

Duncan-Packer Family Papers, circa 1900-1948

Overview of the Collection

Creator	Duncan, Troy Wallace, 1881-1948
Title	Duncan-Packer Family Papers
Dates	circa 1900-1948 1900 1948
Quantity	.4 linear feet
Collection Number	Collection 0860, MtBC, us (collection)
Summary	Primarily business records, letters, receipts, gas and oil leases, and other legal documents created or collected by the Troy Duncan or Erwin Packer families. Subjects include homesteading, Liberty county and communities therein, oil and gas exploration and leasing, and sheep and cattle ranching.
Repository	Montana State University Library, Merrill G. Burlingame Special Collections Montana State University-Bozeman Library Merrill G Burlingame Special Collections P.O. Box 173320 Bozeman, MT 59717-3320 Telephone: 406-994-4242 Fax: 406-994-2851 spcoll@www.lib.montana.edu
Access Restrictions	This collection is open for research.
Languages	English

Biographical Note

Troy Wallace Duncan was born in Missouri on October 22, 1881 and arrived in northern Montana after 1900. He received his mail at Hill Post Office just south of the Sweet Grass Hills. He worked for Laird Brothers as a camp tender for their sheep herders and his first day book gives entries for personal supplies he bought for the people along the route he traveled to the camps. Duncan married Helen Keith, a daughter of Ina R. Keith, the post mistress at the Alma Post office located in the Alma Cash Store east of the Sweet Grass Hills. Ina Keith was Scotch and had worked as a stewardess on an ocean liner between Liverpool and Cape Town. Her husband Jack left Scotland for the United States sometime before 1900 and drove a herd of cattle to Montana. That year he sent for his wife and in 1903 Helen and her sister joined their parents in Montana. Troy Duncan died on November 3, 1948.

Erwin M. Packer came to Sage Montana from Iowa in 1897 as a ranch hand. He established a homestead claim in 1908 and two years later worked as a locator for other would-be homesteaders. Packer raised and trained work horses on the homestead.

Wilhelm and Matilda Suckow came to the Dakotas from Germany prior to 1884. In that year Wilhelm became a missionary and had extended absences from home thereafter. When the adult Suckow children arrived in Montana, they located their homestead claims with a common corner where they could live adjacent to one another. Martha Suckow married Erwin M. Packer. Their daughter, Dorothy, married John Wallace Duncan in 1946. John was the son of Troy and Helen Duncan.

Content Description

Primarily business records, letters, receipts, gas and oil leases, and other legal documents created or collected by the Troy Duncan or Erwin Packer families. Subjects include homesteading, Liberty county and communities therein, oil and gas exploration and leasing, and sheep and cattle ranching. Minnie Paugh, the Special Collections Librarian in 1970, borrowed original family documents from Dorothy Packer Duncan and had them photocopied, and original photographs were used for the production of copy negatives. After she returned the documents, Paugh arranged them in folders that had no apparent sorting order other than family origin. The folders were then given a near complete item level listing. This order has been maintained and the folder contents below are listed as they were prepared by Paugh.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Original documents and photographs pertaining to the Troy Duncan and Erwin Packer families of Hill and Liberty Counties, Montana were loaned to Montana State University for copying by Dorothy Packer Duncan, Joplin, Montana in 1970. Following their reproduction, the original materials were returned to Duncan. This collection was reported to the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections in 1979 and assigned by them accession number 79-650.

