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#### INTRODUCTION

Papers of Levin O. Duncan, blacksmith and farmer, and William O. Lowman, tanner and farmer, of Shelby County, MO, and families; correspondence from family and friends in Maryland, Virginia, Missouri, Ohio, Nebraska, and Illinois; ledgers; miscellaneous business receipts; and scrapbook of Shelby County happenings, 1902-1952. Kept by Ida Lowman.

#### DONOR INFORMATION

The papers were donated to the State Historical Society of Missouri by Jean Tyree Hamilton on 29 June 1984 (Accession No. 2528).

#### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

Levin O. Duncan, son of Milby and Sarah Duncan, was born in Worcester County, Maryland, July 31, 1814. At the age of 18, Levin Duncan learned the trade of blacksmithing. In 1836 he came to Shelby County, Missouri, as a blacksmith and soon became a farmer. He made Shelby County his permanent home, farming and raising livestock for over forty years. On March 2, 1842, Duncan married Irene Coard, formerly of Maryland; they had nine children. Levin Duncan died November 3, 1888.

William O. Lowman was born on November 13, 1815, in Augusta County, Virginia. He was a tanner and married Sarah Eagon (d. 1869) in 1835; they had four children. In 1856 he moved his family to Canton, Missouri, and then, permanently, to Shelby County in 1857. Lowman tanned, farmed and raised livestock. He was involved in spreading Methodism in Shelby County and helped establish Bacon, Lowman, Duncan, and Morris Chapels. He remarried in 1872 and died in 1900.

#### SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

These papers include correspondence from family and friends to, mainly, Levin O. Duncan and William O. Lowman from 1847 to 1902. The correspondents write generally from Maryland and Virginia, the respective home states of Duncan and Lowman. Topics include family and local happenings. Although the correspondence spans over half a century, it is limited due to the relatively small number of letters. The collection also includes the ledgers of Levin O. Duncan from 1853 to 1888 and William O. Lowman from 1852 to 1856 in Virginia and from 1873 to 1875 in Missouri. The Lowman ledger contains a scrapbook compiled by Lowman's granddaughter-in-law, Ida Lowman. It highlights family activities in Shelby County, 1902 to 1952, and contains miscellaneous clippings. There is one folder of photographs of Levin O. Duncan and Lowman family members.

Although limited in terms of size, the collection does give an idea about local conditions in Missouri, Maryland, and other locations where family members lived. Most of the correspondence, however, deals with family activities and members and will be

helpful to genealogists interested in the two families. For researchers interested in economic history, the ledgers and financial and legal papers will be useful.

#### FOLDER LIST

- f. 1-8 Personal Correspondence, 1847-1902, n.d. Letters from family and friends to mainly, Levin O. Duncan and William O. Lowman. The contents of these letters concentrate on family members' and friends' health and activities and general subjects such as crop conditions and weather. Arranged chronologically.
- f. 2 February-March, 1865. These six letters were written by John B. Lowman and William H. Duncan to family members. Lowman and Duncan, as did other Missourians, went to the Nebraska Territory to avoid the Union draft. These letters concern their stay, conditions in the territory, and the death of Lowman in Omaha, 18 March 1865. Of additional interest are Lowman's oath of allegiance and parole of honor, 1862, commutation tax receipt, 1863, and "Limits of Travel Extension," 1863.
- f. 9-12 Receipts and Financial Records, 1849-1900. Contains a variety of William O. Lowman's receipts and financial records. There are also a few Duncan family receipts. Arranged chronologically.
- f. 12 Levin O. Duncan Ledger, 1853-1888. This ledger contains a record of work performed for customers, names of many early Shelby County residents, and prices paid for merchandise and for labor.
- f. 13 Photographs, 1922-1945, n.d. Contains one photograph of Levin O. Duncan, six photographs of relatives of William O. Lowman, and photographs of the California earthquake of 1933.
- f. 14 Loose clippings from the scrapbook kept by Mrs. John B. Lowman.
- f. 15 Ledger of William O. Lowman covers the dates 1852-1856 in Virginia and 1873-1875 in Missouri and contains tanning and farming accounts. The remainder of the ledger includes scrapbook items, mainly obituaries, marriages, and other happenings in Shelby County collected by Ida Lowman.

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