Register of the Lindley Family Papers, 1890-1928

Collection number: Mss184

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Biography
Thomas Morton Lindley, Sr. (1819-1896) was founder and proprietor of the firm of Lindley & Co. of Sacramento. Born in Indiana, he came to California seeking gold in 1849. In that year Lindley began the firm of Lindley & Booth which was succeeded by several other mercantile partnerships until the creation of Lindley & Co. (1869). Douglas A. (D.A.) Lindley, T.M. Lindley's eldest son became a partner in 1886. He subsequently incorporated the company, first as Lindley Mercantile Company (1904), then as Lindley and Company (1919).

The original Lindley & Company (1869-1928) was a wholesale grocer, tea importer and coffee roaster. Lindley and Co. became identified with "Cherub Brand Foods" and "Lindley's Motor Coffee," so named because its quality purportedly moved it rapidly from the grocer's shelf. Later, the Lindleys were involved in many additional enterprises including land sales, canal, railroad and transportation development and ranching in Sacramento, as well as land development in Yuma County, Arizona, through the Mohawk Canal and Improvement Company (ca. 1892-1901). The family owned a Red Bluff
farm from the time they entered the wholesale grocery business. Douglas Lindley later purchased Maxwell Ranch in Plumas County with his brother Morton (1911). Douglas' health began to fail around 1920 and, following his suicide (1928), his wife, Mary, sold the company. Mary B. Lindley (ca. 1867-1956), formerly Mary Denson, subsequently married William A. Briggs.

**Scope and Content**

This collection consists chiefly of the papers of D.A. Lindley and his wife, Mary B. Lindley. They include family correspondence, business documents (including deeds, bills of sale, advertising, minutes, articles of incorporation and stock certificates) and a few photographs. Most records of the wholesale grocery company date from 1920-1928. The Lindley's efforts to develop the Sacramento and Yolo Belt Line electric railway (1908-1912) are represented by three ledger books, including: the by-laws, noting incorporation of March 21, 1912; a stock ledger and record book (1908); and a board of directors minutebook (1908-1910).

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**BOX 1: LINDLEY FAMILY PAPERS**

1.1: STAFF RESEARCH FILE

1.2: CORRESPONDENCE

- S.C. Denson to his daughter, Mrs. D.A. Lindley, 4-27-06 [regarding SF Earthquake]
- "Mary (devoted daughter)" to Mrs. D.A. Lindley, 6-2-19

1.3: DEEDS--MOHAWK CANAL & IMPROVEMENT COMPANY, YUMA CO., ARIZ.

- Patent (deed) USA to Douglas A. Lindley, recorded Jan 27, 1892, General Land Office, Yuma County, Arizona
- Deed. Mohawk Canal and Improvement Company to Douglas A. Lindley. Recorded Dec. 11, 1901
- Deed T.M. Lindley to Douglas A Lindley and Leila J. Lindley. Recorded Nov. 7, 1892. Yuma Co., Arizona
- Deed. Mohawk Canal and Improvement Company to Frank G. Smith. June 9, 1891
- Deed. Frank G. Smith to Mrs. Leila J. Witherbee, Miss Helen Lindley, Mrs. Alice Reith, Mrs. Alice Lindley Hunt. Recorded March 17, 1896
- Deed Leila J. Witherbee, Mrs. Alice Reith, Miss Helen Lindley, Mrs. Mary Lindley Hunt. to Douglas A. Lindley. Dec. 25, 1896
- Deed. Mrs. Leila J. Witherbee, Mrs. Alice Ruth, Miss Helen Lindley, Mrs. Mary Lindley Hunt to Douglas A. Lindley, Leila J. Witherbee, Recorded Dec. 23, 1896
- Duplicate Receiver's Receipt. US Land Office, Tucson, Ariz to Thomas W. Huntington, Sept 20, 1890
- Deed. T.W. Huntington to D.A. Lindley. June 20, 1891
- Deed Roberts Forbes to Douglas A. Lindley. Nov. 14, 1891
- Mohawk Canal and Improvement Co. to Douglas A. Lindley Oct. 31, 1894 [for water in the Mohawk Canal]