Processing Note

This collection was processed 2016 August 25

Detailed Description of the Collection

Packer Family Accountt Book, circa 1912, circa 1913

Box-folder1/1

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/1		
	Packer	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	(Suckow Four Corners of homesteads adjoined)	
	Alfred's entries	
	Four Corners (Cora, Martha and Alfred) Ruben's household was separate	
	Mable's personal account	
	Martha's personal account	
	Rubin's personal account	

Erwin M. Packer

Box-folder1/2

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/2		
	Gildford Mercantile Company accounts (2 items)	1909-1910
	Andersch Brothers dealers in hides and furs	1913
	Thos. O'Hanlon Company, Chinook, machine parts letter	1914
	Fargo Seed House (seed orders)	1911
	Letter about an order from Sears, Roebuck and Company	1914

Erwin M. Packer

Box-folder1/3

(Sage, Montana)

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/3		
	Letter for the family round robin letter telling of the winter of 1912	1912
	Letter from Chester Trading Company	1914
	Bill from Great Northern	1913
	Deposits Security State Bank, Havre	1908
	Annual Report Security State Bank of Havre	1909
	A.W. Sims offered work to E.M. Packer (Oldham, Montana)	1908
	Purchase of hay by F.A. Fifer (Oldham, Montana)	December 1907
	Letters from Elmer Skinner at Laird, Montana	1908
	Letter from Mrs. Chas. Skinner trying to locate work as a cook	1909

Erwin M. Packer

Box-folder1/4

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/4		
	Authorization from T.P. Strode to skin out dead cattle (bad winter)	1907
	Authorization from C. R. Keller to skin out dead cattle (bad winter)	1907
	Strands Nursery (tree order)	1913

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	3 letters and 2 envelopes from First Bank of Chester also notes	1911
	Checks from First Bank of Chester	
	Deposit slips Security State Bank of Havre	
	Letter to locate a homesteader by E.M. Packer	
	Order to Piper Lumber Company of Joplin for supplies used as Hill County Road Supervisor	
	Letter from A.J. Jordan, Columbia Falls about lumber for church pews north of Rudyard	
	E.M. Packer's letter from Sage, Montana, to locate the owner of a brand	
	Alma is designated as a post office	

Erwin M. Packer

Box-folder1/5

Container(s)	Description
Box-folder	
1/5	
	Episode in his life in the writing of Martha Suckow Packer

Erwin M. Packer

Box-folder1/6

(Homestead Locator)

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/6		

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	Order to David C. Cook Publishing Company for Sunday school supplies	1913
	Hy Christansen payment of Packer bill at Gildford mercantile	1909
	Letter to Packer from Conrad Schimopf about the theft of a horse	1910
	Letter from H.L. Larson about a filing receipt on a homestead	1910

Wilhelm Suckow

Box-folder1/7

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/7		
	Letter in German from Wilhelm to wife Matilda	February 1884
	Account in Martha Suckow Packer's handwriting about Wilhelm Suckow's life	
	Letter from Wm. Suckow Letter from Cora	1917

Troy Duncan

Box-folder1/8

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/8		
	Daybook kept while he was a camp tender for Laird Brothers It shows the prices of supplies he bought for the people who lived along his route. The entry of September 1906 lists his assets and those of L.M. Sargent when they started their partnership venture raising sheep.	

Alma Post Office

Box-folder1/9

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/9		
	Register of Advances received on domestic money orders	1912-1924

Troy Duncan

Box-folder1/10

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/10		
	Letter from J.B. Newman of Shelby about the sale of sheep	October 4, 1934
	Letter from a O.E. Lehmes about purchase of feeder cattle	1934
	Birth and history of the Kevin oil field by Gordon Campbell	circa 1924
	Brochures of the Gordon Campbell Kevin Syndicate Annual Reports 1926 and 1927	1921
	Oil and Gas Lease signed by Troy and Helen Duncan with F.T. Ferdig (form is incomplete), other leases for 1930	1926

Troy Duncan

Box-folder1/11

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		

Container(s)	Description
1/11	
	Personal account book of Troy Duncan. The township plats were for his work as a locator, 1912-1914.

