



Smithsonian

Archives of American Art

A Finding Aid to the Henry Bacon Papers, 1849-1931, in the Archives of American Art

Jayna M. Josefson

Processing and digitization of this collection was
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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives of American Art
Title:	Henry Bacon papers
Date:	1849-1931
Identifier:	AAA.bacohenr
Creator:	Bacon, Henry, 1839-1912
Extent:	1.9 Linear feet
Language:	The collection is in English and French.
Summary:	The papers of painter and writer Henry Bacon date from 1849-1931 and measure 1.9 linear feet. The collection documents Bacon's career and travels through France and Egypt. Included are biographical materials, correspondence, writings by Bacon and others, scattered business records, printed material, scrapbooks, photographs, eight sketchbooks and additional sketches.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

The collection was donated in 1987 by Nancy N. Brecht, the grandniece of Henry Bacon and granddaughter of Bacon's brother, Earle.

Separated Materials

Also found in the Archives are three sketchbooks lent by Nancy C. Brecht for microfilming on reels 4040-4041. The scrapbooks are not described in the container listing of this finding aid but are available for viewing in Archives of American Art offices and via interlibrary loan.

Available Formats

The bulk of this collection was digitized in 2013 and is available via the Archives of American Art's website.

Processing Information

The Henry Bacon papers were arranged and microfilmed upon receipt on reels 4040 and 4041. In 2013, the collection was fully processed, arranged and described by Jayna Josefson and digitized with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

Preferred Citation

Henry Bacon papers, 1849-1931. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Restrictions

Use of original papers requires an appointment.

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Biographical / Historical

Painter and writer, Henry Bacon (1839-1912) spent much of his career and life in France and Egypt. He is best known for his watercolor depictions of Egyptian desert scenes.

Henry Bacon was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts in 1839. During the Civil War, he enlisted in the Union Army and served as corporal in Company D, 4th Battalion of Rifles of the 13th Massachusetts Regiment. Also during the war, he worked as a field artist for *Leslie's Weekly*. He suffered an injury at the Second Battle of Bull Run and was discharged in 1864. That same year, he married Lizzie Lord and moved to France. The couple settled in Paris where Bacon studied at the École des Beaux-Arts under Alexandre Cabanel. He spent many summers in Étretat, France--a subject he painted and wrote about in his book *Étretat: Hamlet of the Setting Sun*.

After the death of Lizzie Lord, Bacon married Louisa Lee Andrews. In the 1890s, Henry and Louisa spent their time split between London and Egypt. It was during this time that Bacon produced his many watercolor scenes of the desert, the Nile River, and of the Egyptian people. Henry Bacon died in Cairo in 1912.

Scope and Contents

The papers of painter and writer Henry Bacon date from 1849-1931 and measure 1.9 linear feet. The collection documents Bacon's career and travels through France and Egypt. Included are biographical materials, correspondence, writings by Bacon and others, scattered business records, printed material, scrapbooks, photographs, eight sketchbooks and additional sketches.

Scattered biographical materials include an address book, a photo identification card, genealogical material, and autobiographical notes and resumes. The bulk of correspondence is in French written by French artists included in Bacon's book *Parisian Art and Artists*, including Beaumont, E. Berne-Bellecourt, Vincent Chevillard, Luigi Chialiva, Georges Clairin, Edmond Dupain, Carolus Duran, Antonio Gonzalez, Ferdinand Heilbuth, Madeleine Lemaire, Luc Oliver Merson, and Leon Olivie. Also found is correspondence between Louisa Lee Bacon with museums and institutions concerning her husband's art.

Writings and notes contain short stories, personal accounts, and poems by Henry Bacon, as well as a biographical work on Bacon by Louisa Bacon, and unsigned poems in French. Manuscripts of Bacon's books are not found.

