

Yale University Library
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Guide to the Bacon Family Letters

WA MSS S-4541



Sarah Lerner

March 2023

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-4541

CREATOR: Bacon family

TITLE: Bacon family letters

DATES: 1872-1944

BULK DATES: 1872-1896

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 0.42 linear feet (1 box)

LANGUAGE: English (Latin script)

SUMMARY: Collection of approximately 100 manuscript letters relating to the Bacon family of Worcester, Massachusetts, 1872-1944. Letters chiefly relate to siblings Francis Miles Bacon and Florence Mable Bacon Pierce and their time in Dakota Territory (now South Dakota), 1883-1893. These letters document Francis Bacon's farmwork, the domestic lives of his wife Mable "May" Louisa Sutton Bacon and sister Florence Pierce, and the general store of his brother-in-law Elmer Ellsworth Pierce, as well as death and disease, the weather, and the Panic of 1893. Other letters relate to Miles Bacon, Eliza C. Colburn Bacon, and Sarah Annie Bacon. A group of letters from 1944 are by Sarah "Sadie" Sutton to her niece Nellie May Bacon.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.baconfamilyletters>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.baconfamilyletters>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

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

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Michael D. Heaston on the William Robertson Coe Fund No. 3, 2022.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Bacon Family Letters is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Bacon Family Letters. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

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.

Bacon Family

Francis Miles Bacon (1862-1946) was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, to carpenter and lumber dealer Miles Bacon (1827-1901) and Eliza C. Colburn Bacon (1834-1923). His birth followed those of his siblings Sarah Annie Bacon (1856-1949), Lucy M. Bacon (1858-1965), and Edgar W. Bacon (1860-1875).

Between 1862 and 1864, the Bacon family moved to Worcester, Massachusetts, where Florence Mable Bacon Pierce (1864-1938), Albert I. Bacon (1867-1913), and Marion E. Bacon (1869-1945) were born.

Francis Bacon migrated to LaFoon, Faulk County, Dakota Territory (now South Dakota), around 1883 to homestead a farm. Florence Bacon moved to nearby Faulkton, Dakota Territory, in 1884. In 1885, she married general store owner Elmer Ellsworth Pierce (1861-1930). The couple had three children: Everett Alonzo Pierce (1892-1957), George Pierce (1902-1985), and Ellsworth Bacon Pierce (1905-1974).

In 1886, Francis Bacon married Mabel "May" Louisa Sutton Bacon (1862-1907). The couple had four children: Nellie May Bacon (1887-1979), Warren Sutton Bacon (1891-1967), Ernest Miles Bacon (1893-1972), and Carolyn G. Bacon Prout (1903-1988). Following the Panic of 1893, an economic depression that persisted until 1897, the family moved to Worcester, Massachusetts. By 1930, Francis Bacon and sisters Sarah Bacon and Marion Bacon lived together on a farm in Worcester.

Florence Bacon died in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1938. Francis Bacon died in Leicester, Massachusetts, in 1946.

Scope and Contents

Collection of approximately 100 manuscript letters relating to the Bacon family of Worcester, Massachusetts, 1872-1944.

Letters chiefly relate to siblings Francis Miles Bacon and Florence Mable Bacon Pierce and their time in Dakota Territory (now South Dakota), 1883-1893. These letters document Francis Bacon's farmwork, the domestic lives of his wife Mable "May" Louisa Sutton Bacon and sister Florence Pierce, and the general store of his brother-in-law Elmer Ellsworth Pierce, as well as death and disease, the weather, and the Panic of 1893.

Other letters relate to Miles Bacon, Eliza C. Colburn Bacon, and Sarah Annie Bacon.

A group of letters from 1944 are by Sarah "Sadie" Sutton to her niece Nellie May Bacon.

Arrangement

Arranged chronologically.

Collection Contents

b. 1, f. 1	Letters	1872
b. 1, f. 2	Letters	1873
b. 1, f. 3	Letters	1874
b. 1, f. 4	Letters	1875
b. 1, f. 5	Letters	1876
b. 1, f. 6	Letters	1877
b. 1, f. 7	Letters	1878
b. 1, f. 8	Letters	1880
b. 1, f. 9	Letters	1881
b. 1, f. 10	Letters	1882
b. 1, f. 11	Letters	1883
b. 1, f. 12	Letters	1884
b. 1, f. 13	Letters	1885
b. 1, f. 14	Letters	1886
b. 1, f. 15	Letters	1887
b. 1, f. 16	Letters	1888
b. 1, f. 17	Letters	1889
b. 1, f. 18	Letters	1890
b. 1, f. 19	Letters	1891
b. 1, f. 20	Letters	1892
b. 1, f. 21	Letters	1893
b. 1, f. 22	Letters	1894
b. 1, f. 23	Letters	1895
b. 1, f. 24	Letters	1896
b. 1, f. 25	Letters	1909
b. 1, f. 26-27	Loose notes	1909-1913
b. 1, f. 28	Letters	1944 and undated
b. 1, f. 29	Letters	undated

b. 1, f. 30	Letter fragments	undated
b. 1, f. 31	Empty envelopes	undated

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

Depressions -- 1893 -- United States
Farmers -- South Dakota
Farms -- South Dakota
Frontier and pioneer life -- South Dakota
General stores -- South Dakota
Women -- West (U.S.)

Geographic Names

Dakota Territory
Dakota Territory -- Economic conditions -- 19th century
Dakota Territory -- Social life and customs -- 19th century
Faulk County (S.D.)
Faulkton (S.D.)
South Dakota -- Economic conditions -- 19th century
South Dakota -- Social life and customs -- 19th century

Occupations

Farmers -- South Dakota -- 19th century

Contributors

Bacon family
Bacon, Francis Miles, 1862-1946
Pierce, Florence Mable Bacon, 1864-1938
Bacon, Eliza C. Colburn, 1834-1923
Bacon, Miles, 1827-1901
Pierce, Elmer Ellsworth, 1861-1930
Bacon, Nellie May, 1887-1979
Bacon, Sarah Annie, 1856-1949
Bacon, Mabel Louisa Sutton, 1862-1907
Sutton, Sarah, 1873-1946

Acquired From

Michael D. Heaston , bookseller