel and Sarah Hart. Isaac and Susannah Shelby's oldest son James Shelby (1784-1848) married Mary "Polly" Pindell (1784-1836) in Fayette County, Kentucky. Their children who survived into adulthood were Richard Pindell Shelby (1810-1849), Susan Hart Shelby Carter Magoffin (1813-1901), Isaac Shelby (1815-1873), James Shelby (1817-1852), Lafayette Shelby (1819-1859), and Evan Shelby (1824-1853).

Joseph Bruen (1794-1848) moved to Lexington, Kentucky, where he established a brass and iron foundry and married Margery Parker (1778-1853) in 1818. Their children who survived into adulthood were Elizabeth Bruen Ingels (1820-1874), Joseph Bruen Jr. (1821-1846), Amanda Bruen Shelby (1824-1853), and Sarah "Busy" Bruen Cronly (1828-1902).

At age 13, Amanda Bruen entered the school of Bishop Benjamin Bosworth Smith and began a lifelong association with many of his children, especially Elizabeth "Lizzie" Smith. In 1844, at the age of 19, Amanda married 20-year-old Evan Shelby, the youngest child of Gen. James Shelby. Their daughter Mary Pindell Shelby (1845-1916) would be orphaned in 1853 at the age of 7 when Evan and Amanda Shelby died within five months of each other. Evan died after suffering from erysipelas and Amanda's cause of death is not known.

After the deaths of Evan and Amanda Shelby, Mary Pindell Shelby was raised by Amanda's sister Sarah "Busy" Bruen Cronly, and likely also by Evan's sister Susan Hart Shelby Carter Magoffin and Evan's brother Isaac "Ike" Shelby. During the 1870s, Mary Pindell Shelby traveled with her Aunt Busy, visiting Shelby and Bruen cousins from New Jersey to California and collecting genealogy information. In 1880, she married John Calhoun Stallcup (1841-1915), a lawyer and judge living in Denver, Colorado. In 1889, they moved to Tacoma, Washington. Their children who survived into adulthood were Margery Bruen Stallcup Smith, John Calhoun "Buster" Stallcup, Jr., and Evan Dhu Shelby Stallcup.

References:

Sue Clark's notes on the collection.

**Shelby-Bruen family
Papers, 1761-1916**

Folder List

Box 1

- Folder 1: Correspondence from Isaac Shelby to Thomas Hart, ca. 1782-1789
- Folder 2: Correspondence of Thomas Hart, 1799-1807
- Folder 3: Correspondence, poems, and school reports of Shelby family, 1809-1842
- Folder 4: Transcriptions and photocopies, ca. 1782-1842
- Folder 5: Iron store account ledger of Joseph Bruen, 1831-1835
- Folder 6: Correspondence of Amanda Bruen and Elizabeth Bruen Ingels, ribbon of Sarah "Busy" Bruen, ca. 1836-1841
- Folder 7: Transcriptions and photocopies, ca. 1836-1841

Box 2

- Folder 8: Autograph album of Amanda Bruen, 1835-1839
- Folder 9: Journal given to Charlotte Bruen by Amanda Bruen, 1837-1859
- Folder 10: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1835-1859
- Folder 11: School journal of Amanda Bruen, Jan.-April 1838
- Folder 12: School journal of Amanda Bruen, April-Dec. 1838
- Folder 13: Index, transcriptions, and photocopies, Jan.-Dec. 1838

Box 3

- Folder 14: School journal of Amanda Bruen, March 1839-Feb. 1841
- Folder 15: School journal of Amanda Bruen, 1840-1852
- Folder 16: Index, transcriptions, and photocopies, 1839-1852

Box 4

- Folder 17: Passports and correspondence of Joseph Bruen, 1841, including transcriptions and photocopies
- Folder 18: Diary of Amanda Bruen from trip to Europe, April-May 1841
- Folder 19: Diary of Amanda Bruen from trip to Europe, June-Aug. 1841
- Folder 20: Notes, calling cards, and pressed flowers of Amanda Bruen from trip to Europe, 1841
- Folder 21: Index, transcriptions, and photocopies, 1841

Box 5

- Folder 22: Correspondence of Amanda Bruen, 1841
- Folder 23: Correspondence of Amanda Bruen, 1842
- Folder 24: Correspondence and poems from Evan Shelby to Amanda Bruen, 1843-1844
- Folder 25: Journal notes and correspondence of Amanda Bruen, ca. 1843-1849
- Folder 26: Correspondence of Amanda Bruen Shelby, 1844
- Folder 27: Correspondence of Amanda Bruen Shelby and Shelby family, 1845