Scattered personal business records include a sales record notebook, an expense journal, and a lease. Printed materials consist primarily of clippings, a few exhibition catalogs, a copy of Bacon's book *Étretat: Hamlet of the Setting Sun*, and printed images of works of art. Two scrapbooks document Bacon's career as an artist through clippings, photos, exhibition catalogs, and announcements.

Photographs include portraits and snapshots of Bacon and his wife, travel photos used as reference, and photos of works of art. Artwork by Bacon includes eight sketchbooks, watercolor sketches, and pen and ink sketches.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged as 8 series.

- Series 1: Biographical Material, 1864-circa 1930 (Box 1; 0.1 linear feet)
- Series 2: Correspondence, 1849-1931 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1875-circa 1912 (Box 1-2, 5; 0.3 linear feet)
- Series 4: Personal Business and Financial records, 1864-1871 (Box 2; 2 folders)
- Series 5: Printed Material, 1882-1931 (Box 2; 0.3 linear feet)
- Series 6: Scrapbooks, 1866-1923 (Box 3; 0.2 linear feet)
- Series 7: Photographs, circa 1862-circa 1930 (Box 3-5; 0.4 linear feet)
- Series 8: Artwork and Sketchbooks, 1864-1912 (Box 4-5; 0.4 linear feet)

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Types of Materials:

Photographs
Scrapbooks
Sketchbooks
Sketches

Names:

Bacon, Lee Andrews, 1861-
Beaumont
Berne-Bellecourt, E.
Carolus-Duran, 1837 or 8-1917
Chevillard, Vincent
Chialiva, Luigi, 1841-1914
Clairin, Georges, 1843-1919
Dupain, Edmond-Louis, 1847-1933
Gonzales, Antonio
Heilbuth, Ferdinand
Lemaire, Madeleine-Jeanne Coll, 1845-1928
Merson, Luc Olivier, 1846-1920
Olivie, Leon

Occupations:

Artists -- France -- Paris
Authors -- France -- Paris
Landscape painters
Painters -- United States

Places:

Egypt -- description and travel

Container Listing

Series 1: Biographical Material, 1864-circa 1930

0.1 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: Found is an address book, a declaration for American artists signed by Louisa Lee and Henry Bacon, geneological material of the Munro-Bacon family, an identification card with Bacon's photo for the 1889 exposition in Paris, a list of founding members of the Société des Elèves de l'Atelier Cabanel, an engraved menu for a dinner held at the Palais d'Abdine in Cairo, a form granted by the Louvre giving Bacon permission to copy a painting, and autobiographical notes and resumes.

Available Formats: This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 1, Folder 1	Address Book, circa 1890
Box 1, Folder 2	Declaration of American Artists, 1911
Box 1, Folder 3	Geneology, after 1922
Box 1, Folder 4	Identification Card, Exposition Universelle, 1889
Box 1, Folder 5	Membership List, Société des Elèves de l'Atelier Cabanel, 1889
Box 1, Folder 6	Menu, 1909
Box 1, Folder 7	Permission Form, Musée du Louvre, 1864
Box 1, Folder 8	Resumes and Autobiographical Notes, circa 1910-circa 1930

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Series 2: Correspondence, 1849-1931

0.2 Linear feet (Box 1)

Scope and Contents: The bulk of this series consists of scattered letters written in French by artists featured in a book by Bacon and from Bacon's fellow students of Alexandre Cabanel. Researchers should note that some of the signatures are illegible. A letter from Henri de Courmont is an acceptance letter to the École des Beaux-Arts. A letter from Charles Insley Pardee grants honorary membership to the Lotus Club in New York City. Also found is a letter from Henry Bacon Sr., and two letters from American school children writing to Bacon to request snapshots of Egypt. There is correspondence between Louisa Lee Bacon Eldrich to museums and institutions concerning her husband's works of art and donations. A letter written in French to Mr. Romuu from Mr. Henry Vigrand (?) is likely a letter of introduction from the French government to that of Andorra for Henry Bacon.

