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# **Guide to the Collection of Licenses and Tax Receipts for Businesses in Montana Territory**

**WA MSS S-4310**



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February 2024

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
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beinecke.library@yale.edu  
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**CALL NUMBER:** WA MSS S-4310

**TITLE:** Collection of licenses and tax receipts for businesses in Montana Territory

**DATES:** 1865-1880

**BULK DATES:** 1865-1867

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 3.92 linear feet (8 boxes)

**LANGUAGE:** English (Latin script)

**SUMMARY:** Circa 3,500 printed licenses and circa 700 printed tax receipts, completed in manuscript, issued to businesses and individuals in Montana Territory, 1865-1880. Among the types of business represented are assayers, attorneys, billiard tables, brewers, butchers, dance houses, doctors, gambling houses and saloons, hotels, inns and taverns, merchants, ranchmen, saloons, and theaters. Other businesses include auctioneers, bankers, branding houses, jewelers, and liverys and stables. Towns represented include Blackfoot, Butte City, Deer Lodge, Fort Benton, German Gulch, Gold Creek, Henderson Gulch, Jefferson City, Lincoln Gulch, McClellan Gulch, Pacific City, and Virginia City (among others). At least six of the licenses were issued to female entrepreneurs. Two licenses were issued to Kate Sands of Virginia City, who operated a saloon and dance house in 1865-1866. Another dance house proprietor was Mary Miller of Central, whose license was for the duration of two days, from 1865 September 19 to 20. Three other female saloon proprietors are represented by licenses in the collection: Nancy Williams and Hattie Peters of Virginia City and Florence Bennett of Blackfoot.

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## Requesting Instructions

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Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box  
f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Nick Aretakis Americana on the William Robertson Coe Fund No. 3, 2019. Purchased from William Reese Co. on the William Robertson Coe Fund No. 3, 2022.

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### Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

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### Conditions Governing Access

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### Preferred Citation

Collection of Licenses and Tax Receipts for Businesses in Montana Territory. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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### Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

These materials have been arranged and described according to national and local standards. For more information, please refer to the Beinecke Manuscript Unit Processing Manual.

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## Scope and Contents

Circa 3,500 printed licenses and circa 700 printed tax receipts, completed in manuscript, issued to businesses and individuals in Montana Territory, 1865-1880. Among the types of business represented are assayers, attorneys, billiard tables, brewers, butchers, dance houses, doctors, gambling houses and saloons, hotels, inns and taverns, merchants, ranchmen, saloons, and theaters. Other businesses include auctioneers, bankers, branding houses, jewelers, and liveries and stables. Towns represented include Blackfoot, Butte City, Deer Lodge, Fort Benton, German Gulch, Gold Creek, Henderson Gulch, Jefferson City, Lincoln Gulch, McClellan Gulch, Pacific City, and Virginia City (among others).

At least six of the licenses were issued to female entrepreneurs. Two licenses were issued to Kate Sands of Virginia City, who operated a saloon and dance house in 1865-1866. Another dance house proprietor was Mary Miller of Central, whose license was for the duration of two days, from 1865 September 19 to 20. Three other female saloon proprietors are represented by licenses in the collection: Nancy Williams and Hattie Peters of Virginia City and Florence Bennett of Blackfoot.

## **Arrangement**

Organized into three series: I. Business Licenses, 1865-1867. II. Tax Receipts, 1865-1880. III. 2022 Addition, 1865-1867.

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## Collection Contents

### Series I: Business licenses, 1865 January 9-1880

Circa 1,025 printed licenses for businesses and individuals in Montana Territory including assayers, attorneys, brewers, butchers, dance houses, doctors, gambling houses and saloons, hotels, inns and taverns, merchants, ranchers, saloons, and theaters. Other licenses document auctioneers, jewelers, bankers, liveries and stables, branding houses, and other establishments, occupations, or trades. Circa 525 miscellaneous licenses note the individual to whom the license was issued, its duration, the fee, the locality, and the name of the collector--they do not, however, record a specific occupation or trade.

Included is a booklet of licenses exclusively for businesses and individuals in Fort Benton.

Arranged alphabetically by business type. The number in parentheses following each file title indicates the number of licenses present for that business type.

b. 1, f. 1	Assayers (6)	1865 May 9-1866 April 9
b. 1, f. 2	Attorneys (7)	1865 June 13-1867 November 2
b. 1, f. 3	Billiard tables (21)	1865 June 27-1867 October 1
b. 1, f. 4	Brewers (13)	1865 July 15-1867 October 20
b. 1, f. 5	Butchers (86)	1865 January 9-1867 October 26
b. 1, f. 6	Dance houses (11)	1865 June 14-1866 September 24
b. 1, f. 7	Doctors (16)	1865 May 13-1867 October 17
b. 1, f. 8	Gambling houses and saloons (12)	1865 May 11-1866 August 13
b. 1, f. 9	Hotels (19)	1865 October 14-1867 October 3
b. 1, f. 10	Inns and taverns (26)	1865 May 11-1867 February 6
b. 1, f. 11	Merchants (64)	1865 May 1-1867 October 5

b. 1, f. 12	Ranchers (11)	1865 May 10-1866 September 6
b. 1, f. 13	Saloons (73)	1865 May 11-1867 October 31
b. 1, f. 14	Theaters (14)	1866 March 7- July 30
b. 1, f. 15	Other (79)	1865 May 8-1867 October 19
b. 2, f. 16-26	Miscellaneous (circa 525)	1866-1867
b. 2, f. 27	License booklet for Fort Benton	1880

