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Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Guide to the Walker Family Papers

WA MSS S-1295



by Tina Evans

March 1987

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

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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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<http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/>

CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-1295

CREATOR: Walker family

TITLE: Walker family papers

DATES: 1848-1917

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 2.5 linear feet (5 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers contain correspondence, business and legal papers, and family papers concerning the Walker and Reed families of Massachusetts and Nebraska.

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

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.walker>.

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

The papers were donated to The Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library by Harriet Batchelder in 1984.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Walker Family Papers are 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

Walker Family Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Scope and Contents

The Walker Family Papers document the lives of William M. Walker, a farmer and businessman in Nebraska; his wife, Lydia M. Reed Walker; and the Reed and Walker families of Massachusetts and Nebraska. The papers span the dates 1848-1917, but the bulk of the material covers the years 1868-99.

The papers are arranged in four series. Series I, *Correspondence*, is housed in Box 1 and consists of chronologically arranged correspondence of William and Lydia Walker with members of their family. Dated correspondence can be found in folders 1-14, with undated correspondence in folders 15-17. Series II, *Business and Legal Papers*, (Box 2) consists primarily of papers pertaining to William Walker's real estate business. Series III, *Family Papers*, (Box 3, folders 51-69) is composed of papers concerning the Reed and Walker families. Oversize material is in Box 4.

[The 1848-62 correspondence from Series I](#) contains letters of the Walker and Reed families. An 1859 letter from Washington Reed to William Walker discusses William's education at Andover. An 1862 letter to Mercy Walker concerns a family member seeking refuge in Massachusetts from an attack by rebel forces. The correspondence of 1864 is mainly military in nature and consists of letters from M. B. Field, Assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury, and Salmon P. Chase, Secretary of the Treasury, and concerns William's orders to report for duty as a 3rd lieutenant on the U. S. Revenue Cutter *Morris*.

William married Lydia M. Reed on February 2, 1869 and the couple moved to Omaha, Nebraska. Lydia's letters of that year to her mother, Mrs. Theodore Reed, numbering about a dozen, describe their journey from Boston to Omaha, life on their farm, and their first Thanksgiving. Correspondence from 1870-71 concerns household news, the weather, and the progress of the farm. On January 30, 1872 Horace R. Walker was born and Lydia's letters to her mother chronicle the baby's development, as well as household and farm news. On April 5, 1874, a daughter, Lydia R. (Lida) Walker was born. By this time the Walkers had moved to Schuyler, Nebraska, where William was involved in real estate speculation.

The collection contains no correspondence for the years 1876-87 and correspondence from the years 1888-98 is sparse. Included are an 1894 letter to William T. Walker, the youngest child, from a schoolmate; a letter from Horace R. Walker to his mother concerning mortgages and the monetary policy of the government; and an 1898 letter from Lydia to Lida describing Horace's funeral. The undated correspondence concerns housekeeping and farm news.

The [Business and Legal Papers](#) consist of business correspondence, deeds, mortgages, tax receipts, titles, wills, and other papers. The business correspondence begins in 1869, when William was appointed attorney and head of the Omaha branch of Alexander Strong and Company, a Boston footwear firm. The letters between William and the Boston office discuss the management of the Omaha store and poor profits. The 1883-87 correspondence concerns mortgages with the Corbin Banking Company in New York. Sometime in early 1889 William Walker died and Lydia Walker took over his business dealings. The later correspondence pertains to the payment of mortgages and notes.

Folder 28 houses a small group of contracts and agreements concerning Alexander Strong and Company, cattle raising, real estate mortgages, and hay bailing. Deeds for the lands of Thomas Reed in

Massachusetts and the property of several Walkers in Nebraska are found in folders 29-33. Tax receipts, covering the period 1869-1902, are primarily for land in Colfax County, Nebraska.

The [*Family Papers*](#) series contains additional material pertaining to the Walker family, including William Walker's and Lydia Reed's wedding invitation, William Walker's certificate for membership in the Masons, and a booklet commemorating the hundredth anniversary of the First Congregational Church in Rockland, Massachusetts whose pastor was Horace Walker, William Walker's father. Also of interest is the folder of photographs of Horace Walker and his family. The military papers section houses William Walker's 1862 appointment as a corporal in the volunteer militia of Massachusetts and William T. Walker's 1901 discharge papers. The financial papers section is composed of receipts and an account book kept by Mrs. Theodore Reed. Newspapers and newspaper clippings include Lydia Walker's obituary and an account of the Reverend and Mrs. Horace Walker's silver wedding anniversary.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence, 1848-59

