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Collection Summary

Repository: Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries

Creator: Swan, Cyrus

Title: Cyrus Swan Papers

Dates: 1842-1939

Quantity: 1.6 cubic feet (8 boxes)

Abstract: This collection includes personal and professional correspondence, diaries, account books, and other materials relating to the life and career of Cyrus Swan, both before and during his time as a trustee of Vassar College.

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Biographical Note

Cyrus Swan (1820-1900) was born in 1820 and attended Yale College. After establishing a law practice in Poughkeepsie, New York, he became a close friend, advisor, and business agent of local brewer Matthew Vassar, the founder of Vassar College. In 1845, Swan accompanied Vassar on his homecoming voyage to Europe, and in 1855 he married Fanny Walker Swan, with whom he had two daughters, Frances (Swan) Walker and Harriet (Swan) Rachel. Swan served as Secretary of the Board of Trustees of Vassar College from 1861 to 1870 and remained a trustee until his death in 1900. He also served the college as a member of the Committee on the Art Gallery and the Committee on the Library.

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Scope and Content Note

This collection includes personal and professional correspondence, diaries, account books, and other materials relating to the life and career of Cyrus Swan, both before and during his time as a trustee of Vassar College.

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Arrangement

This collection is partially processed and organized into three series: Series I. Correspondence, Series II. Professional and Financial Records, and Series III. Personal Papers. [Top](#)

Access and Use

Access

This collection is open for research according to the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#) without any additional restrictions.

Restrictions on Use

Permission to quote (publish) from unpublished or previously published material must be obtained as described in the [regulations of the Vassar College Archives and Special Collections Library](#).

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Related Material

Related Materials

- [Matthew Vassar Papers](#)

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Subject Headings

Names:

- Vassar, Matthew, 1792-1868

Organizations:

- Vassar College. Art gallery
- Vassar College. Trustees

Subjects:

- Lawyers--New York (State)--Poughkeepsie

Places:

- Poughkeepsie (N.Y.)

VCL Categories:

- Local history
- Vassar College

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Encoding Information

Encoded by Mark Seidl, March 2022.

Updated by Emma Gronbeck, November 2024.

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Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Cyrus Swan Papers, Archives and Special Collections Library, Vassar College Libraries.

Processing Information

Folder list by Emma Iadanza, October 2021.

Updated by Emma Gronbeck, November 2024.

Acquisition Information

Materials gathered or purchased from various sources. Folders 1.1-2.3 represent an artificial collection created by the Vassar College Library. Folders 3.1-3.2 and 4.1 contain materials transferred from the Main Building of Vassar College. Folders 5.1-8.13 contain materials purchased from various dealers. See collection folder for details.

