Alexander D. Miner Correspondence

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Alexander D. Miner Correspondence
Dates (inclusive): 1834-1883
Bulk dates: 1852-1883
Collection Call Number: mssHM 80846-80948
Creator: Miner, Alexander Douglas
Extent: 109 items in 3 boxes
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, California 91108
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Abstract: This collection consists almost entirely of family letters sent by farmer Alexander Miner (1802-1873) in Lima,
New York, to his daughter Martha Matilda Miner, a college student attending Oberlin College in Ohio (Class of 1863).
Language of Material: The records are in English.
Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. Alexander D. Miner Correspondence, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Provenance
Gift from Dr. Malcolm Rohrbough, May 12, 2014.
Biographical Note
Alexander Douglas Miner (1802-1873) was born on June 22, 1802. He married Abby E. Skinner on May 28, 1848. Miner was a farmer in Lima, New York. The couple had two daughters, Martha Matilda Miner and Nellie W. Miner. Martha was born on October 30, 1842. She studied at Oberlin College and graduated in 1863. She married Reverend John Gaius Fraser on July 1, 1868. Fraser was a clergyman from East Toledo, Ohio. The couple had one daughter, Grace Selina Fraser.
Alexander D. Miner died in 1873.
Scope and Content
The correspondence of Alexander Douglas Miner consists almost entirely of letters sent by Miner addressed to his daughter, Martha Matilda Miner, a college student attending Oberlin College in Ohio. The letters sent from Miner to Martha span from 1852 to 1872. Some of the letters include a postscript from Martha's mother, Abby E. Miner.
The letters begin in Lima, New York in June 1852. Martha's mother, Abby E. Miner, begins the letter with an update on her father's health. The majority of these letters cover news on family members and friends, including church and social activities along with Martha's studies. Illnesses and deaths of friends and family are also commonly reported by Miner. Cholera morbus (gastroenteritis), erysipelas, and measles are some of the illnesses mentioned. Besides the common updates on family and friends, there are a couple of highlights in Miner's letters including a trial for perjury and a shooting during a sermon about slavery.
Although Miner did not fight during the Civil War, he mentions several friends who did, including a boy who participated in the First Battle of Bull Run. In regards to the war, he writes, "I am more than ever convinced that this war, before we see its termination, will be felt and realized as the direst calamity which has ever befallen our beloved country" ([after 1860], July 24).
There is a strong moral and religious tone in Miner's writing. In a letter dated October 1, 1858, Miner writes "We may set about any worldly enterprise, with firm health, and with every advantage for accomplishing the object of our pursuit, and
yet...all these advantages may be removed from us, and if destitute of this trust in God, we shall be left to struggle alone unaided against the adversities of life." Miner also appears to have been deeply concerned about his daughter's moral development, as seen throughout his letters. "Avoid also a sort of stiffness of behavior, be familiar, not distant and cold, not waiting to be approached always by others, but prompt to do your part in exhibiting the courtesies and civilities of life" (1856, Mar. 17). In another letter dated February 1, 1859, Miner writes "I am afraid I have encouraged you in pride, in thinking of yourself more highly than you ought, in drawing comparisons between yourself and others ... in respect to smartness."

Martha's younger sister, Nellie W. Miner, appears to have been adopted. Miner reports, "She was found alone on the tow path of the canal by a lady of Rochester, who took her to the home. She says that her Mother put her there, and told her to stay till she came for her, and to tell people that her name was Helen Wells, and that she was six years old, she says that she came on a boat, and that her mother's name is Julia Wells. This is about all we know" ([1856], Sep. 29). Nellie was not the only abused and neglected child mentioned by Miner. In another letter, Miner writes about visiting another girl that needed a home on September 23, [1857]. In Miner's later letters, it appears that Nellie eventually moves to Oberlin, Ohio to attend college as well.

Also included with the collection are miscellaneous manuscripts and notes by John Gaius Fraser on religion, a receipt, and a carte-de-visite of Alexander D. Miner. There are also three volumes: an autograph book, notebook, and an album. These volumes contain various sentimental messages from friends. There are also two empty volumes where the original letters were contained.

