

Haverford College Library  
Special Collections

Finding Aid for the WILLIAM BACON EVANS PAPERS,  
1787-1963

Collection No. 1020  
9 document boxes (4.5 linear feet)  
©April, 2008

Presented by William Bacon Evans, 1942-1958; WB Evans estate, 1967.

**INFORMATION FOR USERS**

Users should be sure to read the entire finding aid, as similar materials may be found in more than one location

**RESTRICTIONS**

No restrictions

**ABSTRACT**

The papers of Quaker William Bacon Evans (1875-1964), a traveler to the Middle East, including Palestine, Syria and Lebanon and to Europe. His letters and journals are complemented by letters to him from a number of prominent people.

**BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE**

William Bacon Evans (1875-1964) was born in Philadelphia, son of William and Rebecca Carter Evans. A Quaker, he attended Westtown School, Columbia University, Harvard University and Rollins College. In 1903, he went to Europe to practice French and study European birds. From 1908-1910, he taught French and general science at Westtown School. From 1919-1930, he taught English, French and general science orphan boys at an English Quaker mission run by Daniel and Emily Oliver in Ras-el-Metn in Lebanon. In this period he learned Arabic which served him when he visited Palestine and Syria as well as Israel. He was an avid student of ornithology. He gradually adopted Quaker plain dress and language. He was the primary author of entries

in the Dictionary of Quaker Biography. At the close of his life, he was a member of Monthly Meeting of Friends of Philadelphia.

(Information from the Dictionary of Quaker Biography)

## **SUBJECT HEADINGS**

Brinton, Howard Haines, 1884-1973

Fisher, Dorothy Canfield, 1879-1958

Keller, Helen, 1880-1968

Libby, Frederick Joseph, 1874-

Marshall, Thurgood, 1908-1993

MacLeish, Archibald, 1892-1982

Muste, Abraham John, 1885-1967

Roosevelt, Eleanor, 1884-1962

Carter family

Evans family

Quakers -- Middle East

Middle East -- Description and travel

## **SCOPE AND CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTION**

A collection of letters and journals relating to the Evans family, Carter family, and others. Included are letters written by William Bacon Evans, 1889-1933, to members of his family, describing his travels in Europe, his work in Palestine, his sojourn in Germany, and relating to various family matters. Also, letters addressed to William Bacon Evans by well-known people, 1896-1946, acknowledging gift copies of his books of poems and other letters, 1927-1962. In addition, letters by Elizabeth B. Evans, Elizabeth R. Evans, William Evans, Jr. Hannah Evans, Jonathan Evans, Rebecca Carter Evans, Thomas Evans, and papers relating to the estate of William Evans (1787-1867). As well, there are letters of John Carter and his wife, Sarah S. Carter. There are diaries or journals of Esther Collins, William and Thomas Evans, William Evans, William Evans, Jr., Sarah C, Hull, David Roberts, and Rachel Hunt Roberts.

An author of diverse genres, there are Bacon Evans' essays, poems, riddles, short stories, manuscripts and graphics.

Letter writers include: Howard Brinton, Richard E. Byrd, Bennett Cerf, Charles Evans, Clifton Fadiman, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Cordell Hull, Helen Keller, Frederick J. Libby, Thurgood Marshall, Francis J. McConnell, Archibald MacLeish, A.J. Muste,

Herbert Nicholson, Levi Pennington, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Eleanor Roosevelt, Richard R. Wood and others.

## **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE COLLECTION**

### **Box 1: Letters written by William Bacon Evans**

Folder 1: n.d., and 1889-1892. 10 items. Childhood and boyhood letters to brother Charles. Also filed here: Cover of the *American Friend*, Jan. 15, 1953, with picture of Bacon Evans on front and paragraph about the picture on back; leaflet, "Reunion of Descendants of Jonathan and Hannah Bacon Evans, 9mo. 22, 1928," which gives birth and death dates for them and their children; paper in Bacon Evans's hand, headed, "Do I Know---?"

Folder 2: during trip to Europe, 1903 & 1908. 19 items.

Folder 3: from Ras-el-Metn, Syria, 1920-1922. 52 items.

Folder 4: from 1923-1924. 65 items.

Folder 5: from Beyrouth, 1925-1926. 83 items.

