

# Lyman Bryson Papers

## A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



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Washington, D.C.

2009

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<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/eadmss.ms009195>

LC Online Catalog record:

<http://lccn.loc.gov/mm78014241>

Prepared by Al Thompson  
Revised by Margaret McAleer

## Collection Summary

**Title:** Lyman Bryson Papers

**Span Dates:** 1893-1978

**Bulk Dates:** (bulk 1917-1959)

**ID No.:** MSS14241

**Creator:** Bryson, Lyman, 1888-1959

**Extent:** 12,000 items ; 51 containers ; 20.4 linear feet

**Language:** Collection material in English

**Location:** Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

**Summary:** Radio and television broadcaster, author, and educator. Correspondence, diaries, memoranda, articles, lectures, writings, transcripts of broadcasts, subject files, business and financial records, biographical material, appointment books, newspaper clippings, and other papers documenting Bryson's public relations work for the American National Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies following World War I, his subsequent work in adult education, and his role in developing educational radio and television programs for the Columbia Broadcasting System.

## Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### People

Aly, Bower, 1903- --Correspondence.

Brunner, Edmund de S. (Edmund de Schweinitz), 1889-1973--Correspondence.

Bryson, Lyman, 1888-1959.

Bye, George T.--Correspondence.

Cartwright, Morse A. (Morse Adams), 1890- --Correspondence.

Clarke, James Mitchell--Correspondence.

Ely, Mary L. (Mary Lillian)--Correspondence.

Finkelstein, Louis, 1895-1991--Correspondence.

Hill, Claude E. (Claude Eugene), 1874-1957--Correspondence.

Hill, Claude H. (Claude Hamilton), Sir, 1866- --Correspondence.

Jackson, Anne E. M.--Correspondence.

Olds, Robert Edwin, 1875-1932--Correspondence.

Paley, William S. (William Samuel), 1901-1990--Correspondence.

Riesman, David, 1909-2002--Correspondence.

Wells, H. G. (Herbert George), 1866-1946.

### Organizations

American Junior Red Cross.

American National Red Cross.

Columbia Broadcasting System, inc.

Columbia University.

League of Red Cross Societies.

### Subjects

Adult education.

Communication.

Philosophy.

Public opinion.

Radio in education--United States.

Radio programs.

Science--History--20th century.

Social policy.

Technology.

Television in education--United States.  
Television programs.  
World economics--20th century.  
World politics--20th century.

### **Places**

Asia--Description and travel.  
Europe--Description and travel.  
Middle East--Description and travel.

### **Occupations**

Authors.  
Broadcasters.  
Educators.

## **Administrative Information**

### **Provenance**

The papers of Lyman Bryson, radio and television broadcaster, author, and educator were given to the Library of Congress by Bryson in 1958. Bryson's wife, Katherine Bryson, gave additional papers in 1961 and 1979.

### **Processing History**

The papers of Lyman Bryson were arranged and described in 1962. The finding aid was revised and portions of the 1979 Addition were reprocessed in 1996. The finding aid was revised in 2009.

### **Additional Guides**

A description of the Bryson Papers appears in *Library of Congress Information Bulletin*, vol. 18, no. 9 (2 March 1959).

### **Transfers**

A filmed interview conducted by Bryson with Arnold Joseph Toynbee in 1956 has been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division where it is identified as part of the Lyman Bryson Papers.

### **Copyright Status**

Copyright in the unpublished writings of Lyman Bryson in these papers and in other collections of papers in the custody of the Library of Congress has been dedicated to the public.

### **Access and Restrictions**

The papers of Lyman Bryson are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

### **Preferred Citation**

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Lyman Bryson Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

## **Biographical Note**

<i>Date</i>	<i>Event</i>
1888, July 12	Born, Valentine, Nebr.
1910	A.B., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

1912 Married Hope Mersereau (died 1944)

1913-1917 Instructor in rhetoric and journalism, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

1915 M.A., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

1916 Published *Smokey Roses*. New York: Putnam & Sons

1917-1918 Publicity staff, American National Red Cross, national headquarters, Washington, D.C.