Folder 28: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1841-1849

Box 6

Folder 29: Correspondence of Amanda Bruen Shelby and Shelby family, lock of Mary Pindell Shelby's hair, 1846-1847

Folder 30: Prescription book and account books of Amanda Bruen Shelby, 1849-1853

Folder 31: Diaries of Amanda Bruen Shelby, 1849-1851

Folder 32: Pages from Shelby family bible, 1852, including transcriptions and photocopies

Folder 33: Transcriptions and photocopies of correspondence, prescription and account books, 1846-1853

Folder 34: Transcriptions and photocopies of diaries, 1849-1851

Box 7

Folder 35: Correspondence of Amanda Bruen Shelby and Bruen and Shelby families, funeral notices, 1848-1849

Folder 36: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1848-1849

Folder 37: Correspondence of Amanda Bruen Shelby, poem, 1850

Folder 38: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1850

Folder 39: Correspondence of Amanda Bruen Shelby and Bruen and Shelby families, 1851-1852

Folder 40: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1851-1852

Folder 41: Correspondence of Amanda Bruen Shelby, funeral notices, estate sale notes, 1853

Folder 42: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1853

Folder 43: School journal likely belonging to Mary Pindell Shelby, ca. 1864-1865

Folder 44: Transcriptions and photocopies, ca. 1864-1865

Folder 45: Phrenological readings of Mary Pindell Shelby, 23 December 1865, 22 March 1866

Folder 46: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1865-1866

Folder 47: Miscellaneous personal papers of Mary Pindell Shelby, ca. 1853-1881

Folder 48: Transcriptions and photocopies, ca. 1853-1881

Folder 49: Notes, autograph book, and journal of Sarah (Busy) Bruen Cronly, ca. 1850-1900

Folder 50: Transcriptions and photocopies, ca. 1850-1900

Folder 51: Correspondence from Mary Pindell Shelby to John Stallcup, ca. 1878

Folder 52: Transcriptions and photocopies, ca. 1878

Folder 53: Correspondence from Mary Pindell Shelby to John Stallcup, ca. 1879-1880

Folder 54: Transcriptions and photocopies, ca. 1879-1880

Folder 55: Correspondence of Mary Pindell Shelby and John Stallcup, June-September 1880

Folder 56: Transcriptions and photocopies, June-September 1880

Folder 57: Correspondence of Mary Pindell Shelby and John Stallcup, 4-22 October 1880

Folder 58: Transcriptions and photocopies, 4-22 October 1880

Folder 59: Correspondence of Mary Pindell Shelby and John Stallcup, 24-31 October 1880

Folder 60: Transcriptions and photocopies, 24-31 October 1880

Folder 61: Correspondence of Mary Pindell Shelby and John Stallcup, 1-4 November 1880

Folder 62: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1-4 November 1880

Folder 63: Correspondence from John Stallcup to Mary Shelby Stallcup, 1882

Folder 64: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1882

Folder 65: Correspondence and notes of Mary Shelby Stallcup and Margery Bruen Stallcup, 1889-1914

Folder 66: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1893-1914
Folder 67: Genealogy notes and correspondence, ca. 1890-1895, undated
Folder 68: Transcriptions and photocopies, ca. 1890-1895, undated
Folder 69: Genealogy notes and correspondence, 1896-1897
Folder 70: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1896-1897
Folder 71: "A Pedigree of Shelby, Including that of Hart," ca. 1897
Folder 72: Transcriptions and photocopies, ca. 1897

Box 8

Folder 73: Genealogy notes and correspondence, 1898, 1908-1911
Folder 74: Transcriptions and photocopies, 1898, 1908-1911
Folder 75: Volume on genealogy of the Pindell family, ca. 1916

