Overview of the Collection

Creator  Kuykendall, George Benson
Title      George Benson Kuykendall Papers
Dates  1881-1931 (inclusive)
1881 1931
Quantity  20 containers., (10 linear feet of shelf space.), (8000 items.)
Collection Number  Cage 60
Summary  Correspondence, reminiscences, addresses, essays, notes, drafts, clippings and photographs of a pioneer physician, local historian and genealogist. His major work, The History of the Kuykendall Family (1919), is represented by extensive correspondence, research notes, drafts and photographs. Other materials include pioneer reminiscences of crossing the plains in 1852, early life in Oregon, and the history of Pomeroy, Washington; as well as material on Indian legends and customs and articles on religious, civic, medical, and rural topics.
Repository  Washington State University Libraries, Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections.
Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections
Terrell Library Suite 12
Pullman WA
99164-5610
Telephone: 509-335-6691
mascref@wsu.edu
Languages  English
Sponsor  Funding for encoding this finding aid was provided through a grant awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Biographical Note

George Benson Kuykendall was born in Indiana in 1843 and emigrated to Oregon with his parents in 1852. He graduated from the Willamette University Medical School in 1872 and began his first medical practice as Agency Physician on the Yakima Indian Reservation at Fort Simcoe, Washington. In 1883 he left the Indian Agency and established an independent practice at Pomeroy, Washington, where he remained until his retirement in 1920. He died at Portland, Oregon, in 1939.

While at Fort Simcoe, Kuykendall began collecting Indian legends and stories. In later years this project was to be expanded into an effort at collecting local history and reminiscences. Some of Kuykendall’s historical and ethnological writing can be found in The West Shore (1887) and the Oregon Historical Quarterly (1918). Although Kuykendall continued to collect some local and personal history until the mid-1920s, about 1905 the main object of his research became a genealogy and history of the Kuykendall Family in North American. The family history proved to be a large project and ultimately it involved 15 years of research and considerable travel. Eventually, Kuykendall was able to trace his ancestors to New York in 1650 and was able to establish the connections between the Kuykendalls, Coykendalls, Kirkendalls and other variant names. The results were published in 1919 in a 700
Not satisfied with a simple genealogy, Kuykendall attempted to make the family history more completed by interspersing American social history in such a way as to provide the backdrop for the lives of the various generation of Kuykendalls. His effort, however, were not very successful and the result was an unconnected section of the book filled with several chapters of social history, some of it of rather legendary nature. Additionally the book contained long passages consisting of quotations of letters which Kuykendall received in response to inquiries for information. As he neither transferred the information from the letters to a narrative nor completed the attempted at social history, the book appears to have been published before it was complete, with large portions of it appearing more like notes than a completed text.

Disregarding the literary merit of the volume, it does contain considerable information about many plain Americans over a span of 250 years. Moreover, while it may not be the best of the lot, it is exemplary of the products coming out of the wave of genealogical activity in the United States in the early years of the 20th Century. The complete title is: History of the Kuykendall Family since its Settlement in Dutch New York in 1646, With Genealogy as Found in Early Dutch Church Records, State and Government Documents, Together With Sketches of Colonial Times, Old Log Cabin Days, Indian Wars, Pioneers Hardships, Social Customs, Dress and Mode of Living of the Early Forefathers (Portland, Ore.: Kilham Stationery and Printing Company, 1919).

Content Description

The greater portion of the papers of George B. Kuykendall consist of notes, drafts, correspondence and photographs used in the preparation, publication, sale and distribution of the Kuykendall Family history. Additionally the collection contains Kuykendall’s personal correspondence for the years 1903-18. Also among his personal papers are several diaries which the chiefly concerned with travel, ca. 1900-1914.

The collection also contains drafts of approximately 200 essays, speeches or articles on religious, civic, moral and historical topics. Among the historical essays are several reminiscences of Kuykendall’s personal experiences in Oregon and Washington.

Administrative Information

Arrangement

The papers are arranged in three series: personal papers; essays, speeches and compositions; and Kuykendall family history.

Acquisition Information

The papers of George Benson Kuykendall, physician of Pomeroy, Washington were donated to the Washington State University Library in 1949 by Dr. Kuykendall’s son, Judge Elgin V. Kuykendall.

Detailed Description of the Collection

The following section contains a detailed listing of the materials in the collection.
Certificates, diplomas, medical licenses, 1872-1905
Box1
8 items.

