

MS-437: Shivell Family, Jane Reece Collection

Collection Number: MS-437

Title: Shivell Family, Jane Reece Collection

Dates: 1911-1944

Creator: Shivell Family

Summary/Abstract:

This collection highlights the work and family of Dayton poet, Paul Shivell. An accomplished poet published in the late 19th- and early 20th centuries, Shivell was recognized for his pastoral poems which were published in several books and collections. Included in the collection are several original portraits by noted Dayton photographer Jane Reece, who was a close family friend of the Shivells and who took portraits of them throughout several decades. Other documents note the Shivells' activities in Dayton society and the arts. Of special interest is the 1916 letter to Shivell from Robert Frost, complimenting him on his recent publication, and a print of one of Jane Reece's photographs of Matilda Dunbar, mother of Paul Laurence Dunbar.

Quantity/Physical Description: 1 lin. ft.

Language(s): English

Repository:

Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, OH 45435-0001, (937) 775-2092

Restrictions on Access: There are no restrictions on accessing material in this collection.

Restrictions on Use:

Copyright restrictions may apply. Unpublished manuscripts are protected by copyright. Permission to publish, quote, or reproduce must be secured from the repository and the copyright holder.

Preferred Citation:

[Box Number, Folder Number], MS-437, Shivell Family, Jane Reece Collection, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio

Acquisition:

The collection was donated by Herbert Van Markle in four accessions from 2010-2012.

Custodial History:

After leaving the Shivell family, these materials passed into the possession of Marie Nellie (Bretz) Markle, 1916-1968, a lifelong Daytonian who was an active musician and music teacher.

Marie was also interested in poetry, and through this interest she became acquainted with the Dayton poet Paul Shivell and his family, whom she visited during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Marie assisted Paul and his son Arthur with packing up belongings selected for transport Paul's move to California about 1965. Some items not wanted were given to Marie in thanks for her assistance, and those items are now included in this collection. Following Marie's death in 1968, the materials passed into the possession of her son, Herbert Van Markle, who initiated the donation in 2010.

Separated Material:

Several large photographic prints and the Dunbar Society certificate are located in Oversize Location 88 File 10. Books of poetry written by Paul Shivell are listed in the library catalog and available in the Archives reading room.

Other Finding Aid:

A complete box and folder inventory for this collection is available on the Special Collections and Archives web site at:

http://www.libraries.wright.edu/special/collection_guides/guide_files/ms437.pdf

Physical Characteristics and Technical Requirements:

The collection contains glass plate negatives which are fragile and require special handling.

Related Material:

MS-151: Jane Reece Photographs
MS-185: Richard Fullerton, Jane Reece Collection
MS-193: Jane Reece, Schwarz Collection
SC-74: Jane Reece Studio Collection

Additional Sources:

The following published books of poetry by Paul Shivell are available in the Special Collections and Archives reading room collection:

Poems and Fragments (2012 Reprint. Originally published: Springfield, Ohio: Hosterman, 1896). PS3537.H92 P6 2012z

Favorite Selections from Published Poems (Dayton, Ohio, 1973)
PS3537.H92 A17

Selections from Published Poems (Dayton, Ohio: J.J. Scruby, 1944)
PS3537.H92 A6 1944

Stillwater Pastorals and Other Poems, with a prefatory note by Bliss Perry (Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1915) PS3537.H92 S6 1915

Stillwater Valley Pastorals (Pleasant Hill, Ohio: J. L. Rector, 1908)
PS3537.H92 S67

Ashes of Roses (Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House, 1898)
PS3537.H92 A7 1898

Roz Young, a well-known columnist for the *Dayton Daily News*, wrote a column about Shivell that appeared in the paper on July 19, 2003; a [copy of that article](#) is available online through Daytonhistorybooks.com.

Processed by:

Finding aid written by Lynda Phillips Kachurek, 2012. Revised by Lisa Rickey, May 2016.

Arrangement:

This collection is arranged into one series.

Biographical/Historical Note

Paul Shivell was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, on September 25, 1874, the son of Edwin and Effie (Iddings) Shivell. His family came to the Dayton area where Paul attended school in both Springfield and Dayton before entering Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. He returned from school to Dayton after just one year because of the death of his mother, eventually owning and operating Pleasant Hill farm and his own Stillwater Press. He married Gertrude Wolf in 1897, and they had three children: Arthur (1898-1989), Edith (1900-1906), and Virginia (1908-1965). Shivell and his wife were both quite active in the social and cultural activities of Dayton.