Supplemental records

Folder 76: Family member information and images
Folder 77: Alphabetical index of letters by author and by people mentioned
Folder 78: Alphabetical index of topics, places, and issues, and chronological index of people
Folder 79: Information about and photographs of family homes and Kalorama
Folder 80: Photocopies of supplemental records, 1761-1833
Folder 81: Photocopies of supplemental records, 1834-1840
Folder 82: Photocopies of supplemental records, 1841-1844
Folder 83: Photocopies of supplemental records, 1844-1847
Folder 84: Photocopies of supplemental records, 1848-1849
Folder 85: Photocopies of supplemental records, 1850-1852
Folder 86: Photocopies of supplemental records, 1853-1859
Folder 87: Photocopies of supplemental records, 1860-1874
Folder 88: Photocopies of supplemental records, 1875-2018
Folder 89: Photocopies of materials in scrapbook of Mary Shelby Stallcup, ca. 1761-1914

Oversize

Volume 90: Scrapbook of Mary Shelby Stallcup, ca. 1761-1914

**Shelby-Bruen family
Papers, 1761-1916**

Subject Headings

Agricultural exhibitions – Kentucky.
Agriculture – Kentucky.
Agriculture – Louisiana.
Autograph albums.
Boardinghouses – Kentucky.
Books and reading – 19th century.
Boone, Daniel, 1734-1820.
Boonesboro (Ky.)
Boston (Mass.) – Description and travel – 19th century.
Botanical specimens.
Brown, James, 1766-1835.
Bruen family – Genealogy.
Bruen, Joseph, 1794-1848.
Bruen, Margery Parker, 1798-1853.
Carter, William Grayson, 1803-1849.
Chinese Americans – Colorado – Denver.
Cholera – Kentucky.
Christians.
Christmas – 19th century.
Clay, Henry, 1777-1852.
Cleveland (Ohio) – Description and travel – 19th century.
Consumer goods.
Courtship.
Cronly, Sarah Bruen, 1828-1902.
Death – Psychological aspects.
Death – Religious aspects – Christianity.
Diseases – Arkansas.
Diseases – Kentucky.
Diseases – Louisiana.
Dueling.
Easter.
England – Description and travel – 19th century.
Episcopal Church.
Executors and administrators – Kentucky.
Families – Kentucky.
Fashion – 19th century.
France – Description and travel – 19th century.

Gardening – Kentucky.
Garfield, James A. (James Abram), 1831-1881.
Genealogy.
General stores – Kentucky.
Girls – Education – Kentucky.
Grayson (Ky.)
Great Western (Steamship).
Halifax (N.S.) – Description and travel – 19th century.
Hart, Nathaniel, 1734-1782.
Hart, Thomas, ca. 1730-1808.
Historic buildings – Kentucky.
Ingels, Elizabeth Bruen, 1820-1874.
Ireland – Description and travel – 19th century.
Iron foundries – Kentucky.
Kalorama (Louisville, Ky.)
Kentucky – politics and government.
Kenyon College.
Land grants – Kentucky.
Land speculation – Kentucky.
Lexington (Ky.)
Louisville (Ky.) – Description and travel – 19th century.
Magoffin, Susan Hart Shelby Carter, 1813-1901.
McMurtry, John, 1812-1890.
Medical care – Kentucky.
Medicine – Kentucky.
Mesmerism.
Mississippi River – Navigation.
New York – Description and travel – 19th century.
Niagara Falls – Description and travel – 19th century.
Ocean travel.
Ohio River – Navigation.
Paper work – United States.
Phlebotomy.
Phrenology.
Pickett family – Genealogy.
Plantations – Louisiana.
Poetry.
Presidents – United States – Election – 1800.
Racially mixed women – Kentucky.
Railroads.
Religion.
Religious education – Kentucky.
Scotland – Description and travel – 19th century.
Sewing – Kentucky – 19th century.
Sheet music.
Shelby, Amanda Bruen, 1824-1853.

Shelby, Evan, 1824-1853.
Shelby, Isaac, 1750-1826.
Shelby, James, 1784-1848.
Shelby family – Genealogy.
Slavery – Arkansas.
Slavery – Kentucky.
Slavery – Maryland.
Smallpox.
Springs – Kentucky.
Stallcup, John Calhoun, 1841-1915.
Stallcup, Mary Pindell Shelby, 1845-1916.
Swine – Kentucky.
Temperance – Kentucky.
Thumb, Tom, 1838-1883.
Transatlantic voyages.
Travel – 19th century.
Trials (Murder) – Kentucky – Lexington.
United States – History – War of 1812.
Visiting cards.
Washington (D.C.) – Description and travel – 19th century.
Weddings – 19th century.
Wheeling (W. Va.) – Description and travel – 19th century.
Wills.
Wyoming (Ky.)
Yandell, David Wendel, 1826-1898.