Troy Duncan

Box-folder1/12

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/12		
	Seed Liens	1922
	Letter from A. Ladenburg	1928
	Papers from the Sinclair Holding Company, specializing in Montana Loans papers locate and give the financial status of homesteads owned by Lynhague, Kreighbaum, Lattimer	
	Loan from the NY Life Insurance Company	1932
	Tax Assessment Liberty County against John Duncan of Alma for sheep	1925
	Oil and Gas Lease Troy Duncan to J.P. Hanson (incomplete)	1914
	Troy Duncan	
	Credit slip giving prices	1933
	Credit slips Chester Trading Company	1937
	Ina Keith obituary in the Liberty Company Newspaper	1944

2 letters from the Investor's Service Corporation about the Barzie and Maddock Leases for which he could not pay, 1928

Box-folder1/13

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/13		
	Peoples Oil Company articles of incorporation	1930
	LMR Oil Company of Shelby	1928
	S.J. Res. 20 766 Congress 1st Sec. 1934 with a letter from Burton K. Wheeler concerning legislation to cancel seed loans for crop yields of less than 5 bu an acre	
	Troy Duncan first mortgage by Johnson Van Sant Company of Minneapolis	1912
	Troy W. Duncan in acct. with Alma Cash Store	1915-1916

Troy Duncan

Box-folder1/14

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/14		
	Handwritten contract lease between Troy Duncan and Karl Rund	
	Drilling well map of the Sweet Grass and Liberty Counties, Montana	circa 1928
	Last will and testament of Troy Wallace Duncan and Helen Rose Duncan, Alma Post Office, Montana	November 28, 1933
	Information for prospective homesteaders	March 3, 1932
	Letter to Thomas F. Corbally to try to acquire oil rights under the stock-raising homestead law	1936

Copy photographic negatives

Box-folder1/15

Container(s)	Description	Dates
Box-folder		
1/15		
	#1. Suckow Family	
	#2. Alma Cash Store showing Mrs. Laird (mail carrier) Ina Keith, Helen Duncan, Tom and Troy Duncan	
	#3. Same as above from different view	
	#4. Mr. Keith and his stone boat to haul water—granddaughter at Alma	
	#5. E.M. Packer hauling wheat to Inverness	
	#6. E.M. Packer and Izra Suckow snubbing a horse	
	#7. N. Rudyard Evangelical Church	
	#8. N. Rudyard Evangelical Church	
	#9. Suckow family Christmas	
	#10. Hart-Parr Tractor used by Mr. Suckow for custom threshing and ground breaking, binding and plowing being done in one operation	
	#11. Hart-Parr Tractor	
	#12. Swimming picture—Sage Creek near Packer's Ranch	1930
	#13. Rome Farm home of Keith's in Scotland	
	#14. Jack Keith on horseback	
	#15. Keith home at Alma with little wash house	

Container(s)	Description	Dates
	#16. Jack and Alma Keith in buggy, Helen Duncan on horse at Keith house	
	#17. Wedding picture - Troy and Helen Duncan	
	#18. Troy Duncan's sheep in Jack Keith's shed at Alma	
	#19. Successful winter wheat crop	about 1938
	#20. Lexington car Troy Duncan bought when he sold his sheep	
	#21. Hay stack at Browning	
	#22. E.M. Packer pictures—Horse ranch homestead	
	#23. E.M. Packer pictures—Horse ranch homestead	
	#24. E.M. Packer pictures—Horse ranch homestead	
	#25. E.M. Packer pictures—Horse ranch homestead	
	#26. E.M. Packer pictures—Horse ranch homestead	
	#27. E.M. Packer pictures—Horse ranch homestead	

Names and Subjects

Subject Terms :

Frontier and pioneer life -- Montana -- Liberty County

Petroleum -- Prospecting

Ranching -- Montana

Sheep farming -- Montana

Personal Names :

Duncan, Troy W.

Packer, Erwin M.

Family Names :

Duncan family -- Archives

Packer family -- Archives

Suckow family

Geographical Names :

Montana -- History -- 20th century

Form or Genre Terms :

Business records

Correspondenc
Daybooks
Family papers
Legal documents

Kim Allen Scott, 2016