Artist letters in this series from Bacon's book *Parisian Art and Artists* include: Beaumont, E. Berne-Bellecour, Vincent Chevillard, Luigi Chialiva, Georges Clairin, Edmond Dupain, Carolus Duran, Antonio Gonzalez, Ferdinand Heilbuth, Madeleine Lemaire, Luc Oliver Merson, and Leon Olivie. Letters from the students of Alexandre Cabanel include Bartholdi, Edmond Borchard, Pierre Cabanel, Horace de Callias, Benjamin Constant, Fernand Cormon, Edmond Dupain, M.H. Gaudefroy, Jules Girardet, Charles Gosselin, E. Hamm, G. Haquette, and E. Renar.

Available Formats: This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 1, Folder 9	Bacon, Henry Sr., 1849
Box 1, Folder 10	Bartholdi, 1892
Box 1, Folder 11	Beaumont, 1879
Box 1, Folder 12	Berne-Bellecour, Etienne Prosper, 1879
Box 1, Folder 13	Boone, J. Allen, 1911
Box 1, Folder 14	Borchard, Edmond, 1879
Box 1, Folder 15	Cabanel, Pierre, 1892
Box 1, Folder 16	Callias, Horace de, 1892
Box 1, Folder 17	Carolus-Duran, Emile-August, 1879
Box 1, Folder 18	Chevilliard, Vincent, 1879
Box 1, Folder 19	Chialivas, Luigi, circa 1880, 1879
Box 1, Folder 20	Clairin, Georges (?), 1879
Box 1, Folder 21	Constant, Benjamin, circa 1880

Box 1, Folder 22	Courmont, Henri de, 1864
Box 1, Folder 23	Cormon, Ferdinand, 1879
Box 1, Folder 24	Dupain, Edmond-Louis, 1879
Box 1, Folder 25	Gaudefroy, M. H., 1892
Box 1, Folder 26	Girardet, Jules, 1892
Box 1, Folder 27	Gonzalez, Antonio (?), 1879
Box 1, Folder 28	Gosselin, Charles, 1892
Box 1, Folder 29	Haquette, Georges Jean Marie, 1892
Box 1, Folder 30	Hamm, E., circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 31	Heilbuth, Ferdinand, 1879
Box 1, Folder 32	LeMarie, Madeline, circa 1890
Box 1, Folder 33	Merson, Luc Oliver, circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 34	Olivie, Leon, circa 1890
Box 1, Folder 35	Pardee, Charles Insley, 1874
Box 1, Folder 36	Renard, E., 1892
Box 1, Folder 37	Survillez, 1864
Box 1, Folder 38	Wadleigh, Levi C., 1899
Box 1, Folder 39	Illegible, French Artists, 1879
Box 1, Folder 40	Illegible, French Artists, 1892
Box 1, Folder 41	Wedding Invitation, 1875
Box 1, Folder 42	Louisa Lee Bacon Eldrich Correspondence, 1914-1931
Box 1, Folder 43	Mr. Henry Vigrand (?) to Mr. Romuu, 1894

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Series 3: Writings and Notes, 1875-circa 1912

0.3 Linear feet (Box 1-2, 5)

Scope and Contents: Found are short stories and personal accounts concerning art, museums, and travel. There is a written account of a meeting with Cecil Rhodes shortly before his death entitled "Meeting with Cecil Rhodes," and "The Artist in Pre-Cromo Days," an account of Bacon's experiences as an art student, his first visit to Ecouen, and encounters with Edouard Frère, J.F. Millet, and Corot. There is a twenty-two page biographical work by Louisa Lee Bacon about her husband. Also found are poems and a poetry notebook by Bacon and scattered poems written in French by unknown authors.

