

# Guide to the Sarah Bishop Brigham Papers

WA MSS S-283



Stephanie Bredbenner

April 2026

P. O. Box 208330  
New Haven, CT 06520-8330  
(203) 432-2977  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

---

## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	3
Requesting Instructions .....	3
Administrative Information .....	3
Immediate Source of Acquisition .....	3
Conditions Governing Access .....	3
Preferred Citation .....	4
Processing Information .....	4
Processing Information .....	4
Biographical / Historical .....	4
Scope and Contents .....	4
Arrangement .....	4
Collection Contents .....	5
Series I: Correspondence .....	5
Series II: Writings .....	6
<i>Golden Mirages</i> .....	6
Other writings .....	6
Series III: Other papers .....	7
Series IV: Visual material .....	8
Series V: Restricted fragile .....	9
Selected Search Terms .....	10

## 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-283

**CREATOR:** Brigham, Sarah Bishop, 1846-1925

**TITLE:** Sarah Bishop Brigham papers

**DATES:** 1897-1907

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.84 linear feet (2 boxes + 2 portfolios)

**LANGUAGE:** English (Latin script)

**SUMMARY:** Memoir, photographs, ephemera, and correspondence documenting Sarah Bishop Brigham's journey to Alaska and time at the Swedish mission in Golovin.

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

---

## 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.brigham>.

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

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Purchased from Morrill and Son on the William Robertson Coe Fund, 1956.

---

### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research. Folders 63-65: Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

---

## Preferred Citation

Sarah Bishop Brigham Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

---

## Processing Information

This collection was previously described with a short catalog record. A retroactive finding aid was created in 2026 to facilitate description and access to the collection at the folder level.

---

## Processing Information

Some folder titles contain language which may be inaccurate and harmful to Alaska Natives. Original titles have been maintained to preserve the original context of how the collection creator labeled their documents. Please contact Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library for details or if you have questions or comments about these revisions. For more information on reparative archival description at Yale, see [Yale's Statement on Harmful Language in Archival Description](#).

---

## Biographical / Historical

Sarah Bishop Brigham and her husband, Dr. C. O. Brigham, of Rutland, Vermont, travelled to Alaska in 1898 with the Vermont Klondike Expedition. Dr. Brigham died of an illness at Golovin Bay. Mrs. Brigham taught in the school run by the Swedish mission at Golovin Bay until the journey home was possible in July of 1899.

---

## Scope and Contents

The papers consist primarily of a memoir by Mrs. Brigham about her experiences in Alaska, much of it drafted while she was still at Golovin Bay in the spring of 1899. It describes the Brighams' journey, the Golovin Bay Mission, Alaska Native culture, the gold rush at Cape Nome, the communities of Unalaska, St. Michael, and "Anvil City" in Nome, the Alaska mail service, observations of reindeer, and various people Mrs. Brigham knew during her year there. The papers also include correspondence, some of it regarding mining claims owned by Mrs. Brigham; receipts and ephemera, including a program from and sketch of the Jesse Lee Home in Unalaska; newspaper clippings; drawings; and 38 photographs. Over half the photographs are of the mission community at Golovin Bay, many of them taken by the missionary P. H. Anderson. Also present are several photos of miners at Nome, one of workers on the Alaska Railroad, two by Winter and Pond of a mine at Douglas, and studio portraits of Dr. and Mrs. Brigham taken in Burlington, Vermont, some years before their Alaska trip.

---

## Arrangement

Organized into five series: I. Correspondence, 1898-1903. II. Writings, 1899 and undated. III. Other papers, 1898-1907. IV. Visual materials, 1897-1899. V. Restricted Fragile, 1898-1907.

---

## Collection Contents

### Series I: Correspondence

Letters from the Brighams are filed first. Other letters are listed alphabetically by correspondent.

b. 1, f. 1	3 letters from Dr. Charles O. Brigham to Lynn Brigham	1898 April
b. 1, f. 2	4 letter fragments from Sarah Bishop Brigham to various recipients en route to Seattle and at St. Michaels	1898 April and undated
b. 1, f. 3	Sarah Bishop Brigham letter to the Swedish missionary society regarding the Golovin Bay Mission School	1899 June 23
b. 1, f. 4	Alaska Commercial Company letter to Sarah Bishop Brigham regarding her claim on Dry Creek	1900 September 6
b. 1, f. 5	2 letters from Mrs. O. P. Anderson to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1903–1905
b. 1, f. 6	P. H. Anderson letter to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1900 January 29
b. 1, f. 7	Harriet M. Butterfield letter to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1901 November 30
b. 1, f. 8	Charles S. D. Emerson letter to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1902 June 21
b. 1, f. 9	George K. Griffin letter and postal forwarding instructions to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1898–1900
b. 1, f. 10	3 letters from J. H. James and his agent James Howell to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1900
b. 1, f. 11	Amanda Johnson letter to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1902 October 19
b. 1, f. 12	"Mrs. King" letter to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1900 July 6
b. 1, f. 13	Mrs. C. W. Lane letter to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1900 March 26
b. 1, f. 14	3 letters from Alice Omegitjoak to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1899–1900
b. 1, f. 15	<i>Rutland Herald</i> letter to Sarah Bishop Brigham regarding her manuscript	1899 October 15
b. 1, f. 16	Stephen S. Smith letter to Sarah Bishop Brigham	1903 February 19
b. 1, f. 17	Letter from an unidentified correspondent to Sarah Bishop Brigham regarding her mining claims on Anvil Creek and Dry Creek	1900 January 5

