

# Ford Family papers, 1871-2003

## Overview of the Collection

<b>Creator</b>	Ford family
<b>Title</b>	Ford Family papers
<b>Dates</b>	1871-2003 (inclusive) 1871 2003
<b>Quantity</b>	2 linear feet of shelf space
<b>Collection Number</b>	MC 380 (collection)
<b>Summary</b>	Sam (1882-1961) and Mary (1885-1982) Ford were governor and first lady of Montana from 1940-1948; other members of their family, also represented in the collection, were similarly active in Montana political life. The collection includes audio materials, audiovisual materials, correspondence, financial records, press releases, speeches, duplicates of state records, writings, and miscellany created or gathered by members of the combined Ford, Jackson, James, Leslie, and Christopher families.
<b>Repository</b>	<a href="#">Montana Historical Society, Research Center Archives</a> Montana Historical Society Research Center Archives 225 North Roberts PO Box 201201 Helena MT 59620-1201 Telephone: 406-444-2681 Fax: 406-444-5297 <a href="mailto:mhslibrary@mt.gov">mhslibrary@mt.gov</a>
<b>Access Restrictions</b>	Collection is open for research.
<b>Languages</b>	English

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## Biographical Note

Sam Ford (1882-1961) was born in Albany, Kentucky. He graduated from the University of Kansas with a degree in law, and in 1906 he moved to Montana, where he met Mary Shobe (1885-1982), also of Kansas, who had come to Montana in 1887 with her family when her grandfather, Preston Hopkins Leslie, was appointed territorial governor. In 1908, Sam Ford was appointed assistant United States Attorney; he was elected Attorney General for the state of Montana in 1916 and Associate Justice of the Montana Supreme Court in 1928. Ford was elected governor in 1940, and served two terms. He and his wife had four daughters together; later in life, Mary Ford was a member of the original restoration committee for the original governor's mansion in Helena, Montana.

Betty Ford Jackson was born Clara Elizabeth Ford, to parents Sam and Mary Ford in 1921. She was the second youngest of four daughters. She married Melbourne Jackson (b. 1915), with whom she had four children. She gathered genealogical materials on the Ford-Shobe and Leslie-Hopkins families, from whom she was descended.

Ted James (1918-1995) was born in Sand Coulee, Montana, where he worked in area coal mines before attending the University of Montana. He practiced law in Great Falls after graduating in 1943, [Ford Family papers, 1871-2003](#)  
<http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv66793>

and was elected in 1950 to the first of two terms he would serve as Cascade County attorney. He was elected lieutenant governor of Montana in 1964 and served with Governor Tim Babcock. He competed with Babcock for the governorship in 1968, and lost. He was appointed chairman of University of Montana board of regents in 1973, from which he resigned in 1982. James married Mary Margaret Ford in 1945; they were divorced in 1972. He married again in 1973, this time to Lois Davenport, who survived him along with several of his siblings, children, and step-children.

Preston Hopkins Leslie (1819-1907) was born in Kentucky. He began practicing law in 1840, and served as a county attorney, legislator, president of the state senate, and finally governor of Kentucky. He served twice in the latter office between 1871 and 1881. In 1887, he was appointed territorial governor of Montana, and later United States district attorney for Montana from 1891 to 1898. He married Louisa Black in 1841; after her death in 1858, he married again to Mary Kuykendall (d. 1900). At the time of his death, he was survived by five of his children.

John Christopher was born in Austria in the 1860s, and lived in Sand Coulee, Cascade, Montana in the early 1900s. He and his wife, Annie, had seven children, six of whom survived to adulthood. Their grown sons John, Joseph, and Andy Christopher fought in World War I; of the three, only John survived the conflict. John and Annie Christopher's daughters were named Elizabeth, Susie, and Catherine. Elizabeth Christopher grew up to marry Theodore James, and was the mother of Lieutenant Governor Ted James.

## Content Description

The collection consists of six subgroups: Sam Ford; Mary Ford; Betty Ford Jackson; Ted James; Preston Hopkins Leslie; and the Christopher family.

The Sam Ford subgroup consists of general correspondence (1920-1952; undated); financial records (1912), consisting of one receipt for furniture; speeches (undated); and miscellany (1906-1907; undated), consisting of certificates authorizing Ford as an attorney, as well as Sam Ford's Spiritual Will. There is also a scrapbook including clippings, photographs, and correspondence covering Ford's governorship (1940-1943)

The Mary Ford subgroup consists of general correspondence (1904-1963; undated); writings (undated), consisting of Mary Ford's illustrated autobiographical manuscript, titled "History of My Life"; and miscellany (1892-1900), consisting of a good luck album containing handwritten messages. There is also a scrapbook covering Mary's high school years.

The Betty Ford Jackson subgroup consists of writings (undated; 1940), including "Peggy," and "Dad's Wedding Suit,"; and miscellaneous genealogical and biographical materials (undated; 1998) gathered by Jackson, which reflect the history of the Ford-Shobe and Leslie-Hopkins family trees.

The Ted James subgroup consists of audio recordings (undated); audiovisual recordings (undated); general correspondence (undated; 1964, 1968), including both personal correspondence and campaign correspondence; financial records (1964), consisting of correspondence and records regarding contributions to James's campaign fund; press releases (1964-1968; undated); speeches (1966; undated); writings (undated), consisting of an autobiographical manuscript; and miscellany (1964; undated), including an army airbase badge, political literature, and campaign literature, ephemera, and clippings.

The Preston Hopkins Leslie subgroup (1871-1875) consists of a subject file, which contains duplicates of the state papers of Leslie from his time as governor of Kentucky in bound form.

The Christopher family subgroup consists of general correspondence (1918-1919) of John Christopher and his sons, John, Joseph, and Andy Christopher, from the period in which the three brothers fought in World War I.