1919 Publicity staff, American National Red Cross, European headquarters, Paris, France  
Associate director, American Junior Red Cross Foreign Program

1920-1922 Director, Junior Red Cross Division, League of Red Cross Societies

1923-1924 Director of Publications, League of Red Cross Societies

1925-1932 Lecturer, University of California, Extension Division, Berkeley, Calif.

1928-1930 Director, San Diego Museum of Anthropology, San Diego, Calif.  
Professor of Anthropology, San Diego State College, San Diego, Calif.

1929-1932 Director, California Association for Adult Education

1932-1934 Leader, Public School Forum, Des Moines, Iowa

1934-1953 Professor of Education and Director of the Readability Laboratory, Columbia University, Teachers College, New York, N.Y.

1936 Published *Adult Education*. New York: American Book Co.

1938-1942 Chairman, Adult Education Board, Columbia Broadcasting System

1938-1944 Moderated *The People's Platform*, Columbia Broadcasting System radio program

1939 Published *Which Way America? Communism, Fascism, Democracy*. New York: Macmillan & Co.  
Edited *The People's Library*. New York: Macmillan & Co.

1941 Published *The New Prometheus*. New York: Macmillan & Co.

1941-1943 Headed Department X, a committee studying potential postwar issues, Columbia Broadcasting System

1942-1943 Chief, Bureau of Special Operations, Office of War Information

1942-1945 Director of Education, Columbia Broadcasting System

1944-1946 President, American Association for Adult Education

1945 Married Katherine McGrattan

1945-1947	Moderated <i>Problems of the Peace</i> , Columbia Broadcasting System radio program ( <i>Time for Reason</i> after March 1946)
1946-1947	Moderated <i>Time for Reason About Radio</i> , Columbia Broadcasting System radio program
1946-1959	Permanent moderator, <i>Invitation to Learning</i> , Columbia Broadcasting System radio program
1947	Appointed Counselor on Public Affairs, Columbia Broadcasting System Published <i>Science and Freedom</i> . New York: Columbia University Press
1950-1951	Moderated <i>We Take Your Word</i> , Columbia Broadcasting System radio and television program
1950-1959	Moderated <i>Lamp Unto My Feet</i> , Columbia Broadcasting System television program
1952	Published <i>The Next America, Prophecy and Faith</i> . New York: Harper & Brothers
1954	Published <i>The Drive Toward Reason, In the Service of a Free People</i> . New York: Harper & Brothers
1959, Nov. 24	Died, New York, N.Y.
1960	Published posthumously <i>An Outline of Man's Knowledge of the Modern World</i> . New York: McGraw-Hill

## Scope and Content Note

The papers of Lyman Lloyd Bryson (1888-1959) span the years 1893-1978, with the bulk of the material dating from 1917 to 1959. The papers document Bryson's work for the American National Red Cross and League of Red Cross Societies following World War I, his subsequent work in the field of adult education, and his role in developing educational radio and television programming for the Columbia Broadcasting System in the 1940s and 1950s. The collection also features many of Bryson's literary works, including drafts of novels, short stories, poems, and plays. The collection is arranged into five series: [General Correspondence](#); [Subject File](#); [Speech, Article, and Book File](#); [Miscellany](#); and a [1979 Addition](#).

The [General Correspondence](#) series covers virtually every aspect of Bryson's professional life and literary endeavors. Correspondence with friends, agents, and publishers, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s, concerns Bryson's efforts to succeed as a writer. Correspondence with Red Cross colleagues in this series, the [Subject File](#), and the [1979 Addition](#) provides information on Bryson's work for the American National Red Cross and League of Red Cross Societies as a publicist, his directorship of Junior Red Cross programs, and his extensive travels in Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. The addition includes Bryson's account of his interview with H. G. Wells in 1920 on behalf of the Junior Red Cross. The bulk of the [General Correspondence](#) series consists of correspondence with associates in the field of adult education, Columbia University faculty and administrators, and Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) executives. Correspondents include Bower Aly, Edmund de Schweinitz Brunner, George T. Bye, Morse A. Cartwright, James Mitchell Clarke, Mary L. Ely, Louis Finkelstein, Sir Claude H. Hill, Anne E. M. Jackson, Robert Edwin Olds, William S. Paley, and David Riesman.