Available Formats: This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 1, Folder 44	"A Wonderfull [sic] Voyage for 4 Sons", 1894
Box 1, Folder 45	"Roman Models", 1896
Box 1, Folder 46	"The Artist in Pre-Cromo Days", circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 47	"The Black Sheep of Doxviller", circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 48	"In Venice", circa 1880 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 5, Folder 1
Box 1, Folder 49	"Je Ne Sais Pas", circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 50	"Monsieur, le Dauphin de France", circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 51	"Palace of the Louvre", circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 52	"Papa was Coming Home!", circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 53	"Siena", circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 54	"To Miss C", circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 55	"Widow Jones' Man", circa 1880
Box 1, Folder 56	Untitled Work, circa 1880 Notes: Pages 2-5 are missing Oversized material housed in Box 5, F1
Box 1, Folder 57	"Great Temple of Abou Simnel: Nubia", circa 1890
Box 2, Folder 1	"Meeting with Cecil Rhodes", circa 1902
Box 2, Folder 2	Poetry Notebook, 1875-1891

Box 2, Folder 3	Poems, 1875-1897
Box 2, Folder 4	Notes and Fragments, circa 1900
Box 2, Folder 5	"Henry Bacon- Figure and Landscape Painter, 1839-1912," by Lee Bacon, circa 1912
Box 2, Folder 6	French Poetry, by Unknown, circa 1880
Box 5, Folder 1	Oversized Writings, circa 1880 Notes: Material scanned with Box 1, F48

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Series 4: Personal Business and Financial Records, 1864-1871

2 Folders (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Found is a notebook documenting the sale of Bacon's paintings from 1864-1867, an expense journal detailing expenses from a European trip in 1911, and a French document concerning Bacon's occupation of an apartment.

Available Formats: This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 2, Folder 7	Lease or Rental Agreement, 1871
Box 2, Folder 8	Sales Record Notebook, 1864-1867
Box 2, Folder 9	Expense Journal, 1911

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Series 5: Printed Material, 1882-1931

0.3 Linear feet (Box 2)

Scope and Contents: Found are clippings, exhibition catalogs, a copy of *Étretat: Hamlet of the Setting Sun* by Bacon, reproductions of works of art, and a copy of *The Artists Guild* journal. One exhibition catalog from 1931 is a handmade mock-up created by Louisa Lee Bacon Eldrich with both typed and handwritten names of works. Some materials are in French.

Available Formats: This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 2, Folder 10	Clippings, 1883
Box 2, Folder 11	Clippings, 1884
Box 2, Folder 12	Clippings, 1885
Box 2, Folder 13	Clippings, 1888
Box 2, Folder 14	Clippings, 1890
Box 2, Folder 15	Clippings, 1891
Box 2, Folder 16	Clippings, 1893
Box 2, Folder 17	Clippings, 1894
Box 2, Folder 18	Clippings, 1911
Box 2, Folder 19	Clippings, 1912
Box 2, Folder 20	Clippings, 1913
Box 2, Folder 21	Clippings, circa 1880-circa 1895
Box 2, Folder 22	Exhibition Catalog, 1889
Box 2, Folder 23	Exhibition Catalog, circa 1896
Box 2, Folder 24	Exhibition Catalogs, 1925-1931
Box 2, Folder 25	Reproductions of Works of Art, 1882, circa 1890
Box 2, Folder 26	Étretat: Hamlet of the Setting Sun, by Henry Bacon

Box 2, Folder 27

[The Artists Guild, Journal, 1913](#)

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Series 6: Scrapbooks, 1866-1923

0.2 Linear feet (Box 3)

Scope and Contents: Found are two scrapbooks which relate to Henry Bacon's career as an artist. One scrapbook dates from 1866-1882 and contains mostly clippings, however one photograph is included. A second scrapbook dates from 1912-1923 and was created by Louisa Lee Bacon. It contains clippings, exhibition catalogs, notices, photographs, and a poem. Many of the clippings are in French.