## Use of the Collection

### Restrictions on Use

Researchers must use collection in accordance with the policies of the Montana Historical Society. The Society does not necessarily hold copyright to all materials in the collection. In some cases permission for use may require additional authorization from the copyright owners. For more information contact an archivist.

### Preferred Citation

Item description and date. Collection Title. Collection Number. Box and Folder numbers. Montana Historical Society Research Center, Archives, Helena, Montana.

## Administrative Information

### Arrangement

Arranged by subgroup and series. Some material in oversized boxes and in the Multimedia Cabinet. See location listings above and inventory below for more information. Some material housed in Archives map case. See inventory below for more information.

### Location of Collection

17:3-1

### Location of Collection

20:2-5 (Oversize Boxes 1 & 2)

### Acquisition Information

Acquisition information available upon request.

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Sam Ford

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	<b>General Correspondence</b>	

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Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box/Folder		
1 / 1	General Correspondence	1920-1952; undated
<b>Financial Records</b>		
Box/Folder		
1 / 2	Receipt (Wahlgren Furniture Co.)	1912
<b>Speeches</b>		
Box/Folder		
1 / 3-4	Speeches	undated
<b>Writings</b>		
Box/Folder		
1 / 5	Spiritual Will	undated
<b>Miscellany</b>		
Box/Folder		
1 / 6	Certificates	1906-1907
Oversize Folder		
1	Certificates (oversize folder: see Archives Map Case)	1906-1907
Oversizebox		
1	Polictcal Career Scrapbook	1940-1943

## Mary Ford

Container(s)	Description	Dates
<b>General Correspondence</b>		
<a href="#">Box/Folder</a>		
1 / 7	Mary Shobe at the St. Louis World's Fair	1904
1 / 8	Leslie Shobe to Mary Ford	1957-1963
1 / 9	Mary Ford to daughter Judy	undated
<b>Writings</b>		
<a href="#">Box/Folder</a>		
1 / 10	"History of My Life"	undated
<b>Miscellany</b>		
<a href="#">Box/Folder</a>		
1 / 11	Good Luck Album	1892-1900
<a href="#">Oversizebox</a>		
2	High School Scrapbook	1904

## Betty Ford Jackson

Container(s)	Description	Dates
<b>Writings</b>		
<a href="#">Box/Folder</a>		
1 / 12	"Peggy"; "Dad's Wedding Suit"	undated; 1940
<b>Miscellany</b>		
<a href="#">Box/Folder</a>		
1 / 13	Genealogy: Ford-Shobe, Hopkins-Leslie	undated

Container(s)	Description	Dates
1 / 14	Genealogical research by Betty Ford	undated; 1998

## Ted James

Container(s)	Description	Dates
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### Audio recordings

#### Box/Folder

MM82 / 1	"Ted James special tape 2 cuts"; "James master tape odell-"	undated
MM82 / 2	Magnetic tapes ("Ted James for Lt. Governor"; "TS14961 Ted James"; "James TV-64-VWX-10"; "Ted James H. Aronson")	undated
MM82 / 3	Cassette tape ("Station RIGLER")	undated

### Audiovisual recordings

#### Box/Folder

MM82 / 4	VHS (Ted James and Hugo Aronson)	undated
MM82 / 5-6	16mm film rolls (Ted for Lt. Governor 5 minute spot)	undated

### General correspondence and campaign materials

#### Box/Folder

1 / 15 - 2 / 1	Correspondence, certificates, and speeches	undated
2 / 2	Campaign correspondence (also includes campaign literature)	1964, 1968

### Financial records

#### Box/Folder

2 / 3-4	Contributions	1964
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### Press releases

Container(s)	Description	Dates
<b>Box/Folder</b>		
2 / 5	Press releases, clippings, and photos	1964-1968
2 / 6	Press releases ("updating legislature, cooperation, fair campaigns, six mile levy, tap stand, corporation tot, board of education")	1964-1968
<b>Speeches</b>		
<b>Box/Folder</b>		
2 / 7	Untitled speeches	1966; undated
2 / 8	Speeches (untitled; "Philosophical and Spiritual Aspects of Republicanism")	circa 1960-1969
<b>Writings</b>		
<b>Box/Folder</b>		
2 / 9	Autobiography of Ted James	undated
<b>Miscellany</b>		
<b>Box/Folder</b>		
2 / 10	Miscellany (army airbase badge; campaign literature; clippings; parole board and prisons; lawyer humor)	undated
3 / 1	Brochures (and other campaign materials and ephemera)	1964

## Preston Hopkins Leslie

Container(s)	Description	Dates
<b>Subject file</b>		
<b>Box/Folder</b>		
3 / 2	State Papers of Governor Preston Leslie - Kentucky	1871-1875

# Christopher family

Container(s)	Description	Dates
<b>General correspondence</b>		
Box/Folder		
3 / 3	Christopher family (John, Joseph, John, and Andy)	1918-1919

## Names and Subjects

### Subject Terms :

Campaign paraphernalia  
Governors  
Governors' spouses  
House furnishings--Prices--Montana  
Lieutenant governors  
World War I

### Personal Names :

Christopher family  
(creator)  
Ford, Mary, 1885-1982  
(creator)  
Ford, Mary, 1885-1982  
(creator)  
Ford, Sam C. (Sam Clarence), 1882-1961  
(creator)  
Jackson, Elizabeth (Betty Ford), born 1921  
(creator)  
James, Ted, 1918-1995  
(creator)  
Leslie, Preston H. (Preston Hopkins), 1819-1907  
(creator)

### Geographical Names :

Montana--History

Finding aid prepared by Kathryn Kramer  
2012



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