Folder 6: from Lebanon, Syria, Moorestown, N.J., and Winter Park, Fla., 1927-1928. 86 items.

Folder 7: from Florida, Moorestown, N.J., Italy, and Syria, 1929. 57 items.

Folder 8: from Syria, 1930. 54 items.

Folder 9: from Syria 1931. 51 items.

Folder 10: from Syria 1932. 76 items.

Folder 11: from Germany, lmo. 2 - 7mo. 7, 1933, and one from Pocono Manor, Pa., U.S A., Aug. 9, 1933. P.C., 1951 42 items.

### **Box 2: Letters to William Bacon Evans, 1896-1963**

Note: 375 items, including 7 items added, 1967. Alphabetically arranged, by authors. Largely about birds, his poetry books, etc.

### **Box 3: Genealogical items; Evans and Carter family letters**

Descendants of Jonathan Evans and Hannah Bacon. 1 ms., 1 printed, item

Letters from members of the Evans family and relatives:

1. Carter, John, 1800- . 7 items, 1807-1858.
2. Carter, Sarah (Shoemaker) d.1858. 5 items, 1852-1856.
3. Collins, Esther (Roberts) Hunt. Diary, 1787-1807, plus 2 letters, 1808 and 1820.
4. Evans, Elizabeth Barton. Letters, 1829-1861. 42 items.
5. Evans, Elizabeth Reeve, 1830-1906. Letters, etc., 1854-1898. 17 items.
6. Evans, Hannah, 1827-1902. Letters, 1856-1901. 33 items.
7. Evans, Jonathan. Legal papers re his estate, 1839. 4 items.
8. Evans, Rebecca Carter, 1835-1919. Letters, 1851-1914. 107 items.
9. Evans, Thomas. Letters, 1856-1857. 6 items.
10. Evans, William, 1787-1867. 1 letter. Mt. Pleasant Boarding School, 9mo. 7, 1854.
11. Evans, William Bacon, 1876-1964. Biographical sketch of Charles Evans (1870-1958), son of Wm. and Rebecca (Carter) Evans. Papers, 1921-1962. 19 items.  
[Notes, articles, letters, etc.]
12. Hull, Sarah (Cooper), wife of Henry Hull. Memorandums for Sarah C. Gaskell.  
Notebook journal of journey in ministry from Phila. to Friends in Upper Canada.  
1831.

#### **Box 4: Papers of Evans and Roberts families**

1. William Evans's Journal, 1831-32.
2. William Evans's Journal, 1895.
3. Wm. and Thomas Evans, Account book and Agreement, 1844-66.
4. Roberts, Rachel (Hunt)  
Folder 1: Copy book, 1806; Journal, 1837, 1839, 1840, 1844-45.  
Folder 2: Letter to husband, 1837; Journal, 1846-56, 1856-58.
5. Evans, William, 1787-1867.  
Folder 1: Papers re estate of. 5 items.  
Folder 2: Fragment of his Journal, 1822-1829 (pp.99-168)
6. Evans, William, 1835-1919.  
Folder 1: Letters, 1859-1908. 31 items.  
Folder 2: Letters to him, 1862-1903. 66 items.
7. Roberts, David Journal, 1830; 3 letters, 1837.

#### **Box 5: Additions: Papers of William Bacon Evans, 1875-1964**

1. Notebooks and diaries, 1898-ca.1950. 12 items. [Include membership list of the Free Reading Room Assoc. of Moorestown, N.J., 1901]
2. Notebook of birds in Syria, 1928, and folder of bird drawings, 1963 (some on backs of ms. pages)

#### **Box 6: Papers of William Bacon Evans**

1. Pictures, mostly from Syria and Europe, a few from U.S.A. 227 items. All photographs, except one framed painting of man, inscribed, "For William Bacon Evans and the Peacemakers, B. H. Dyshel, Jerusalem, 4mo. 14, 1960." Also include 10 pictures of Friends' Meetinghouses in England and America.