Available Formats: This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 3, Folder 1 [Scrapbook 1, 1866-1882](#)

Box 3, Folder 2 [Scrapbook 2, 1912-1923](#)

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Series 7: Photographs, circa 1862-circa 1930

0.4 Linear feet (Box 3-5)

Scope and Contents: Found are portraits of the artist, snapshots, photos of works of art, and reference photos. Portraits are of Bacon, his wife Louisa Lee Bacon, and of Marie Therese de Bourbon. Portraits of Bacon are mostly in his later years, however there is a daguerreotype of the artist in his Civil War uniform. Snapshots are of the couple during their travels through France, Egypt, and Italy some of which depict Bacon painting outside in France. There are travel photos of Egypt and England used by Bacon as reference for his art.

Available Formats: This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 3, Folder 3	Henry Bacon, Portrait in Civil War Uniform, circa 1862
Box 3, Folder 4	Henry Bacon, Portraits, circa 1890-1910
Box 3, Folder 5	Henry Bacon, Painting Outside, circa 1880
Box 3, Folder 6	Henry Bacon, in Paris, 1896
Box 3, Folder 7	Henry and Louisa Lee Bacon, in Venice, circa 1880
Box 3, Folder 8	Henry and Louisa Lee Bacon, in Egypt, circa 1900
Box 3, Folder 9	Louisa Lee Bacon, Portrait, circa 1870
Box 3, Folder 10	Grave Monument, after 1912
Box 3, Folder 11	Marie Therese de Boubon, circa 1880
Box 3, Folder 12	Travel and Reference Photos, Egypt, circa 1890-1900 Notes: Oversized material housed in Box 5, F2
Box 3, Folder 13	Travel and Reference Photos, Egypt, circa 1890-1900
Box 3, Folder 14	Travel and Reference Photos, Egypt, circa 1890-1900
Box 4, Folder 1	Travel and Reference Photos, England, circa 1900
Box 4, Folder 2	Travel and Reference Photos, Unknown, circa 1890
Box 4, Folder 3	Works of Art, circa 1930s
Box 5, Folder 2	Oversized Photographs, circa 1890-1900

Notes: Material scanned with Box 3, F14

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Series 8: Artwork and Sketchbooks, 1864-1912

0.4 Linear feet (Box 4-5)

Scope and Contents: This series consists of eight sketchbooks, pen and ink illustrations, and watercolor sketches. The majority of the works depict scenes of Bacon's travels through France and Egypt and include figures in costume, desert landscapes, and seascapes. Also found are two sketches of Bacon, one by J. Carroll Beckwith and one unsigned.

Available Formats: This series has been scanned in its entirety.

Box 4, Folder 4	Sketchbook, 1873 Notes: Alcace-Lorraine and Bouxwiller, France
Box 4, Folder 5	Sketchbook, 1884-1887 Notes: Ship scenes
Box 4, Folder 6	Sketchbook, 1889 Notes: Corsica
Box 4, Folder 7	Sketchbook, 1894 Notes: Andorra
Box 4, Folder 8	Sketchbook, 1897 Notes: Egypt, Athens, and Venice
Box 4, Folder 9	Sketchbook, circa 1880 Notes: Venice
Box 4, Folder 10	Sketchbook, circa 1881 Notes: Shipboard Scenes
Box 4, Folder 11	Sketchbook, circa 1888 Notes: Possibly Étretat, France; oversized material housed in Box 5, F3
Box 4, Folder 12	Drawings and Watercolors, circa 1870-circa 1900 Notes: Possibly illustrations for a book
Box 4, Folder 13	Watercolor Sketches, 1891-1912
Box 4, Folder 14	Pencil Sketch, circa 1890
Box 4, Folder 15	Sketches of Henry Bacon by J. Carroll Beckwith and Unknown, 1864, 1874
Box 5, Folder 3	Oversized Watercolor Sketches, circa 1900, 1904-1910

Notes: Material scanned with Box 4, F11

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