b. 1, f. 1	Correspondence	1848-59
b. 1, f. 2	Correspondence	1862
b. 1, f. 3	Correspondence	1864
b. 1, f. 4	Correspondence	1868
b. 1, f. 5-7	Correspondence	1869
b. 1, f. 8	Correspondence	1870
b. 1, f. 9	Correspondence	1871
b. 1, f. 10-11	Correspondence	1872
b. 1, f. 12	Correspondence	1873
b. 1, f. 13	Correspondence	1874-75
b. 1, f. 14	Correspondence See also: Oversize, Box 4, folder 70	1888-98
b. 1, f. 15-17	Correspondence	n.d.

Series II: Business and Legal Papers, 1869-1917, n.d.

b. 2, f. 18-23	Business correspondence	1869-1917, n.d.
b. 2, f. 24	Business receipts	1869-98, n.d.
b. 2, f. 25	Cemetery plot: Theodore Reed	1889
b. 2, f. 26	Cemetery plot: Lydia M. Walker	1917
b. 2, f. 27	Certificate of executor's appointment: Amos N. Reed and Edward F. Reed	1892 Apr 8
b. 2, f. 28	Contracts	1865-80
b. 2, f. 29-33	Deeds	1865-80
b. 2, f. 34	Maps	1891
b. 2, f. 35-36	Miscellaneous business papers	1866-92, n.d.
b. 2, f. 37-38	Mortgages	1870-1900
b. 2, f. 39	Promissory notes	1880-93
b. 2, f. 40	Redemption certificate	1877-95
b. 2, f. 41-46	Tax receipts	1869-1902
b. 2, f. 47-48	Titles	1868-99
b. 2, f. 49	Will: Lydia M. Walker	1890
b. 2, f. 50	Will: William M. Walker	1886-89

Series III: Family Papers, n.d.

b. 3, f. 51	Cards	n.d.
b. 3, f. 52	Declaration of Independence: reprint	n.d.
	Financial papers	
b. 3, f. 53	Account book of Mrs. Theodore Reed	1865-1901
b. 3, f. 54	Personal receipts	1864-1904, n.d.
b. 3, f. 55	Hair, unidentified	n.d.
b. 3, f. 56	<i>Historical Addresses and Papers, Hundredth Anniversary, First Congregational Church</i>	1913
b. 3, f. 57	Masonic certificate, William M. Walker	1886
	Military Papers	
b. 3, f. 58	Walker, William M. See also: Oversize, Box 5, folder 75	1862-70
b. 3, f. 59	Walker, William T.	1901, n.d.
b. 3, f. 60	Miscellaneous envelopes	n.d.
b. 3, f. 61	Newspaper clippings	n.d.
b. 3, f. 62	Newspapers See also: Oversize, Box 4, folders 71-74	1890, 1892
	Photographs	
b. 3, f. 63	Lincoln family	n.d.
b. 3, f. 64	Horace Walker and family	n.d.
b. 3, f. 65	Lydia Walker house	1907 Apr 16
b. 3, f. 66	Unidentified house	n.d.
b. 3, f. 67	Unidentified people	n.d.
b. 3, f. 68	Poems, unidentified	1862, n.d.
b. 3, f. 69	Wedding invitation: William and Lydia Walker	1869 Feb 2

Oversize, 1888-89

b. 4, f. 70	Correspondence	1888-89
	Newspapers	
b. 4, f. 71	<i>Abington Standard</i>	1869 Jan 23
b. 4, f. 72	<i>Boston Cultivator</i>	1868 Nov 21
b. 4, f. 73	<i>The Congregationalist</i>	1858 Oct 22
b. 4, f. 74	<i>The Rockland Standard</i>	1882 Oct 28
b. 4, f. 75	Military papers: Walker, William M., certificate	1870

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

Child care
Families
Farm life -- Nebraska
Home economics
Land use -- Nebraska
Women -- West (U.S.)

Geographic Names

Colfax County (Neb.)
Nebraska -- Description and travel
Nebraska -- Economic conditions
Nebraska -- History
Omaha (Neb.)
Schuyler (Neb.)

Genres / Formats

Photoprints -- United States

Occupations

Businessmen -- Nebraska
Farmers -- Nebraska

Names

Chase, Salmon P. (Salmon Portland), 1808-1873
Field, Maunsell B. (Maunsell Bradhurst),
1822-1875
Walker, Lydia M. Reed
Walker, William M., 1845-1889

Families

Reed family
Walker family