The [Subject File](#) includes material from Bryson's participation in various conferences and seminars on adult education, public communication, and philosophy. Letters from listeners to CBS's *Invitation to Learning* provide insight into the program's popular reception. Other CBS material includes correspondence and reports relating to Department X, a committee organized by Bryson in 1941 at the request of William S. Paley, president of the network. The committee examined issues relating to postwar planning, including political, social, and economic trends, scientific and technological developments, shifts in public opinion, and government programs.

The [Speech, Article, and Book File](#) contains many of Bryson's lectures, articles, and books on adult education, public communication, and post World War II political, intellectual, and cultural developments. Also included is a draft of

Bryson's novel, "William Blades," and correspondence with the publishers of *Adventure* magazine and *Atlantic Monthly* who published many of Bryson's early stories, articles, and essays. The series contains correspondence and transcripts from Bryson's CBS radio and television programs.

A small Miscellany series includes appointment books, biographical material, business and financial records, letters of recommendation, programs, and clippings.

The 1979 Addition comprises general correspondence, Red Cross correspondence, transcripts and programs from Bryson's CBS broadcasts, fan letters, and clippings which complement material found in the collection. The addition also contains Bryson's reminiscences based on oral interviews with him conducted in 1951. While covering his childhood and early career, this autobiographical account focuses particularly on Bryson's work for CBS, his chairmanship of CBS's Adult Education Board from 1938 to 1942, his appointment as Director of Education in 1942, and his role in the creation and hosting of educational programs. Family correspondence exchanged chiefly between Bryson and his parents contains detailed accounts of Bryson's activities from his freshman year at the University of Michigan in 1906 through 1940. The bulk of the addition consists of drafts of Bryson's short stories, plays, novels, and poetry, many of them unpublished. An account journal, begun by Bryson in 1917, records the sale of some of these works.

## Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in five series:

- General Correspondence, 1908-1960
- Subject File, 1919-1960
- Speech, Article, and Book File, 1909-1960
- Miscellany, 1925-1959
- 1979 Addition, 1893-1978

## Description of Series

<i>Container</i>	<i>Series</i>
BOX 1-11	<b><u>General Correspondence, 1908-1960</u></b> Letters sent and received. Arranged alphabetically by name of individual or organization and chronologically therein.
BOX 12-18	<b><u>Subject File, 1919-1960</u></b> Correspondence, memoranda, reports, articles, conference and seminar material, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by subject.
BOX 19-30	<b><u>Speech, Article, and Book File, 1909-1960</u></b> Handwritten, typewritten, near-print, and printed copies with related correspondence of Bryson's speeches, lectures, broadcasts, articles, books, reviews, novel, and poems. Grouped by type of literary work.
BOX 31-34	<b><u>Miscellany, 1925-1959</u></b> Appointment books, biographical material, business and financial records, letters of recommendation, and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by type of material and chronologically therein.
BOX 35-51	<b><u>1979 Addition, 1893-1978</u></b> Family and general correspondence; diary; reminiscences; biographical material; obituaries; radio and television transcripts; fan letters; drafts of short stories; plays, poems, novels, articles, lectures, essays, and books; notes and notebooks; scrapbook; and printed matter. Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material.

# Container List

<i>Container</i>	<i>Contents</i>
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<b>BOX 1</b>	Adams, Lucy Wilcox, 1929-1954
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<b>BOX 3</b>	Century Association, 1950-1960
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BOX 24	<i>Science and Freedom</i> , 1943-1947
BOX 24	"William Blades," 1947-1948
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BOX 42	"A College Comedy in Three Acts," undated
BOX 42	"A Comic Strip" with Frederic Mertz, 1928, undated
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BOX 44	"Forbidden Voices," undated (3 folders)
BOX 44	"Freshmen Days: Sixty Years Ago," 1906-1907, 1966
BOX 44	"Gilt Edge," 1926
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BOX 45	"How Conrad Would Have Ended 'Suspense,'" undated
BOX 45	"Imperialism at Home," undated
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BOX 50	"The Spieler," undated
BOX 50	"The Stranger's House," 1927
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BOX 50	"What Women Do to Men," 1932
BOX 50	"Wild Pepper," 1927
BOX 50	"The Will to Progress," undated (1 folder)
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BOX 51	"William Blades," 1947 (2 folders)
BOX 51	"Youth and Circumstances," undated