Rix Family Correspondence

Finding aid prepared by Katrina Denman.
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Descriptive Summary
Title: Rix Family Correspondence
Dates: c.1868-1903
Collection Number: mssHM 76000-76184
Creator: Rix family
Extent: 187 items
Repository: The Huntington Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens. Manuscripts Department
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Abstract: Correspondence to Sarah Rix of Connecticut from various family members, including her brother Charles Allen Rix in Dunlap, Iowa. Charles' correspondence, as well as that of his nephew George Tracy Rix, describes life in Iowa from 1870-1903. Other letters in the collection trace family connections and events in Connecticut in the later part of the 19th century.
Language of Material: The records are in English.
Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item]. Rix Family Correspondence, The Huntington Library, San Marino, California.
Provenance
Purchased from Cowan's Auctions, Inc., on June 23, 2011.
Biographical Note
Sarah Rix (1817-1889) was born in Connecticut on August 30, 1817. She never married and spent many of her adult years living with her sisters and brothers-in-law. She died in 1889.
Charles Allen Rix was born in Preston, Connecticut, on January 21, 1820. In 1859 he married Sarah Elizabeth Chapman (d. 1893) and the couple moved to Dunlap, Iowa. Charles Rix was one of the nine children of Thomas Tracy Rix (1774-1859) and Mary Jennings (1778-1876). Rix, his brother Thomas, and their sisters married extensively into the Chapman and Burdick families.
Scope and Content
The collection consists almost entirely of letters sent to Sarah Rix by her family members, primarily her brother Charles and sisters Nancy, Phebe, and Eunice, as well as various nieces and nephews. Included are 61 letters sent by Charles Rix in Dunlap, Iowa, from 1870-1894. Charles describes his life in Iowa extensively, including notes on the landscape, his crops and success at farming, and his general happiness with living in the West. He describes in detail the prices of agriculture, livestock, and other living expenses over the course of the twenty years his letters cover, and notes that in general the “cost...for provision and clothing is low.” Charles also writes of family members, business affairs in Connecticut (he writes to Sarah about selling their “old home” for a low price, for which he blames their in-laws the Burdicks, noting “I have not much reason to Respect [them]”), of an 1883 cyclone, of an influx of immigrants from Illinois seeking to buy land, and of his worry over his wife Sarah’s many illnesses. A series of letters written by Charles’ nephew George Tracy Burdick to his sister Mary Adelaide Burdick from 1901-1903 also describe life in Iowa, where George worked in La Moille at the Kimball and Burdick General Store. George writes of a great increase in land speculation in Iowa in 1901, but also notes that “the great rush has been on the Dakotas and Minnesota.” An earlier letter describes his trip to Chicago in 1885.
The remaining letters mainly consist of those written to Sarah Rix from her sisters and nieces in Connecticut. The majority of these cover news on family members and acquaintances, including weddings, births, deaths, marriages, and illnesses, particularly scarlet fever, pneumonia, and “deranged spells.” An unsigned letter chronicles the Centennial International
Exhibition in Philadelphia (1876). Another letter by an unknown friend of Ella Burdick Burton written in 1887 relates details of religious fervor in Manchester, New Hampshire, which the friend writes is "unlike any ordinary place because there are so many Christians who have had deep religious experiences." Also included in the collection are several cartes-de-visite and other ephemera.

**Arrangement**
The correspondence is arranged chronologically in three boxes, followed by ephemera:

- Box 1: Correspondence, 1868-1882
- Box 2: Correspondence, 1883-1903
- Box 3: Correspondence, photographs, and ephemera, undated

**Personal Names**
Rix family--Correspondence.

**Subjects**
Agriculture--Iowa--History.
Centennial Exhibition (1876: Philadelphia, Pa.)
Domestic relations--Connecticut.
Frontier and pioneer life--Iowa.
Land speculation--Iowa--History.
Livestock--Iowa.
Religious awakening--Christianity--History--19th century.

**Geographic Areas**
Chicago (Ill.)--Description and travel.
Iowa--Description and travel.
Iowa--History--19th century--Sources.

**Genre**
Ephemera--United States--19th century.
Letters (correspondence)--Connecticut--19th century.
Letters (correspondence)--Iowa--19th century.

**Box 1**

**Correspondence. 1868-1882.**
Letter to Sarah Rix. Brooklyn, Conn. 1870 November 5. HM 76007.
[Blake, Mary Ella Burdick]. Letter to Sarah Rix. 1873, July 31. HM 76026.
Kendall, Mary Emma Burdick. Letter to Sarah Rix. Brooklyn, Conn. 1876 February 17. HM 76038.
Burdick, Phebe M. Rix. Letter to Sarah Rix. Brooklyn, Conn. [1876], Sep. 2. HM 76040.
Letter to Charles Allen Rix. 1876. HM 76042.
Wilcox, Annie E. Letter to Sarah Rix. 1877 November 19. HM 76043.
Rix, Charles Allen. Letter to Thomas Rix. Dunlap, Iowa. 1879 February 27. HM 76051.
Blake, Mary Ella Burdick. Letter to Sarah Rix. Brooklyn, Conn. 1879 October 8. HM 76055.
Young, R.C. Receipt to Sarah Rix for medical attendance. 1882 January 8. HM 76065.

Box 2
Correspondence. 1883-1903.
Kendall, Mary Emma Burdick. Letter to Sarah Rix. 1883 December 20. HM 76071.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa. 1885 March 24. HM 76077.
Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. 1885 December 22. HM 76080.
Wedding invitation for Frank Burdick and Kitty May Arnold. 1885. HM 76081.
Marriage announcement for Charles Blake and Mary Ella Burdick. 1887. HM 76090.
Blake, Mary Ella Burdick. Letter to Sarah Rix. Brooklyn, Conn. 1890, July 2. HM 76101.
Blake, Mary Ella Burdick. Letter to Sarah Rix. Brooklyn, Conn. 1890 October 4. HM 76103.
Blake, Mary Ella Burdick. Letter to Sarah Rix. Brooklyn, Conn. 1890 December 24. HM 76105.
Blake, Mary Ella Burdick. Letter to Sarah Rix. Brooklyn, Conn. 1891 December 30. HM 76110.
Burdick, Nancy Rix. Letter to Sarah Rix. 1891. HM 76111.
Blake, Mary Ella Burdick. Letter to Sarah Rix. Brooklyn, Conn. 1892 February 15. HM 76113.
Blake, Mary Ella Burdick. Letter to Sarah Rix. Brooklyn, Conn. 1892 September 2. HM 76116.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa. 1901 January 27. HM 76120.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa. 1901, June 30. HM 76121.
Gidman, Mary Humphrey. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. New Haven, Conn. 1901 August 31. HM 76122.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa 1901 November 3. HM 76123.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa. 1902 January 26. HM 76124.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa. 1903 February 23. HM 76125.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa. 1903 March 15. HM 76126.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa. 1903, June 22. HM 76127.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa. 1903 August 16. HM 76128.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa. 1903 September 20. HM 76129.
Burdick, George Tracy. Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. La Moille, Iowa. 1903 December 13. HM 76130.

Box 3

Correspondence, photographs, and ephemera.

Burdick, Mary Adelaide. Letter to Sarah Rix Undated. HM 76147.
Letter to Mary Adelaide Burdick. Undated. HM 76183.
Cartes-de-visite and ephemera. 12 items.
Envelopes. 15 items.