Arrangement
Boxes 1-2 contain correspondence organized chronologically, followed by miscellaneous notes, ephemera, and photograph, followed by bound volumes in Box 3.

Indexing Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Huntington Library's Online Catalog.

Personal Names
Miner, Alexander Douglas

Titles
Bible—Romans—Commentaries

Subjects
Abandoned children
Child abuse
College students--Religious life
Conduct of life
Etiquette
Erysipelas
Families--United States
Farmers--New York (State)
Fathers and daughters
Gastroenteritis
Moral development
Neck--Infections
Orphans
Parenting--Religious aspects
Students
Universities and colleges--Religion
Lima (N.Y.)
New York (State)--Religious life and customs
New York (State)--Social life and customs
Oberlin (Ohio)
United States--History--Civil War, 1861-1863--Public opinion

Genre
Correspondence, 1852-1869 (HM 80846-80903)

Box 1

HM 80846 Miner, Abby E. and Alexander D. Miner 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima, (N.Y.) ([1852], June [13] and 14)
HM 80847 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1856, Jan. 10)
HM 80848 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1856, Mar. 17)
HM 80849 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to "Brother Beecher," Lima (N.Y.) (1856, Aug.)
HM 80850 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1856, Aug. 29)
HM 80851 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([1856], Sep. 11)
HM 80852 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner] ([1856], Sep. 29)
HM 80853 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to "Sister Pamela". ([1856], Oct. 4)
    Note: Postscript to Martha [M. Miner]

HM 80855 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner] ([1856], Oct. 19)
HM 80856 Miner, Alexander D. and [Matilda] Beecher 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner] (1856, Nov. 1)
HM 80857 Beecher, Matilda 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1856], Nov. 10)
HM 80858 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to "Sister Pamela" and Martha [M. Miner] ([1856], Nov. 17)
HM 80859 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([1856], Nov. 25)
HM 80860 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([1856], Dec. 8)
    Included: Note about Martha's grammar and spelling

HM 80861 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner] (1856, Dec. 27)
HM 80862 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1857, Feb. 1)
HM 80863 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([1857], Sep. 23)
HM 80864 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1858, Sep. 18)
HM 80865 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([1858], Sep. 26)
HM 80866 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1858, Oct. 1)
HM 80867 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([1858], Oct. 24)
HM 80868 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([1858], Nov. 13)
HM 80869 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1858], Dec. 4)
HM 80870 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1858, Dec. 8)
HM 80871 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner] ([1858], Dec. 12)
HM 80872 Miner, Alexander D. and Abby E. Miner 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1858, Dec. 15)
HM 80873 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha D. Miner] (1858, Dec. 25)
HM 80874 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha D. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1859, Feb. 1)
HM 80875 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [D. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1859, Feb. 12)
HM 80876 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1859, Feb. 21)
HM 80877 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([1859], Mar. 12)
HM 80878 Miner, Alexander D. and [Abby E. Miner] to Martha [M. Miner] ([1859], Mar. 21)
HM 80879 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([1859], Mar. 28)
HM 80880 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1859], Apr. 9)
HM 80881 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1859, Apr. 21)
HM 80882 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1859, May 3)
HM 80883 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([1859], Aug. 29)
HM 80884 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([after 1860], July 24)
HM 80885 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1861, Aug. 22)
HM 80886 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1861], Sep.1)
HM 80887 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1861], Sep. 14)
HM 80888 Miner, Alexander D. and [Abby E. Miner] to Martha [M. Miner] ([1861], Sep. 22)
HM 80889 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1861], Sep. 26)
HM 80890 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1863, Mar. 7)
HM 80892 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1863, Mar. 22)
HM 80893 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1863, Mar. 27)
HM 80894 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1863, Mar. 31)
HM 80895 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1863, Apr. 19)
HM 80896 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1863, May 10)
HM 80897 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [John Gaius] Fraser, Lima (N.Y.) (1868, Jan. 31)
HM 80898 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to John [Gaius Fraser] (1868, Sep. 24)
HM 80899 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to John [Gaius Fraser] (1868, Sep.)
HM 80900 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to John [Gaius Fraser] (1869, Jan. 18)
HM 80901 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to John [Gaius Fraser], Lima (N.Y.) (1869, May 5)
HM 80902 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to "Dear Children", Lima (N.Y.) (1869, June 12)
HM 80903 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1869, June 25)
Correspondence, 1870-1873 and undated; miscellaneous documents, ephemera, and photograph (HM 80904-80948)
HM 80904 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1870, Mar. 12)
HM 80905 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1870, Mar. 27)
HM 80906 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1870, Mar. 31)
HM 80907 [Miner, Alexander D.] 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner] (1870, June 20)
Note: Postscript

