



Smithsonian Institution Archives

Florence Merriam Bailey Papers, 1865-1942

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Smithsonian Institution Archives, Washington, D.C., osiaref@si.edu
Title:	Florence Merriam Bailey Papers
Identifier:	Record Unit 7417
Date:	1865-1942
Extent:	2.19 cu. ft. (3 document boxes) (1 16x20 box)
Creator::	Bailey, Florence Merriam, 1863-1948
Language:	Language of Materials: English

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

Smithsonian Institution Archives, Record Unit 7417, Florence Merriam Bailey Papers

Historical Note

Born in Locust Grove, New York during the Civil War, Florence Merriam Bailey (1863-1948), devoted her life to the study and protection of birds. From her work in ornithology she authored over ten books, including several field guides to birds, and close to one hundred articles. Though interested in birds as a child, she gained recognition as a naturalist while at Smith College. Disgusted by the use of feathers and whole birds in fashion, she started the Smith College Audubon Society.

Her later accomplishments include establishing the Washington, D.C., Audubon Society and becoming the first female associate member of the Ornithologists Union (1885). Within that organization she was the both the first female fellow (1929) and the first female recipient of the Brewster Medal (1931). In 1908 a kind of California Mountain Chickadee was named *Parus gambeli baileyae* in her honor.

Bailey's relations with prominent scientists augmented her own distinguished career. C. Hart Merriam, her brother, was the first chief of the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey, as well as a co-founder of the National Geographic Society. His work also led to Florence's introduction, and subsequent marriage, to fellow Bureau naturalist, Vernon Bailey. From their travels to the Western United States the Bailey's produced several works on the distinctive, and largely unexplored, flora and fauna in that region. As an amateur ornithologist Florence Bailey was at the forefront of the movement to use binoculars, rather than shotguns, to observe birds. She died in Washington, D.C., on September 22, 1948.

Descriptive Entry

These papers consist of Florence Merriam Bailey's diaries, 1874, 1887, as well as additional journals kept on trips to the Bermuda Islands, 1890; California, 1907; and Maine; 1911. Other materials include

expense account books; articles and news clippings concerning and written by Bailey; a scrapbook; childhood writings; college papers and memorabilia; manuscripts of papers on birds; reading lists; one letter; and photographs of family and various landscapes. Also included are oversized photographs of a relative's golden wedding celebration.

Names and Subject Terms

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

Subjects:

Ornithology

Types of Materials:

Black-and-white photographs

Manuscripts

Names:

Bailey, Florence Merriam, 1863-1948

Geographic Names:

Bermuda Islands

California

Maine

Container Listing

Box 1

- Box 1 of 4 Diary 1874
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 1 of 4 Diary 1887
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 1 of 4 Journal - Bermuda, March 1890
- Box 1 of 4 Journal - California, 1907
[Digital Content](#)
- Box 1 of 4 Journal from a trip to Maine, 1911
[Digital Content](#)
- Box 1 of 4 Journal - California, undated
[Digital Content](#)
- Box 1 of 4 Expense account books, 1876-1881 and 1891-1899
- Box 1 of 4 Bird Lists, 1910 and undated

Box 2

- Box 2 of 4 Scrapbook, c. 1886-1930
- Box 2 of 4 Journal Articles and News Clippings concerning Florence Merriam Bailey
- Box 2 of 4 Journal Articles and News Clippings concerning Florence Merriam Bailey
- Box 2 of 4 Newspaper clipping, Boonville Herald, 10/24/1889, re: Merriam family trip to Arizona
- Box 2 of 4 Manuscript - "A Woodland Circuit," undated
[Image\(s\)](#)
- Box 2 of 4 Manuscript - "Current Events in the Bird World," March 28, 1899
- Box 2 of 4 Miscellaneous photographs, undated
- Box 2 of 4 Miscellaneous photographs, 1892, 1895, 1898 and undated
- Box 2 of 4 Photograph of Florence Merriam Bailey , undated
- Box 2 of 4 Photographs of "Homewood," the Merriam home

Box 3

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| Box 3 of 4 | Childhood writings |
| Box 3 of 4 | Reading lists, undated, 2 vols. |
| Box 3 of 4 | College papers: Carlyle, The Man, Sept. 1885 |
| Box 3 of 4 | Smith College papers - Comparative religion, 1886 |
| Box 3 of 4 | College papers, "Favorite Haunts," April 22, 1886 |
| Box 3 of 4 | College papers: Evolution, June 1886 |
| Box 3 of 4 | College papers: The Adirondacks, undated |
| Box 3 of 4 | College papers, miscellaneous |
| Box 3 of 4 | Class of '86 Smith College Publication, 2 vols. |
| Box 3 of 4 | Notebook, "Figures and Illustrations," July 1889. Contain early writings of Florence Merriam Bailey |
| Box 3 of 4 | Notebook containing information of Florence Merriam's marriage to V. O. Bailey, 1899 |
| Box 3 of 4 | Letter, Florence Merriam Bailey to "My Dear Dorothy," 12/9/1942 |
| Box 3 of 4 | Mormon Families, Farmington, Utah |
| | Box 4 |
| Box 4 of 4 | Large format photographs |
| Box 4 of 4 | Golden Wedding booklet |