

Grand Rapids History & Special Collections

Archives

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Finding Aid for the
Sluman S. Bailey Papers
Collection # 085

October 2007 version

Abstract

Sluman S. Bailey (14 December 1821-4 March 1907), a native of Somerset, New York, began writing his journals in 1842, at 21 years old. His writings take the reader through the Civil War years, into the new century, ending in 1906. Some years are missing. His family moved to Michigan in 1846, and purchased a farm in Paris Township, Kent County, Michigan. Bailey was one of the founders of the Kent County Agricultural Society. They cover his day-to-day activities most notably when he was Sheriff of Grand Rapids and an Internal Revenue collector. His journals also cover the Chicago, Grand Haven and Manistee Fires of October 1871. One journal, 1896-1897 was written by S.S. Bailey's daughter, Alice Bailey, about life on the family farm in the outskirts of the city of Grand Rapids.

Collection #: 085

Accession #: 1979.019 or 00.019

Donor: Mrs. Stewart O. Darling, June 1979

Span dates: 1842-1907, n.d.

Processor: Martha Bloem, October 1988. Box Summary, Marcella Beck, Sept. 14, 2000; R. Mayne, added acc. Number, per accession file found for Mrs. Darling, 1/05/2001. Revised 2000-2005 R. Mayne.

Size: 1.5 cu.ft.

Box Summary

Box No.	Description of Contents	Box Description
1	untitled	slim
2	untitled	clam 3x10.5x15.5
3	untitled	clam
4	untitled	clam

Processing note

The original journals in Boxes 2-3 are in poor condition, and would benefit from the additional protection of a folder. This might make it necessary to change the box type and housing orientation of the materials.

The items in Box 4 are photocopies in in-house made books (boards with library tape), and the sheet are coming loose from the glue. They too would benefit from foldering.

Biography

Sluman S. Bailey (14 December 1821-4 March 1907), a native of Somerset, New York, began writing his journals in 1842. In 1844 he married Delia Starbuck. The family moved to Michigan in 1846. Bailey purchased a farm in Paris Township, Kent County. The family lived on the farm until Bailey became Kent County Sheriff and they moved to Grand Rapids, but kept the Paris Township farm. Farming was one of his great interests in life and they returned to the country often.

Bailey was one of the founders of the Kent County Agricultural Society. He and his wife were also instrumental in organizing a Congregational Church in Paris Township. As well as his political interests, his business interests were varied, he was trustee in the organization of the Grand Rapids Savings Bank and an incorporator of the Grand Rapids Electric Light and Power Company.

Bailey had four children, Herman, Charles, Alice, and Clarabelle. Charles died in 1867, and Alice in 1897.

For more biographical information, refer to *History of Kent County, Michigan*, by C.C. Chapman or *Memorials of the Grand river Valley*, by Franklin Everett.

Scope and Content

The collection is arranged into two series, and chronologically within each series.

Series one consists of the original journals and papers dealing with Bailey's life. Some of the major points of interest are his professional life in Grand Rapids, his personal life such as the death of his son in 1867, and his interest in farming, and his paper titled "Good Roads" which deals with developing good county roads.

Series Two consists of duplicate photocopies of the manuscripts.

Access Restriction

Due to the fragile condition of the original materials in the collection, researchers should use the photocopies of the journal in Box 4 instead of the originals, where available.

Contents

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
Series I. Manuscript Material, 1842-1906.		
1	1	Journal, 1842-1844.
1	2	Journal, 1845-1849.
1	3	Assignment order, 1858.
1	4	Pages from journal, June 1865.
1	5	Correspondence, 1866.
1	6	Pages from journal, February 1867.
1	7	Pages from journal, March 1867.
1	8	Pages from journal, December 1-3, [1867].
1	9	Pages from journal, 1867.
1	10	Miscellaneous papers, n.d.
1	11	"Good Roads" n.d. Photocopies only.
1	12	News clippings, 1874-1907, n.d. Photocopies only.

<u>Box</u>	<u>Volume</u>	<u>Description</u>
2	1	Journal, 1846-1855
2	2	Journal, 1859-1862, 1867-1871.
2	3	Journal, 1862-1865.
2	4	Journal and ledger, September 1865-January 1867.
2	5	Journal, July 1865-January 1867.
3	1	Journal, 1871-1873.
3	2	Journal, 1873-1876.
3	3	Journal, 1876-1880.
3	4	Journal, 1896-1897, written by Alice Bailey.
3	5	Journal, 1903-1904.
3	6	Journal, 1905-1906.

Series II. Duplicate Copies of Manuscript, 1842-1868		
1	13	Journals of Sluman S Bailey, Summary, n.d.
The following items were formerly: M92.B155		
4	[1]	Journal, 1842-1844.
4	[2]	Journal, 1844-1849.
4	[3]	1855-1859.
4	[4]	1859-1862, 1867.
4	[5]	1865-1868.