HM 80908 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1870, July 11)
HM 80909 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1870, Aug. 18)
HM 80910 Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] and Nellie [W. Miner] (1870, Dec. 12)
HM 80911 Miner, Alexander D.] 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1870?])
Note: Written on the verso of a letter by Nellie [W. Miner]
HM 80912  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1870?])**  
Note: First page of the letter written on the verso of a letter by Abby E. Miner

HM 80913  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1871, Jan. 14)**

HM 80914  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] and Nellie [W. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1871, Mar. 2)**

HM 80915  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1871, Mar. 16)**

HM 80916  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Nellie [W. Miner] (1871, Mar. 22)**

HM 80917  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1871, Apr. 1)**

HM 80918  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1871, Apr. 27)**

HM 80919  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1871, June 11)**

HM 80920  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1871, July 13)**

HM 80921  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1871, July 27)**

HM 80922  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1871], July 30)**

HM 80923  **[Miner, Alexander D.] 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1871, Sep. 8)**  
Incomplete? Note: Written on the verso of a letter by Abby E. Miner

HM 80924  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1871, Sep. 30)**

HM 80925  **[Miner, Alexander D.] 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1871, Oct. 6)**

HM 80926  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1871, Oct. 22)**

HM 80927  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1871, Nov. 3)**

HM 80928  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1871], Nov. 23)**

HM 80929  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1871], Dec. 11)**

HM 80930  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1871], Dec. 21)**

HM 80931  **[Miner, Alexander D.] 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1871?])**  
Note: Written on the verso of a letter by Abby E. Miner


HM 80933  **[Miner, Alexander D.] 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1872], Mar. 5)**

HM 80934  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to John [Gaius Fraser] (1872, Mar. 14)**

HM 80935  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] (1872, Apr. 5)**

HM 80936  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to John [Gaius Fraser] and Martha [M. Miner] (1872, Apr. 15)**

HM 80937  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to "Dear Ours" ([1872], June 4)**


HM 80939  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to "My Dear Sister", Lima (N.Y.) (1872, Oct. 20)**

HM 80940  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1872])**

HM 80941  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner] ([1872])**

HM 80942  **Miner, Abby E. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) (1873, Jan. 27)**

HM 80943  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to Martha [M. Miner], Albany (N.Y.) ([18--], Jan. 2 and (3?)]**

HM 80944  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner], Lima (N.Y.) ([18--], Sep. 20)**

HM 80945  **Miner, Alexander D. 1 letter to [Martha M. Miner] ([18--], Oct. 6)**

HM 80946  **[Essay / Diary pages (II)]**

HM 80947  **Fraser, John [Gaius] [Notes (II)] (1865-1866)**  
Note: Heavily edited

HM 80948  **Fraser, John [Gaius] [Notes 2 (II)] 1865, Dec. 1 Receipt (1880, May 12)**

**Carte-de-visite**

**Box 3**

**Bound Volumes**

- Martha M. Miner's autograph book (1861-1883)
- H. Boothe's notebook (1834-1835)
Annie's album (1857-1877)
Volume cover only
Volume cover only