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Series List

[Series I.](#) Correspondence, 1843-1930

[Series II.](#) Professional and Financial Records, 1842-1939

[Series III.](#) Personal Papers, 1842-1930

Container List

Series I. Correspondence, 1843-1930

Folder 1.19 Franks, D. F. to Cyrus Swan, 1843 Mar 15

Folder 1.20 Hutchinson, [?] to Cyrus Swan, 1844 Aug 4

Folders 5.3-
5.4 Jewett, Milo to Cyrus Swan, 1879

Folder 1.17 Lossing, Benson to Cyrus Swan, 1867 Dec 6

- Folder 1.18 Lossing, Benson to Cyrus Swan, 1883 Jan 27
- Folder 5.1 Mitchell, Maria to Harriet Swan, undated
- Folder 1.9 Mitchell, Maria to Ms. Swan (?), 1896
- Folder 1.16 Osborne, C. Oatman to Cyrus Swan, 1881 Mar 7
- Folder 5.10 Raymond, John to Cyrus Swan, 1863
- Folder 5.9 Raymond, John to Cyrus Swan, 1867
- Folder 5.8 Raymond, John to Cyrus Swan, 1869
- Folder 3.2 Swan, Cyrus - Letterbook, 1862-1864
- Folder 4.1 Swan, Cyrus - Letterbook, 1866-1867
- Folder 2.3 Swan, Cyrus - Letterbook, [1866-1868?]
- Folder 3.1 Swan, Cyrus - Letterbook, 1875-1878
- Folder 7.3 Swan, Cyrus to family, 1845
- Folder 5.13 Taylor, James to Cyrus Swan, 1887
- Folder 5.11 Taylor, James to Cyrus Swan, 1888
- Folder 5.5 Taylor, James to Cyrus Swan, 1890
- Folder 5.12 Vassar, Matthew to Cyrus Swan, 1864
- Folder 5.2 Vassar, Matthew to Cyrus Swan, 1867
- Folder 5.6 Vassar, Matthew to the Poughkeepsie Daily Press, incomplete draft, undated
- Folder 8.4 Letters related to Cyrus Swan Monument, undated
- Folder 1.21 Unsorted correspondence to Cyrus Swan, 1867 Mar-Nov
Correspondents include A.F. Bellows, John W. Ehninger, S.R. Gifford, George H. Hall, George Innes, Elias L. Magoon, C.H. Moore, and Marcus Waterman.
- Folder 1.15 Unsorted correspondence to Cyrus Swan, 1896 Jan 2
- Folder 7.4 Unsorted correspondence, 1845-1930
Letters to and from Cyrus Swan and Swan family members and other correspondents, including Herbert E. Mills and J. Rockwell. Also includes reports and legal documents.
- Folder 7.2 Unsorted correspondence, 1848-1930
Letters to and from Cyrus Swan and Swan family members. Photograph, printed material, draft of Matthew Vassar's will.

Series II. Professional and Financial Records, 1842-1939

- Folder 8.1 Account Book, 1846-1869
- Folder 1.12 Chancery Court License for Cyrus Swan, 1843 Nov 2
- Folder 6.13 Deed from Clark to Matthew Vassar, 1855
- Folder 1.13 Internal Revenue License issued to Cyrus Swan, 1865 May 11
- Folder 5.7 Jewett, Milo - Letter of Resignation, 1864
- Folders 6.11-6.12 Lease from Matthew Vassar to Dudley and Thompson, 1855
- Folder 1.5 Memorandum Book (Steward's Department), circa 1864-1865
- Folder 1.6 Memorandum Book (Steward's Department), 1866
- Folder 1.7 Memorandum Book (Steward's Department), 1865
- Folder 1.8 Memorandum Book (Steward's Department), Rules of Operation, undated
- Folder 6.10 Mitchell, Maria - Draft of Will, 1871
- Folder 1.4 Receipt book - Cyrus Swan, Trustee, for Chandler Holbrook and Co., 1856-1861

- Folder 1.14 Supreme Court License for Cyrus Swan, 1842 Oct 27
- Folder 7.1 Vassar 50(?)th Anniversary, circa 1915-1939
- Folder 6.9 Vassar College Board of Trustees Executive Committee to Matthew Vassar, 1864
- Folder 6.8 Vassar, Matthew - Address to the Trustees, draft in Cyrus Swan's Hand, 1864
- Folder 6.7 Vassar, Matthew - financial affairs regarding kin, undated

Series III. Personal Papers, 1842-1930

- Folder 1.2 Catalogue of the Miscellaneous Library of Cyrus Swan, 1855
- Folder 1.1 Diary by Cyrus Swan (?) - Travel to London, Italy, France, 1845
- Folder 1.11 Invitation and ticket for Inauguration of New Building at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1894
- Folder 6.6 Lyceum Materials, 1852, undated
- Folder 8.2-8.3 Material relating to Mill Street House, 1869-1886
- Folder 6.4 Miscellaneous papers, 1845-1880, undated
- Folder 1.10 Newspaper clipping with ink drawing of Cyrus Swan, undated
- Folder 1.3 Notebook - 18 page manuscript with clippings inserted ("Read before Armor Lodge, Knights of Pythias, Jan 11, 1881"), [1881?]
- Folder 6.3 Photograph, undated [Framed]
- Folder 6.5 Photograph - Cyrus Swan and daughter (?), undated
- Folder 2.1 Scrapbook (Includes some pages of Private Account, 1842-1843), 1842-1854
- Folder 2.2 Scrapbook of Political Clippings, 1872
- Folder 6.1 Speech (?), 1848 Jul 4
- Folder 6.2 Speech (?), 1856 Feb 8
- Folder 8.5 Swan family materials, 1845-1930
- Folder 1.22 Swan, William - Notebook of Ms. Musier, 1882

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