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Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

# Guide to the Bacon Family Letters

WA MSS S-4541



Sarah Lerner

March 2023

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library  
P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

**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>

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## 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](mailto:beinecke.images@yale.edu).

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 Michael D. Heaston 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 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.

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### Preferred Citation

Bacon Family Letters. 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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## 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.

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## **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.

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## **Arrangement**

Arranged chronologically.

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## 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