Mortgages, notes, account books, 1890-1925
Box1
100 items.

Clipping scrapbooks re: G. B. Kuykendall, family members and close associates. Many are obituaries., 1885-1927
Box1
5 items.

Diaries and journals of eastern trips for medical training or family history research, 1903-1914
Box1
10 items.

Personal correspondence, 1903-1922
Box2
500 items.

Personal correspondence, 1923-1931
Box3
500 items.

History of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Pomeray.
Box4
1

M. E. Church history notes and correspondence, 1910
Box4
250 items.

Photographs used for M. E. Church history.
Box4
30 items.

**Religious essays and speeches.**
Box4

60 items.

**Civic, scientific and moral essays and speeches.**
Box5

100 items.

**History essays, 1900-1925**
Box5

**The Pioneers’ Retrospect (poetry)**
Box5

**Death of the Wisham Chief’s daughter**
Box5

**Notes on Enoch’s Secrets of the Pacific**
Box5

**Soft Breezes of Oregon (poetry)**
Box5

**Some recollections of Southern Oregon experiences**
Box5

**Addresses to the Garfield County Pioneer Association, 1911-1920**
Box5

**Pioneer reminiscences of other days in Garfield County**
Box5

**Fort Simcoe recollections**
Box5

**Incidents Occurring in Medical Practice at Fort Simcoe**
Box5
Reminiscences of Pioneer Medical Practice
Box5

Epidemic of Eubro-Spinal Meningitis in 1888
Box5

Pioneer Medical Experiences
Box5

Bedbug Experiences
Box5

Reminiscences of Home Life
Box5

Trip From Fort Simcoe to San Francisco
Box5

Reminiscences of Early Days at the Old Umpqua Academy
Box5

Teaching the Indian Children by Means of Charts and Pictures
Box5

Indian Customs and Legends (3 vols.)
Box5

Indian Cemetery at Cascades
Box5

Indian Subjects to write upon
Box5

Copy of Letter Written to Rev. T. F. Royal, together with other reminiscences., Feb. 13, 1905
Box5

Family history research, letters received, 1907-1918
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container(s)</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Alabama-Illinois</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Indiana-North Carolina</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>New-York-Tennessee</td>
<td>500 items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Texas-Wyoming</td>
<td>500 items.</td>
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**Family history research and sale, letters sent:**

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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>500 items.</td>
<td>1913-1916</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>500 items.</td>
<td>1916-1919</td>
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**Typescript transcripts of letters received re: family history, including some original letters and notes, 1907-1918**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Container(s)</th>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Alabama-Pennsylvania</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Tennessee-Wyoming</td>
<td>400 items.</td>
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</table>

**Clippings re: family history**

Box 13

250 items.
Notes and drafts for family history, 1910-1918
Box14-15
1000 items.

Engravings from family history illustrations, with notes on captions.
Box15
100 items.

Photoprints and negatives collected for family history (plus contact prints, 12-80), 1850-1914

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Container(s)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Box</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Scenes, mostly New York and West Virginia. 100 items.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Eastern members of Kuykendall Family 150 items.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Midwestern (including West Virginia) members of Kuykendall Family 100 items.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Southern members of Kuykendall Family 100 items.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Western members of Kuykendall Family 100 items.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Unidentified members of Kuykendall Family 75 items.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Photographs of George B. Kuykendall 25 items.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Photographs of Umpqua Academy 8 items.</td>
<td>1856</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Correspondence re: Kuykendalls in WWI.
Box18
200 items.

**Mailing lists.**

Box18

7 items.

**Testimonial letters re: family history, 1919-1920**

Box19

100 items.

**Letters received re: sale and distribution of family history, 1919-1925**

Box19

350 items.

**Genealogical charts. (oversize)**

Box20

50 items.

**Names and Subjects**

**Subject Terms :**
Frontier and pioneer life--Washington (State)--Garfield County
Overland journeys to the Pacific

**Personal Names :**
Kuykendall, George Benson, 1843-1931 --Archives
(creator)
Kuykendall, Elgin Victor. waps
(donor)

**Corporate Names :**
United States. Bureau of Indian Affairs. Yakima Agency

**Family Names :**
Kuykendall family

**Geographical Names :**
Pomeroy (Wash.)--History

**Occupations :**
Physicians--Washington (State)--Pomeroy--Correspondence

Finding aid prepared by MASC staff
2012

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George Benson Kuykendall Papers, 1881-1931
http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv72847