1.4: CALIFORNIA LAND TRANSACTIONS

- H. H. Yard, Mining Engineer to D.A. Lindley, July 18, 1911. Recorded July 22, 1911 [land in the Butterfly District of Plumas County, California]
- Deed, H.H. Yard to DA Kindley, 160 Acres--Maxwell Ranch, July 18th, 1911
- Copy of extract on H.H. Yard, Mining Engineer letterhead., Plumas House, Quincy, Calif. [Lee demands addition to sale, note by Morton Lindley]
- H.H. Yard, Mining Engineer to D A. Lindley, July 18th, 1911.
- H.H. Yard to Morton Lindley, July 19, 1911 [regarding claim and suit of Lee holding up sale of land]
- H.H. Yard to Morton Lindley, July 17, 1911 [regarding claim and suit of Lee holding up sale of land]
- Deed made in 1849 by John A Sutter, Jr. [typescript copy]

1.5: SACRAMENTO-MOHAWK CO. PLAT OF LOT SURVEY, SACRAMENTO [Lots 3 and 4, 2nd, 3rd, K and L Streets, June 1923]

1.6: LINDLEY & COMPANY WHOLESALE GROCERS, SACRAMENTO
- "Grocer's Friend" 1926 [lists of grocery products, bulk quantities and costs; typescript with some printed pages & some holograph notes of price changes]
  - Price Changes: Cash and Carry Division Lindley & Co.
  - Sugar Change: Cash and Carry Division.
  - "Holiday Wants" [adv. card]
  - Statement & price changes, 11/1926.
  - #194. Sacramento, Calif. Nov. 19, 1925 [letter to customers regarding advertising of Liquid Sunshine]
  - Price of goods, 9-2 to 9-27 on Cherub Brand letterhead
  - Lindley & Company billing form with letter

1.7: LINDLEY & CO. DOCUMENTS
  - J. H. Gurnsey and Lillie E. Gurnsey to D.A. Lindley. Bill of Sale. May 29, 1918. $3079.00 for farm equipment and stock; $20,500.00 for land in Sacramento on K Street
  - Sale Mary B. Lindley, (President) and G.L. Brickford (Secretary) to J.T. Young (President) of Western States Grocery Co. 22 August 1928 for $170,056.00 for merchandise, groceries, stock, furniture, office equipment, warehouse equipment and machinery, automobiles and trucks

1.8: RED BLUFF FARM
  - Statement. April 18, 1918, Mr. D. A. Lindley Red Bluff Farm in Account with Lindley & Company. [July 15, 1917-Jan 1918, account sheet of expenses "on trips made to Red Bluff while working in the store"]

1.9: STOCK CERTIFICATES
  - American Timber Company. 20 shares to H.H. Yard. September, 1901
  - Sacramento and Yolo Belt Line (4 sheets) March 1908 and Sept. 1908 DA. Lindley

1.10: PHOTOGRAPHS
  - "Deep Water Shipping at Your Doorstep" [Aerial view of Sacramento River and Lake Washington]
  - K Street Property, c1923 [10 photos pasted on black scrapbook paper]

Box 2: SACRAMENTO MOHAWK CO.& YOLO BELT LINE LEDGER BOOKS
2.1: MINUTE BOOK OF THE SACRAMENTO MOHAWK COMPANY. DIRECTORS' MEETING, SACRAMENTO, CAL. JULY 3, 1905. [2 pp. used in this 150 pp. book; 2 loose pp. of holograph notes also found in vol.]
2.2: YOLO BELT LINE AND TERMINAL CO. BY-LAWS, incorporated March 21st, 1912 [Holograph notes on printed form; 4 pp.]
2.3: YOLO BELT LINE STOCK JOURNAL AND LEDGER, 1908 [stocks listed with "date, name, no. of certificate, no. of shares, left by, in whose name, signature"; incl. 3 pp. holograph notes in 76 pp. journal]
2.4: SACRAMENTO AND YOLO BELT LINE MINUTES, 1908-1910