

# Bradt family fonds, 1796-1976

RG 666

Brock University Archives

<b>Creator:</b>	Bradt Family
<b>Extent:</b>	6 cm of textual records 3 photographs 1 album
<b>Abstract:</b>	Fonds contains material about the Bradt and Hansler families. The Bradt family were United Empire Loyalists from the Mohawk River Valley of New York State who settled in the Niagara peninsula. Material concerning the Hansler family is also included. The Bradt and Hansler families were related by marriage. Material includes correspondence, notebooks, genealogical material, an album containing locks of hair of Bradt family members, and photographs.
<b>Materials:</b>	Correspondence, notebooks, genealogical material, photographs, album with locks of hair.
<b>Repository:</b>	Brock University Archives
<b>Processed by:</b>	Chantal Cameron
<b>Last updated:</b>	June 2019

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<b>Preferred citation:</b>	RG 666, Bradt Family fonds, 1796-1976, Brock University Archives, Brock University.

**Acquisition info.:** Most of the material was donated by William Murphy in 2018. The photographs were added by William Murphy in June 2019.

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**Scope and content:**

Fonds contains material about the Bradt and Hansler families. The Bradt family were United Empire Loyalists from the Mohawk River Valley of New York State who settled in the Niagara peninsula. Material concerning the Hansler family is also included. The Bradt and Hansler families were related by marriage. Material includes correspondence, notebooks, genealogical material, and an album containing locks of hair of Bradt family members. Some of the materials were collected by Peter and Mercy Bradt, and were subsequently added to and passed down through their family.

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**Biographical sketch:**

The Bradt family came to the Niagara peninsula from Schenectady, New York as United Empire Loyalists. Arent A. Bradt (1732-1796) and his wife Eva Van Antwerp came to Canada with their children, settling in present-day Niagara-on-the-Lake around 1784. This move coincided with the disbandment of Butler's Rangers, a Loyalist military unit founded by John Butler during the American Revolutionary War. The Butler and Bradt families both came to Canada from Schenectady. John Butler was married to Arent Bradt's sister Catherine. Both families were granted land in the Niagara peninsula by the Crown for their loyalty.

Arent and Eva Bradt brought their five children with them, including Andrew (1755-1830), Margaret (b. 1758), John (1761-1828), Roger (b. 1765) and Peter (1767-1824). Andrew and John Bradt both served in Butler's Rangers, Andrew as a Captain and John as a Lieutenant. Peter Bradt was the youngest member of the family, being 18 when his family came to Niagara. In 1792 he married Mercy Burtch. They settled on a farm near St. Catharines, and had twelve children between 1793 and 1818. Their son Thomas married Elizabeth Hansler. They had five children, including Mercy J. Bradt (Dunn).

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**Organization:**

The fonds was organized into five series:

Series I: Correspondence, 1820-1926

Series II: Notebooks and Books, 1796-1858

Series III: Genealogical Material, 1900-1943, n.d.

Series IV: Photographs, n.d.

Series V: Album, 1843-1976

**Inventory:**

**Series I: Correspondence, 1820-1926**

- 1.1-1.2 Letter written by S. Durell, Knox County, Indiana, to Peter Bradt, Sixteen Mile Creek, Crookes [postmaster] Fort George, dated January 15, 1820. The last page of the letter contains messages written by Edee Durell and Samuel and Rhoda Williams. Samuel and Rhoda briefly describe their journey from Upper Canada to Indiana. An entry signed with the initials M.B. (Mercy Bradt?) can be found on the reverse of the first page. A transcription of the letter and a glossary of names that appear in Durell's letters are included.
- 1.3-1.4 Letter written by Stephen Durell, Vincennes, Indiana, to his sister Mercy Bradt, Niagara, Crookes [postmaster] Post Office in Newark, dated August 5, 1825. Durell writes about conditions on his farm, family members, and mentions a visit from Dewitt Clinton, who came to see the falls and start the canal. A transcription of the letter is included.
- 1.5-1.6 Letters written by Mercy Jane Bradt to her parents, 1856. The letters were sent from the Williamsville Classical Institute, and dated January 29, September 18, and October 21. Transcriptions of the letters are included, as well as a history of the Williamsville Classical Institute.
- 1.7 Letter to Andrew from Jas. J. Bradt, dated at Beamsville, Ont., June 15, 1909. A typewritten letter about genealogical research. The reverse side of the letter contains a list of the Bradt family members who were on the list of half-pay officers, U.E. Loyalists, who adhered to the British Standard after the American Revolution, 1776.
- 1.8 Letter to Mrs. Dunn from Mary Kilpatrick, dated April 12, 1920. A typewritten letter about family matters and the compilation of a Bradt family history.
- 1.8 Letter to Mrs. Dunn from Mary Kilpatrick, dated Oct. 15, 1920. A typewritten letter about family matters and genealogical research, including the Bradt family, Van Slyck family, De Voss family, Vrooman family, Van Antwerp family, and Veeder family.
- 1.8 Letter to Mrs. Dunn from Mary Kilpatrick, dated December 12, 1920. A typewritten letter about genealogical research.

