Henry Lee Fenton papers, 1859-1949

Overview of the Collection

**Creator**  Fenton, Henry Lee, 1863-1930

**Title**  Henry Lee Fenton papers

**Dates**  1859-1949 (inclusive)
            1859 1949
            1880-1922 (bulk)
            1880 1922

**Quantity**  .9 cubic feet (2 document cases, 1 oversize folder)

**Collection Number**  Mss 1335

**Summary**  Papers of a Dallas, Oregon, merchant and businessman, including correspondence, financial and legal records, records of the Polk County Pioneer Association, and records of the firm Fenton and Toner. Also includes papers of other family members, including diaries and World War I papers of Carl Fenton, and a diary of Henriett Coad.

**Repository**  Oregon Historical Society Research Library
            1200 SW Park Avenue
            Portland, OR
            97205
            Telephone: 503-306-5240
            Fax: 503-219-2040
            libreference@ohs.org

**Access Restrictions**  The collection is open to the public.

**Languages**  English

**Sponsor**  Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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**Historical Note**

The son of a prominent Oregon pioneer family, Henry Lee Fenton was born in Lafayette, Oregon, in 1863. As a teenager he moved to Dallas, Oregon, and worked for the grocer J. D. Lee before beginning his own establishment. He was a well-known amateur athlete who played on the Dallas baseball team "The Alerts." He served as Polk County Treasurer beginning in 1896, and in his later life he engaged in the hop, prune, and angora wool businesses. Fenton's only son, Carl, attended the University of Oregon where he was a star football player and a student of civil engineering. After graduating in 1914, Carl taught at Eugene High School, then served in the U.S. Army during World War I. He contracted influenza in 1918 while in France, and he died of meningitis in Dallas, Oregon, in 1919.

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**Content Description**

The collection includes correspondence and records concerning various aspects of Henry Fenton's life in Polk County, including materials relating to his business Fenton and Toner, his live stock and farming enterprises, his property holdings, the Polk County Pioneer Association, and his work as Polk County Treasurer. Also included are materials relating to Henry's son Carl, including World War I
memorabilia, certificates, diplomas, and a brief diary he kept in 1917. A small diary of Henriett ("Hetta") Coad provides details on the life of a girl in the Dallas area. Coad was cousin of the Fentons who died at 16, shortly after the last entry in the diary.

Use of the Collection

Restrictions on Use

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Preferred Citation

Henry Lee Fenton papers, Mss1335, Oregon Historical Society Research Library

Administrative Information

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in two series:

Series A: Henry Lee Fenton and Fenton family materials, 1859-1949
Series B: Carl Fenton papers, 1905-1921

Acquisition Information


Detailed Description of the Collection

Series A: Henry Lee Fenton and Fenton family materials, 1859-1949

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/1</td>
<td>General correspondence Includes letters concerning Fenton's application for the position of U.S. Marshall of Oregon, with recommendations from George Chamberlain and Harry Lane; 1908 letter from a trustee at the Oregon State Penitentiary; 1918 letter from Mitchell Gilliam, judge of the Superior Court of Washington.</td>
<td>1888-1940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Container(s)</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2</td>
<td>Legal papers, including deeds and indentures Includes agreement with Oregon Railway Company for a railway to be built from Dallas to Kings Valley in Benton County and afterwards to Portland or to Yaquina Bay.</td>
<td>1886-1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/3</td>
<td>Henry L. Fenton account books (3 volumes)</td>
<td>1908; 1915; undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4</td>
<td>Henry L. Fenton financial papers</td>
<td>1885-1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/5</td>
<td>Henry L. Fenton bank book, Dallas National Bank</td>
<td>1908-1913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/6</td>
<td>Polk County Treasurer records Mostly receipts, including reference to a fire that destroyed the county courthouse.</td>
<td>1895-1900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/7</td>
<td>Polk County Pioneer Association records, including names of pioneers</td>
<td>1898-1905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8</td>
<td>Fenton and Toner records and hop records</td>
<td>1880-1907</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/9</td>
<td>Angora goat certificates</td>
<td>1901-1906</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>Recipes, invitations, and general papers</td>
<td>1859-1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oversize:Folder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Certificate from the Pacific State Fire Insurance Company</td>
<td>1919</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poster for the Reading Fire Insurance Company for insurance of Hops, H. L. Fenton, agent</td>
<td>undated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Box/Folder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/1</td>
<td>Diary of Henriett (&quot;Retta&quot;) Coad</td>
<td>1890-1891</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Series B: Carl Fenton papers, 1905-1921**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box/Folder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>Certificates, military papers, and general materials</td>
<td>1914-1921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Container(s)</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes French letter-writing kit.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>Diary and memo book</td>
<td>1912-1913; 1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Field book containing training notes</td>
<td>circa 1918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oversize:Folder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diplomas and certificates</td>
<td>1905-1917</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Names and Subjects**

**Subject Terms:**
Angora goat--Oregon--Polk County.
Hops industry--Oregon--History.
Pioneers--Oregon--Polk County.
Wool industry--Oregon--History.
World War, 1914-1918--Diaries.

**Personal Names:**
Coad, Henriett--Diaries.
Fenton, Carl.
Fenton, Henry Lee, 1863-1930--Correspondence.

**Corporate Names:**
Fenton and Toner (Dallas, Or.)--Archives.
Polk County (Or.). Treasurer.
Polk County Pioneer Association--Archives.

**Family Names:**
Fenton family.

**Geographical Names:**
Dallas (Or.)--History.
Polk County (Or.)--History.

**Form or Genre Terms:**
Diaries.
Diplomas
Recipes.

Collection processed by Geoffrey B. Wexler, 2005 December 2006

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