

THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
RARE BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS DIVISION
ACCESSION SHEET

Accession # 60 M 91

Location Annex 2-d-1/3
2-e-1/3

Title BACON CIPHER. COLLECTION

Approximate inclusive dates 1893-1948

Date of receipt November 11, 1960

Received from Josephine C. (Mrs. George) Curtis

Volume on arrival 13 cartons

Number of boxes (after reboxing) 24 RC, 5 AB, 1 FB, 3 packages

Condition Good

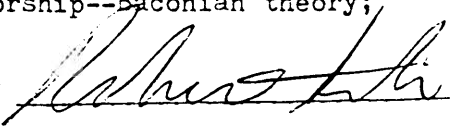
Restrictions None

Description These papers are from several individuals who sought to translate codes alleged to exist in the writings of Sir Francis Bacon (1561-1626). Two separate codes--the "Word Cipher" discovered by Orville W. Owen and the "Bilateral Cipher" discovered by Elizabeth W. Gallup--purport to contain secret messages revealing that Bacon was the son of an undisclosed marriage between Queen Elizabeth I and the Earl of Leicester. In addition, the deciphered messages state that Bacon was the author of works usually attributed to Shakespeare, Robert Burton, Marlowe, Greene, and others. Orville W. Owen (1854-1924) was a Detroit physician who in 1893 started publishing the results of his discovery of Bacon's word cipher. Mrs. Elizabeth Wells Gallup (1846-1930), a Detroit school teacher who assisted Dr. Owen, subsequently discovered Bacon's bilateral cipher, a code based on the existence of two different fonts of type in Bacon's printed works. George Fabyan (1867-1936) was a wealthy Chicago businessman who purchased the rights to Dr. Owen's works, hired Mrs. Gallup, and established the Riverbank Laboratory in Geneva Illinois in order to study codes. Fabyan published studies of cryptography and sold portfolios and lesson plans to teach the public how to decipher Bacon's code.

The bulk of the collection consists of transcriptions and notes used in deciphering the codes; publications by Owen, Gallup, and Riverbank Labs; articles on the Bacon controversy; and clippings. Despite much overlap, the collection is partially arranged. Envelopes I-XXI (boxes 1-3) contain transcriptions by Owen and Gallup along with lectures and articles on Owen's work. Envelopes #1-78 (boxes 3-12) contain transcriptions and notes, replies to critics (#28 and #36), clippings (#29), and articles. The Riverbank materials (boxes 13-21) include transcriptions, clippings, legal documents, correspondence, student portfolios and lesson plans, publications, and reproductions used for these publications. Box 28 has handwritten slips comprising a concordance to Robert Burton's The Anatomy of Melancholy (1621).

Special Formats ☒ Photographs ☐ Maps ☐ Audio Tapes ☐ Films ☐ Graphics
☐ Artifacts ☐ Machine-readable records
☐ Other (list) _____

Temporary catalog card added entries Francis Bacon (1561-1626); Robert Burton (1577-1640); Ciphers; George Fabyan (1867-1936); Elizabeth Wells Gallup (1846-1930); Orville W. Owen (1854-1924); Riverbank Laboratory; William Shakespeare--Authorship--Baconian theory; Great Britain--History--Elizabeth; Cryptography

Accessioned by 

Date

Oct. 7, 1982

BACON CIPHER COLLECTION

<u>Container</u>	<u>Contents</u>
1	Biliteral Cipher, Envelopes I-VII
2	" " " VIII-XI Word Cipher, Envelopes XIII-XV
3	" " " XVI-XXI Envelopes 1-2
4	" 3-6
5	" 7-11
6	" 13, 15-16, 18, 21-25, 27
7	" 28-29, 31-35
8	" 36-39
9	" 40-41, 43, 45-47
10	" 48-53
11	" 54, 56-66
12	" 67-70, 72-78
13	Riverbank Labs--cipher transcriptions, notes, and correspondence
14	" " --transcriptions, clippings, scrapbooks, writings, and legal documents
15	" " --student exercises and lessons, Mexican codes
16	" " --unsorted material concerning cryptography
17	" " --printed portfolios on the Bacon ciphers
18	" " --printed material
19	" " --photographs and photostats (brown package)
20	" " --lay-out boards for publications (brown package)
21	" " -- " " " " " (brown package)
22	Typed transcriptions of Bacon's works
23	- " " " " "
24	" " " " "
25	" " " " "
26	Concordance of Burton's <u>The Anatomy of Melancholy</u>
27	Transcriptions and writings by Gallup, Owen, and others
28	Printed works by Shakespeare, Bacon, Gallup, and Owen
29	Printed Articles concerning the Bacon Ciphers
30	Unsorted transcriptions
31	Unsorted Bacon Cipher materials
32	" " " "
33	" " " "