- 1.8 Letter to Mrs. Mercy Dunn, Hagersville, Ont., from Mary Kilpatrick, dated at Beatrice, Nebraska, December 29, 1921. A typewritten letter about family matters and genealogical research.
- 1.9 Letter to Mercy Dunn, Hagersville, Ontario, from D.J. Van Bradt, dated Nov. 12, 1926. A typewritten letter by Van Bradt to his Aunt Mercy, concerning family matters and genealogical research of the Bradt family.

**Series II: Notebooks and Books, 1796-1858, n.d.**

- 1.10 Account book, 1796. The cover reads "Fonthill--Hansler Great Grandfather's account book, 1796, Andrew Hansler". The book likely belonged to Andrew's father George (1756-1831), as Andrew Hansler was only six years old at the time. Entries are dated from March 29, 1796 to July 20, 1796. George was a farmer, tanner, and shoemaker in Fonthill.
- 1.11 Notebook kept by Elizabeth Hansler (1817-1889) when young. She later married Thomas Bradt (1810-1885). Some of the entries contain the cost of items purchased, such as shoes, bonnets, gloves, silk, cotton and wool. A lock of hair is included towards the end of the book. Names which appear in the book include Andrew Bradt, Mercy Jane Bradt, David James [Hansler] and Anna Maria Schram (who was raised in the Bradt family as a foster child).
- 1.12 Notebook belonging to Mercie Bradt, Wainfleet, C.W. Sept. 13, 1858. The notebook contains expressions, poems and sketches.
- 1.13 Children's books, n.d. One book is a very small book of "pretty poems" featuring black and white illustrations. The second book is larger with a cloth cover and features short rhymes of "London Cries" with coloured illustrations.

**Series III: Genealogical Material, 1900-1943, n.d.**

- 1.14 Bradt Family, 1943, n.d. Contains a brief family history written in 1943 by M.B. Smith of St. Catharines (daughter of Andrew Hansler Bradt); a family tree of the Bradt family; a written history of the Bradt line beginning with Arent Andriessen Bradt and Albert Adreissen Bradt; a genealogy of the Bradt family reproduced from a diagram by T.W. Bradt of Aylmer, Ont.; and written accounts of the Bradt family history.

- 1.15 Notebook of family records belonging to Mercy J. Dunn, Hagersville, March 11, 1918. A record of the Bradt family, including dates of birth, death and marriages, as well as some biographical information. A family record of the Hansler family is included. A brief record of the Wills and Dunn families are also included. Loose material enclosed in the notebook was separated and put in an envelope. This material includes an obituary for Thomas Bradt and a news clipping from the Santa Ana, California "Register" on a Hansler family reunion.
- 1.16 Hansler Family, n.d. Contains handwritten notes on George Hansler settling in Canada in 1786 and his line of descendants. The reverse side of one page contains information on the children of Peter Bradt and Mercy Burtch Bradt.
- 1.17 Vanderzee Family, 1900. Contains a typewritten copy of *The Ancestry of the Vanderzee Family* taken from The Mail and Express of February 3, 1900.
- 1.18 Copy of David Price's will, n.d. A handwritten copy of David Price's will, who died March 24, 1841.

**Series IV: Photographs, n.d.**

- 1.19 Photographs, n.d. Contains three portrait photographs, featuring Andrew John Hansler, Elizabeth Hansler Bradt, and Mercy Jane Bradt Dunn.

**Series V: Album, 1843-1976**

- O.1 Album, 1843-1976. An album containing locks of hair of Bradt family members. The album was started by Elizabeth (Hansler) Bradt in 1843, then continued by her daughter Mercy J. Dunn, in 1899. Each lock of hair contains the person's name, year the lock was taken, and sometimes other details such as date of birth and death, place of birth, or other biographical information. The hair is adorned with ribbons and flowers, and many samples are braided. There are 255 locks of hair in the album.

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**Related material:**

- RG 580, Bradt Family fonds, 1817-1923. Brock University Archives.
- RG 24, Hansler Family fonds, Brock University Archives.

RG 564, Hansler Family fonds, 1792-1952, Brock University Archives.

Wood, Joan Bradt. *Establishing a new nation: the Bradt family in Canada*. Surrey, BC: J.B. Wood, 2006. **SPCL FC 3140.7 U55 W66 2006**

Wood, Joan Bradt. *Journey to a new land: the Bradt family in history*. Oakville, Ont.: J.B. Wood, 1999. **SPCL F 122 W66 1999**

Bradt, T. W. *Bradt, Hansler and Peart family histories*. Selkirk, [Ont.]: s.n., 1930]. **SPCL CS 90 B66 1930**

Biasca, Cynthia Brott. *Descendants of Albert and Arent Andriessen Bradt*. Wolfe City, [Texas]: Henington Pub. Co., 1990. **SPCL CS 71 B814 1990**