## Series II: Tax receipts, 1865 July 31-1867 October 28

Circa 700 printed tax receipts for businesses in Montana Territory. The receipts bear the name and locality of the person to whom they were issued; the name of the collector; the assessed value of the property; the amount of tax in four categories: territorial, county, poor, and school; and a space for interest charged.

Arranged chronologically.

b. 3, f. 28-43

Tax receipts

1865 July  
31-1867 October  
28

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**Series III: 2022 addition, 1865–1867***2.09 linear feet (5 boxes)*

Circa 2,500 business licenses and 2 tax receipts from Montana Territory, 1865-1867. Businesses documented include attorneys, butchers, saloons, merchants, retail liquor dealers, photographers, ranchers, jewelers, toll roads, barbers, a sleight of hand artist, and "dance girls."

From the collection of Norm Moore. Purchased from William Reese Co. on the William Robertson Coe Fund No. 3, 2022.

Arranged into two subseries: I. Business Licenses, 1865-1867. II. Tax Receipts, 1865.

Business licenses		1865–1867
Arranged alphabetically by business type. The number in parentheses following each file title indicates the number of licenses present for that business type. Licenses without an occupation and bound license booklets are filed at the end of the series.		
b. 4, f. 1	Attorneys and lawyers (9)	1865–1867
b. 4, f. 2	Auctioneers (19)	1865–1867
b. 4, f. 3	Bankers (7)	1865–1867
b. 4, f. 4	Billiard halls and billiard tables (18)	1865–1867
b. 4, f. 5	Boarding houses (55)	1865–1867
b. 4, f. 6	Brewers (16)	1865–1867
b. 4, f. 7	Butchers (41)	1865–1867
b. 4, f. 8	Corrals, hay yards, and stables (52)	1865–1867
b. 4, f. 9	Dance houses (7)	1865–1867
b. 4, f. 10	Dentists (5)	1865–1867
b. 4, f. 11-12	Gambling houses and saloons (182)	1865–1867
b. 5, f. 1	Gambling houses and saloons (continued)	1865–1867
b. 5, f. 2	Hotels (16)	1865–1867
b. 5, f. 3	Inns and taverns (30)	1865–1867
b. 5, f. 4-6	Merchants (326)	1865–1867
b. 6, f. 1-2	Merchants (continued)	1865–1867
b. 6, f. 3	Peddlers (61)	1865–1867
b. 6, f. 4	Photographers and picture galleries (4)	1865–1867
b. 6, f. 5	Physicians (2)	1865–1867
b. 6, f. 6	Ranchers (28)	1865–1867
b. 6, f. 7	Restaurants (7)	1865–1867

## Business licenses (continued)

b. 6, f. 8-10	Retail liquor dealers (165)	1865-1867
b. 7, f. 1	Theaters (4)	1865-1867
b. 7, f. 2-3	Other occupations (104)	1865-1867
b. 7, f. 4	No occupation - Chouteau County	1865-1867
b. 7, f. 5-8	No occupation - Deer Lodge County	1865-1867
b. 7, f. 9	No occupation - Edgerton County	1865-1867
b. 8, f. 1-2	No occupation - Jefferson County	1865-1867
b. 8, f. 3	No occupation - Madison County	1865-1867
b. 8, f. 4	No occupation - Meagher County	1865-1867
b. 8, f. 5	No occupation - no county	1865-1867
b. 8, f. 6	License booklet for Chouteau County	1865-1867
b. 8, f. 7-9	License booklet for Deer Lodge County	1865-1867
b. 8, f. 10	License booklets for Meagher County	1865-1867
b. 8, f. 11	License booklets, no county	1865-1867
	Tax receipts	1865
b. 8, f. 12	Tax receipts (2)	1865

## **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.

### **Subjects**

Business enterprises -- Montana  
Property tax -- Montana  
Taxation -- Montana  
Women -- West (U.S.)

### **Geographic Names**

Butte (Mont.)  
Deer Lodge (Mont.)  
Fort Benton (Mont.)  
Goldcreek (Mont.)  
Lincoln (Mont.)  
Montana -- Economic conditions -- 19th century  
Montana Territory  
Virginia City (Mont.)

### **Genres / Formats**

Licenses  
Receipts (financial records)

### **Acquired From**

Nick Aretakis Americana , bookseller  
William Reese Co.