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## Immediate Release : Dr. Robert Bray Awarded Summer Stipend of \$3,000

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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May 1, 1986

Dr. Robert Bray, professor of English at Illinois Wesleyan University, has been awarded a Summer Stipend of \$3,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Washington, D.C.

The grant will be used this summer to help cover Bray's expenses in writing a book about Peter Cartwright, a colorful 19th Century Methodist "backwoods preacher" who was one of the founding trustees of Illinois Wesleyan.

Bray said the grant will help finance trips to various locations in the midwest for research.

The National Endowment for Humanities was created by Congress in 1965 to support research, education and public activities in the fields of philosophy, literature, language, history, linguistics, jurisprudence, archaeology, comparative religion, ethics, the fine arts and certain aspects of the social sciences.

Cartwright's own book, The Autobiography of Peter Cartwright, published in 1856, was an instant success and a new edition was published recently. However, no book-length critical study of this early church leader, who also spent two terms in the Illinois legislature, has been published.

Bray already has written some of the material for the book and plans to complete it by the end of 1987.

This will be Bray's fourth book. Bray and another IWU faculty member, Paul Bushnell, were co-authors of The Diary of a Common Soldier in the American Revolution, which was published in 1976.

In 1982, the University of Illinois press published Bray's Rediscoveries: Literature and Place in Illinois. The book's success established him as an authority on early literature in Illinois. In 1985, Bray was the editor of, and a contributor to, A Reader's Guide to Illinois Literature, which was published by the Illinois State Library.

Bray also has accepted membership in the Society of Midland Authors, a group restricted to authors of works printed by a recognized publisher and worthy of literary attention.

The society sponsors six to eight meetings a year and an annual awards dinner in May. Its membership includes residents of Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin and Ohio.

A native of Pittsburg, Kan., Bray received a bachelor of arts degree from Kansas State College in Pittsburg in 1966, a master's from the University of Chicago in 1967 and a doctorate from Chicago in 1971. He joined the IWU faculty in 1970. It was while he was working on his doctoral dissertation that he began conducting research on writers, leading to his interest in Illinois literary pioneers.