2. Chart of Yearly Meetings in America, James Cox, comp., 1950.
3. Miscellaneous Prose Writings:
  - A. Notebook, memoirs of James Kite, written by himself [ca.1912]
  - B. William Bacon Evans's notes on George Keith (1638-1716)
  - C. "The Debate between Roger Williams and the Quakers," by W.B.E.
  - D. "Pine Folk of New Jersey," (rough draft, ms.) by Wm. Bacon Evans.
  - E. "Among Strange Voices, (rough draft, ms.) by Wm. Bacon Evans.
  - F. "Remembered Conversations of Zebedee Haines (II) by Wm. Bacon Evans.
  - G. "Trusting the Way," (rough draft, ms.) by Wm. Bacon Evans.
  - H. "Theology," (rough draft, ms.) by Wm. Bacon Evans.
  - I. "George Fox and the Light Within," (typescript, with ms. corrections) by Wm. Bacon Evans.
  - J. "The Four Thrushes," (typescript with ms. corrections.) by Wm. Bacon Evans.
  - K. "Divisions in the Society of Friends," (mimeographed, with ms. corrections) by Wm. Bacon Evans
  - L. "Reflections on inner Spirit," (rough draft, ms ) by Wm. Bacon Evans.
  - M. "A Briefer Barclay," Printed, Phil., 1961-63, by Wm. Bacon Evans.
  - N. "The Brothers -- A Parable," Printed, Friends Intelligencer, 11mo. 2, 1946, by William Bacon Evans.
  - O. "A Brief Sketch of the Delaware Valley Ornithological Club in the '90's," (typescript, with ms. corrections., by William Bacon Evans.
  - P. "The Story of Friends' Meetings and Schools in Moorestown, N J.," (typescript, with ms. corrections, by William Bacon Evans.

**Box 7: Additions: Wm. Bacon Evans Miscellaneous Papers.**

1. Limericks [original?] 18 items.
2. Sonnets, some printed. 100 original; 39 not original.
3. "Those Quakers," compiled by Wm. Bacon Evans [series of extracts, etc.]
4. Fifteen short poems and pieces of doggerel (original)
5. "A Philadelphia Battledore of History, part Natural," 1926 (original)
6. Eleven miscellaneous poems [all original but one]
7. Bird poems (original) 15 items.
8. notebook, mostly poetry.
9. Word puzzles, etc. 70 items.
10. Materials pertaining to the Separation of 1827-1828. 22 items.
11. Birth certificate and will of Wm. Bacon Evans, 11mo, 6, 1958. [Birth certificate is notarized letter from Joseph Stokes, M.D., Moorestown, N.J., 6mo 9, 1942]
12. 3-piece wooden puzzle created by William Bacon Evans.

**Box 8: Letters to William Bacon Evans, 1927-1962 & n.d.; Essays; Fragments**

A-B. 1 folder (ca. 20 items)

Note: While the Roosevelt signature appears to be a reproduction, the Keller appears original. Others thank Bacon Evans for items he has authored or produced

Letter writers include:

American Association for the United Nations (Eleanor Roosevelt), American Foundation for Overseas Blind (Helen Keller), American Friend (Errol Elliott), American Friends Service Committee (William Ensor), American Indian Fund (Haven Emerson et al), American Walswain Aid Society, Asheboro Friends Meeting (Seth Hinshaw), Athens College (Homer Davis), Bailey, Joshua L., Baltimore Yearly Meeting of Friends (Harold Tollefson), Anderson Barker, E.F. Bellows, Isaac Bradford, Ernest R. Bromley, Walter J. Brown, Burlington County Hospital (Alfred E. Darnell)

C-E. 1 folder (ca. 40 items)

Note: Extensive historical information about the Christian Children's Fund (formerly China's Children Fund)

Letter writers include:

Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors (Ray Newton and A.J. Muste), Citizens Committee on Displaced Persons (Earl Harrison), Christian Children's Fund (J. Calvitt Clarke), Christopher Publishing House (Thomas Christopher), Roy Clampitt, Committee of 100 (Francis McConnell, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Thurgood Marshall et al), Commonwealth of Pa. Dept. of Public Education (James Duckrey), Congress of the U.S. (Charles Howell), William Copel, Orval Cox, Elwood Cronk, Francis D'Olier, Downingtown Friends School (Wm. E. Cadbury), Eleanor Roosevelt 70<sup>th</sup> birthday Committee (Charles Mayo, Frank Graham), Charles Evans

Highlights include:

Christopher Publishing House (Thomas Christopher). 1951-1961. 13 items. [primarily re publication of WBE's *Sonnets for Lovers and Lovers of Sonnets*]

Committee of 100. 1950-1960. 11 items. [issues relating to segregation and injustice toward African Americans]

F-H. 1 folder (ca. 50 items)

Letter writers include:

Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Five Years Meeting (Errol Elliott), William E. Fort, Frederick Libby Gift Committee (Ray Newton), Freedom House Bookshelf Committee (Archibald MacLeish), Free Public Library of Haddonfield (Beatrice Stuckert), The Friend (Alfred Scattergood), Friends Boarding School (Byron Thomas), Friends Committee on National Legislation (Wilmer Cooper), Friends General Conference (James Frorer), Friends Historical Library (Frederick Tolles), Friends Hospital (Samuel Brinton), Friends Peace Committee (Richard R. Wood), Friends Select School (J.

Theodore Peters), Friends World Committee (Clarence Pickett et al), Helen Gilbert, Guilford College (John C. Bradshaw), Taylor and Irma Guthrie, J. Bernard Haviland, H.K. Heebner, J. Omar Heritage, Theodore and Rebecca Hetzel, Historical Society of Pennsylvania (R.N. Williams), Hotel Dennis (J. Howard Buzby), Hotel Morton (Paul Cope), Cordell Hull

Highlights include:

Freedom House Bookshelf Committee (Archibald MacLeish). New York, 1960 5/4. [In an effort to exceed the number of translated copies of works by Lenin and other Communists, the Committee is publishing works of some notable Americans]

Friends Historical Library (Frederick Tolles). 1949-56. 2 items. [on the influence of 18<sup>th</sup> century Friends and impact of Joseph John Gurney on PYM]

Friends Hospital (Samuel Brinton et al). 1953-56. 4 items. [WBE elected a member of the Coporation of the Hospital]

I-Q. 1 folder (ca. 60 items)

Letter writers include:

Indian Committee of PYM (Edna Morris et al), Iron Curtain Refugee Campaign (Richard E. Byrd), Jack & Jill (Ada Rose), John Bartram Association (Emily Chester), John Woolman Association (Douglas Steere), Howard Kershner, Donald Knapp, Leonard Wood Memorial (Perry Burgess), Lincoln University (A.O. Grubb), Horace M. Lippincott, Paul S. Lippincott, Edward W. Marshall, Georgie May, Frank B. Moody, Mutual Aid Food Package Service, Nat'l Council for Prevention of War (Frederick Libby), Nebraska Central College (Milo Crosbie), New England Yearly Meeting (Rebecca Perry), New Jersey Audubon Society (Betty Carnes), Herbert Nicholson, Joe Nicholson, Douglas Oliver, G. Ray Parker, Florence Palmier, Pendle Hill (Howard Brinton), Levi Pennington, Pennsylvania Hospital (Florence Grein), Harold Perry, Phila. Center for Older People (Lola Harris), Phila. Yearly Meeting (Richmond Miller, Howard Taylor), Prohibition Party (John Lytle), Provident Mutual Life (Paul Baker), Pocket Testament League (Alfred Kunz), Public Library of Haddonfield (Beatrice Stuckhert)

Highlights include:

Pennington, Levi. Newberg, Oregon, 1949 10/8. [refers to an attempt to start another branch of Friends in Amboy Indiana, based on the location of a new meeting house, while he (Pennington) was a pastor there; the split-off was called "Modern Friends."]

Prohibition Party (John G. Lytle). Blairstown, N.J., 1949 3/15. [glad WBE willing to run as a candidate for State Assembly from Burlington County on the Prohibition Party ticket]

R-Z. 1 folder (ca. 60 items)

Letter writers include:

Eveline Rausch, Redevelopment Authority (Francis Myers), Welden Reynolds, Philip Rhoads, Richard Rhoads, Mary Roberts Rinehart, William Roberts, Margaret Robbins, Rollins College (Erwin Brown), C. Chandler Ross, Saturday Evening Post (Ashley Halsey), Alfred Scattergood, J. Henry Scattergood, Nellie Seltzer, Logan Shannan, Social Order Committee (Bernard Waring), St. Mary's Rectory (Wilbur Hogg), Hannah Stapler, Alfred Steer, Francis Stokes, Ed Stratton, Guilford Street, Louis Taber, Teachers College (Hollis Caswell), Elma Thompson, Harold Toomey, Tract Assoc. of Friends (Ralph Rose), Elton Trueblood, Trustees of Athens College (Homer Davis), U.S. Dept. of Commerce (h.P. Adams), William Van Hoy, Lavora Vaughn, James F. Walker, Peter Walsh, George Walton, J. Warner, Kenneth Webb, Wellesley College (Ruth Lindsay), Westfield Friends School (Donald Stillwell), Westtown School (J. Robert James), Westtown School Anniversary Fund (John Parker), William Penn College (Herbert Nichols), H. Justice Williams, Albert H. Wilson, Joseph Wilson, George WoodWorld Council of Churches (Ursula Schuster), Young Friends Movement (Milton Zimmerman), Mrs. William Wright

Highlights include:

Stratton, Ed F. Salem, Ohio, 1949 4/19. [suggests where WBE can find information on a number of Quakers]

Warner, J. Yardley. West Grove PA., 1949 2/17. [responds to announcement placed by WBE in The Friend re obtaining information about deceased Friends]

Wilson, Albert H. Haverford, Pa., 1954 11/12. [asks WBE to serve on the nominating committee of the Tract Association]

Unknown sender and letter fragments. 1 folder (8 items)Essays by William Bacon Evans. 1 Folder (8 items).

Note: Typescripts, annotated, primarily undated. The essays are not signed, but presumed to be by Evans, because of the typewriter font. Essays are arranged alphabetically, and include the following titles:

- The Christian Message
- Concord Quarterly Meeting: State of the Meeting Report, 1957
- Divisions in the Society of Friends
- George Fox and the Light Within
- A Second Period in the History of Philadelphia
- A Straight and Narrow Way
- Welsh Origins: Thomas Ap Evans

Fragments. 1 Folder (ca. 40 items).

Note: Typescripts, annotated, undated. Presumed to be by Evans. The items are fragments of essays and some chapters of an unnamed larger work.

**Box 9: Poems; Riddles; Short Stories; Graphics**

Poems by William Bacon Evans. 3 Folders (ca. 150 items)

Note: Poems are arranged alphabetically. Some have Bacon Evans' name and address, some have drawings by W.B.E.

Riddles and Short Stories. 1 Folder (ca. 40 items).

Note: The short stories are arranged alphabetically, and include the following titles:

- Aunt Hannah Stories
- The Parrot that Used to Bite
- Seneca Indian Legends
- They Played Tag
- Thunder-Storms

Graphics. 3 Folders.

The graphics include:

Photographs of anti-Quakeriana drawings. 1 Folder (4 items)

Bird drawings, sketches, other drawings by W.B.E. 1 Folder (ca. 20 items)

Note: The bird drawings are finished renderings in color.

Photographs of Quakers, including in other media; photographs of artifacts. 1 Folder (ca. 30 items)

Note: Quaker photos are arranged alphabetically, and include:

- David Bacon, Anna Braithwaite, Moses Brown,
- John Comly, Thomas P. Cope, John Cox,
- Charles Evans, Jonathan Evans, Reunion of descendants of Jonathan Evans, Thomas Evans, William Evans,
- Stephen Grellet, Joseph John Gurney,
- Christopher Healy, Edward Hicks,
- Richard Jordan,
- Mildred Ratcliff, Elizabeth Robson,
- Thomas Shillitoe, Nathan Shoemaker,
- Nicholas Waln, Daniel Wheeler, John Wilbur, George Withy.
  
- Artifact photos are of a building, a clock and two documents.

**MATERIALS REMOVED**

**REMOVED FROM COLLECTION, FOR STORAGE IN 990-B:**

Chart of the evolution of Quakerism, headed, "Children of the Light." Hand-drawn and colored. [Drawn on back of unused marriage certificate form. Additional diagrams of the New Jerusalem, on back.]

**Moved to Coll. No. 1134 - Daniel and Emily Oliver Orphanages Papers.**

Letters concerning Friends Relief Work and Orphanages, Ras-el-Metn, Syria and Lebanon, including letters to Mr. and Mrs. William E. Rhoads from Daniel Oliver.