As Larry Sizer noted, Paul Shivell is “the other poet from Dayton named Paul” (http://communicationart.net/paulshevill_b.htm). Like Paul Laurence Dunbar, Shivell worked briefly at the Chicago World’s Fair as a guide. Shivell spent time in San Antonio, Texas, with his mother who was recuperating from tuberculosis; spent time out west working as a cowboy; and eventually ended up in New York City, before settling into writing as a full-time career, publishing many of his works through his own Stillwater Press.

Around 1965, Paul Shivell relocated to California, where he passed away near Los Angeles on October 11, 1968.

Scope and Content

The collection contains both documents and photographs. Articles about Paul Shivell note his contributions to poetry, and a 1916 letter to Shivell from poet Robert Frost congratulated him on his 1915 book, mentioning two poems specifically for merit.

Photographs in the collection are primarily the work of noted Dayton photographer Jane Reece. A friend of the Shivell family, portraits and other studies follow the Shivell family through several decades, containing both formal portraits of Paul Shivell, silhouettes of Paul and Gertrude Shivell, and several portraits of their youngest daughter, Virginia Shivell, at variety of ages. There are also two glass plate negatives, as well as an original print of Reece’s photograph of Matilda Dunbar, mother of local Dayton poet Paul Laurence Dunbar. Also included are reference prints of other photographs of the Shivells from MS-151, the Jane Reece Collection.

Subject Terms

Persons/Families

Shivell, Paul, 1874-1968

Reece, Jane, 1868-1961

Dunbar, Matilda

Places

Dayton (Ohio)

Subjects (General)

Stillwater River (Ohio)

Material Types

Correspondence

Photographic prints

Glass plate negatives

Occupations

Poet

Collection Inventory

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	1	Articles on Paul Shivell	Undated
	2	“Sonnets to Jane Reece” handwritten by Paul Shivell	Undated
	3	“A Tribute to Jane Reece” program	1939 Aug. 20
	4	Letter to Paul Shivell from Robert Frost	1916 June 29
	5	Portrait: [Little Virginia Shivell] signed by Jane Reece 4.5 x 6.5, mounted then on backing	Undated
	6	Portrait: Virginia Shivell, signed by Jane Reece 4.5 x 6.5, mounted	circa 1920
	7	Portrait: Virginia Shivell, signed by Jane Reece 4.5 x 6.5, mounted	circa 1920
	8	Portrait: Virginia Shivell, signed by Jane Reece 8 x 10, unmounted	1923
	9	Portrait: Unidentified teenage boy, possibly Arthur Shivell, signed by Jane Reece 3.25 x 4.5, mounted inside brown cover	Undated
	10	Portrait: young Virginia Shivell with rose 4.5 x 6.5, print, with silvering, mounted	Undated
	11	Portrait: young Virginia Shivell, smiling with rose 4.5 x 6.5 print, with silvering, mounted	Undated
	12	Portrait: Matilda Dunbar in rocking chair, signed by Jane Reece 8 x 10	[1924]

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| 13 | Glass Plate Negative, Virginia Shivell, by Jane Reece | Undated |
| 14 | Glass Plate Negative, Virginia Shivell, by Jane Reece with box noted "Shivell plates" in Reece's handwriting | Undated |
| 15 | Reference Prints from MS-151 Jane Reece Collection of various portraits of the Shivell Family | 1911-1937, undated |
| 16 | Portrait of unidentified man (possibly Paul Shivell or Archie Mumma) by Jane Reece | Undated |
| 17 | Dayton Fine Arts Guild Constitution and By-Laws from organizational meeting at Engineers Club of Dayton, with signatures of attendees | 1924 Feb. 14 |
| 18 | Dayton Art Institute Program for musical tea honoring Paul Shivell, poet, featuring Archie Mumma | 1944 Oct. 1 |

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| 19 | Virginia Shivell by Jane Reece (large) | Undated |
| 20 | Virginia Shivell by Jane Reece, signed | Undated |
| 21 | Paul Shivell in garden by Jane Reece | Undated |
| 22 | [Paul Shivell?], signed to Mr and Mrs. Shivell by Jane Reece | 1922 |
| 23 | Paul Laurence Dunbar Memorial Association membership certificate #96 for Mrs. Paul Shivell | 1917 June 8 |