**Series II: Writings***Golden Mirages*

b. 1, f. 18-20	Manuscript draft	1899 April
b. 1, f. 21-23	Typescript drafts of Chapters 1 and 2	undated
b. 1, f. 24	Manuscript draft of chapter describing Dr. Brigham's death and hardships in Alaska	undated
b. 1, f. 25	Manuscript draft of "Eskimos" chapter This folder title contains language that may be inaccurate or harmful to Alaska Native communities. Original folder titles have been maintained to preserve the original context of how the collection creator labeled their files.	undated
b. 1, f. 26	Manuscript draft of "Mrs. J. H. Bings" section	undated
b. 1, f. 27	Manuscript draft of "C. C. Reynolds" section	undated
b. 1, f. 28	Manuscript drafts of "Dr. Gleaver" and "Kotzebue Sound" sections	1899 July 1
b. 1, f. 29	Manuscript drafts of "A Trip to the Mines of Camp Nome" section	undated
b. 1, f. 30	Manuscript drafts of a chapter about mining	undated
b. 1, f. 31	Manuscript drafts of "The Mail Service of Alaska 98-99" section	1899 April-July
b. 1, f. 32	Manuscript drafts of "Reindeer Herd" section	undated
b. 1, f. 33	Manuscript draft and diary pages for "Anvil City" chapter	1899 July-August
b. 1, f. 34	Manuscript drafts of "Finale" chapter	undated
b. 1, f. 35	Miscellaneous loose pages, including a description of the Brighams' journey to St. Michaels	undated

*Other writings*

b. 1, f. 36	"Eskimo Brotherhood" manuscript and typescript drafts This folder title contains language that may be inaccurate or harmful to Alaska Native communities. Original folder titles have been maintained to preserve the original context of how the collection creator labeled their files.	
b. 1, f. 37	"Harnessing the Reindeer" manuscript and typescript drafts	undated
b. 1, f. 38	"New Gold Finds or Fields North of Norton Sound" manuscript drafts	undated
b. 1, f. 39	"Opening remarks" manuscript drafts	undated
b. 1, f. 40	"Unalaska" manuscript draft	undated

**Series III: Other papers**

b. 1, f. 41	Receipt, letter of identification, and purser's ticket from the SS Brixham	1898
b. 1, f. 42	Business and calling cards	circa 1898-1899
b. 1, f. 43	Blank Vermont Klondike Expedition contract and receipt	1898
b. 1, f. 44	Manuscript map of western Alaska and sketch of an unidentified Alaska Native	undated
b. 1, f. 45	Printed program and sketch from a musical evening at the Jesse Lee Home, Unalaska	1898 May
b. 1, f. 46	Flyer for Sarah Bishop Brigham's talks on western Alaska at the Congregational Church parsonage, Rutland, Vermont	1899 November
b. 1, f. 47	List of names of Rutland area people	undated
b. 1, f. 48	Newspaper clippings about the Brighams and the Vermont Klondike Expedition	1898-1899
b. 1, f. 49	Newspaper clippings about Alaska	1900-1907
f. 62	Klondike Clarion and Unalaska Evangelist poster	undated

**Series IV: Visual material**

b. 2, f. 50	Studio portraits [possibly of Charles and Sarah Brigham?], L.A. Atwood, Burlington, undated Vermont	
b. 2, f. 51-52	18 photographs of missionary P. H. Anderson of Golovin Bay	1897-1898
b. 2, f. 53	2 photographs of children at the mission school and five men on a snowy roof	
b. 2, f. 54	3 photographs of Golovin Bay, including Charles Brigham's grave, the Brighams' cabin, and the church school	1899
b. 2, f. 55	2 photographs of the ice breaking in Golovin Bay	1899 June 13
b. 2, f. 56	6 photographs of Anvil City, one with a drawing of an unidentified Alaska Native on the verso	1899 July
b. 2, f. 57	2 photographs of the mouth of Snake River	1899
b. 2, f. 58	2 photographs of Treadwell Gold Mine and Mill in Douglas, Alaska	undated
b. 2, f. 59	Photograph of workers on a railroad in Alaska	undated
b. 2, f. 60-61	6 drawings of Golovin Bay and other coastal scenes	undated

## **Series V: Restricted fragile**

Restricted fragile material. Reference surrogates have been substituted in the main files. For further information consult the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

f. 63-65

Original newspaper clippings from Box 1

1898-1907

---

## **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**

Alaska Natives  
Alaska Natives -- Education  
Eskimo -- Alaska -- Pictorial works  
Gold mines and mining -- Alaska -- Pictorial works  
Indians of North America -- Alaska -- Pictorial works  
Indians of North America -- Education -- Alaska  
Missions, Swedish  
Missions -- Alaska  
Postal service -- West (U.S.)  
Reindeer -- Alaska

### **Geographic Names**

Alaska -- Gold discoveries  
Nome (Alaska)  
Unalaska (Alaska) -- Pictorial works

### **Occupations**

Missionaries -- Alaska

### **Names**

Brigham, Charles Orson