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Finding aid for the Faulkner - Bacher Collection

MUM01714

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SUMMARY INFORMATION

Repository

University of Mississippi Libraries

Creator

Bacher, William A.

Title

Faulkner - Bacher Collection

ID

MUM01714

Date [inclusive]

1953-1962

General Physical Description note

1 box (.417 linear feet)

Abstract:

Collection of correspondence between William Bacher and William Faulkner concerning a screenplay for *A Fable*.

Preferred Citation

Faulkner - Bacher Collection, Archives and Special Collections, J.D. Williams Library, The University of Mississippi

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HISTORICAL NOTE

In the summer of 1943, author William Faulkner sat down in discussions with producer William Bacher and director Henry Hathaway about a story concerning the Unknown

Soldier as Christ returning to save the world. Hathaway and Bacher had the idea for a while and were shopping around for a writer to do a screenplay. They approached Pierre van Passen, Ben Hecht, Ernest Hemingway, and others until finally Bacher suggested they try their idea on William Faulkner. Faulkner was interested and entered into a verbal agreement with Bacher and Hathaway.

Bacher advanced Faulkner \$1000 and Faulkner returned to Oxford, Mississippi to work on the piece. Faulkner began writing the 10,000 word first-draft in January 1944. Though under contract with Warner Brothers, the draft developed into a novel project, published in August 1954 as *A Fable*, for which Faulkner received the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award.

Correspondence concerning turning *A Fable* into a screenplay continued until Faulkner's death in 1962.

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SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Correspondence between William Faulkner and William Bacher concerning turning their "modern Christ story", which Faulkner developed as *A Fable*, into a screenplay. Collection also includes the contract between Bacher and Jill Faulkner Summers for the movie rights. Of particular note in this collection is discussion of Faulkner's views of his ability as a screenwriter.

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Publication Information

University of Mississippi Libraries

Access Restrictions

The Faulkner - Bacher Collection is open for research.

Copyright Restrictions

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request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of "fair use", that user may be liable for copyright infringement.

Additions

No further additions are expected to this collection.

Acquisition Information

Acquired from Alan Snitow, William Bacher's nephew, 2008.

Processing Information

Collection processed by Jennifer Ford. Finding aid encoded by Jason Kovari, 13 October 2009.

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RELATED MATERIALS

Resources at the University of Mississippi

For a description of the William Faulkner archival collections housed at the University of Mississippi, please view our [William Faulkner Subject Guide](#)

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CONTROLLED ACCESS HEADINGS

Format(s)

- contracts
- correspondence
- typescripts

Personal Name(s)

- Bacher, William A.
- Faulkner, William, 1897-1962. Fable
- Faulkner, William, 1897-1962. Reivers.
- Faulkner, William, 1897-1962. Screenplays.
- Faulkner, William, 1897-1962

Subject(s)

- Screenwriters

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COLLECTION INVENTORY

Folder 1 TLS. 18 June 1953. William Faulkner, signed Bill, to "Dear Bill" [Bacher]. Oxford, Mississippi (1p. letter and envelope)

Scope and Contents note

"Working on the big book which came from the idea you gave me years ago. Also, I may have also committed to do a script from one of my books..."

Folder 2 TLS. 3 September 1954. Bill [Faulkner] to "Dear Bill" [Bacher]. Oxford, Mississippi (1p. letter and envelope)

Scope and Contents note

Faulkner's desire to not write a script for a book he spent nine years writing

Folder 3 TLS. 19 February 1958. "Bill" [Faulkner] to "Dear Bill" [Bacher]. Charlottesville, Virginia (1p. letter and envelope)

Scope and Contents note

Putting off a project because of being in the middle of writing a novel and commitment at Princeton

Folder 4 ALS. 30 November 1959. William Faulkner to "Dear Bill" [Bacher]. Charlottesville, Virginia (1p. letter and envelope)

Scope and Contents note

Passing on a project as he has already "made a book out of it"

Folder 5 TLS. 31 July 1961. Bill Faulkner to "Dear Bill" [Bacher]. Oxford, Mississippi (1p. letter and envelope)

Scope and Contents note

Commitment to work on the screenplay for *A Fable* once he finishes his in-progress novel [*The Reivers*]

Folder 6 TLS. 6 February 1962. Bill Faulkner to "Dear Bill" [Bacher]. Oxford, Mississippi (1p. letter and envelope)

Scope and Contents note

Faulkner discussing his lack of talent for screenwriting and editing other people's work

Folder 7 TLS. 1962. Bill F. [Faulkner] to "Dear Bill" [Bacher]. Oxford, Mississippi (1p. letter and envelope)

Scope and Contents note

Discusses Faulkner's editing of a screenplay and the script's dialogue and language

Folder 8 TL. (retained carbon) Undated. [Bill Bacher] to Bill [Faulkner]. (1p.)

Scope and Contents note

Wants to do "the modern Christ story"; complex they discussed years prior

Folder 9 TLS. 24 July 1962. William Bacher to Mrs. William Faulkner. (2p.)

Scope and Contents note

Bacher's sadness at Faulkner's passing. Also provides a history of their correspondence and desire to produce the "modern Christ story" (The Unknown Soldier), which Faulkner wrote as *A Fable*

Folder 10 Contract. Signed Carbon. 13 December 1962. Jill Faulkner Summers, Executrix. (1p.)

Scope and Contents note

The "preliminary binding agreement between the Estate of William Faulkner and you [William Bacher] and Henry Hathaway for the movie production of William Faulkner's *A Fable*"
