



**Description & Finding Aid:
Douglas Duncan Fonds
CA OTAG SC095**

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Douglas Duncan fonds

Dates of creation:

1921–1971

Extent:

21 cm of textual records and graphic material

14 photographs : b&w ; 25 x 18 cm or smaller

3 drawings

Biographical sketch:

Douglas Moerdyke Duncan (1902–1968) was a Canadian art collector and dealer, book collector and director of the Picture Loan Society in Toronto. He was born in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and studied at the University of Toronto. From 1925 to 1928 he trained as a bookbinder of fine books in Paris, then returned to Toronto to open a studio. In 1936 he was a member of the founding committee of the Picture Loan Society and soon after its director. Over the next thirty years, his taste in selecting work for inclusion in the society's frequent exhibitions became increasingly influential. With his private income Duncan supported artists by purchasing their work, eventually amassing an important collection of Canadian art. After his death in Toronto in 1968, the collection was dispersed to public galleries across Canada, including over 600 works to the National Gallery in Ottawa.

Scope and content:

Fonds consists chiefly of correspondence to Douglas Duncan as director of the Picture Loan Society in Toronto between 1936 and 1966, and his personal correspondence with Norman Endicott and their friends in common during the 1920s. Also included are records of Canadian artist David Milne from the 1950s and British painter Robert 'Scottie' Wilson from about 1945 to 1970; both were clients of Douglas Duncan and friends of Norman Endicott.

Contains series:

1. Picture Loan Society correspondence
2. Duncan-Endicott correspondence
3. David Milne records
4. Scottie Wilson records

Custodial history:

Douglas Duncan's papers were bequeathed to his friend and executor Norman Endicott. After his death, Endicott's children inherited both Douglas's and Endicott's papers. His daughter Clare Endicott was their principal custodian and made the selection of letters and other materials donated to the Art Gallery of Ontario 2004/2005.

Notes:

Immediate source of acquisition:

Fonds was donated by the Endicott family in 2004 (Series 1) and 2005.

Language:

In English and French.

Restrictions on access:

None.

Terms governing use and reproduction / publication:

Various copyright holders. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain permission to publish any part of the fonds.

Associated material:

Records of the dispersal of Douglas Duncan's art collection by his sister Frances Duncan Barwick are held by the National Gallery of Canada Library & Archives. The Douglas Duncan Fonds at Library & Archives Canada contains records of his bookbinding activity. Other records are held by the University of Toronto Archives and the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library at the University of Toronto.

Related material:

The Art Gallery of Ontario Library acquired a selection of art books from the estate of Douglas Duncan in 1968. A list of these titles is in the administrative file for this fonds.

Provenance access points:

Duncan, Douglas, 1902–1968
Endicott, Norman, 1902–1979

SERIES 1: PICTURE LOAN SOCIETY CORRESPONDENCE**Dates of creation:**

[ca. 1935] – 1966

Extent:

5 cm of textual records and graphic material
2 photographs : b&w ; 7 x 12 cm and 25 x 18 cm
3 drawings

Administrative history:

The Picture Loan Society was established in Toronto in 1936 to exhibit, rent-out and sell contemporary Canadian art. Among its artist members were Carl Schaefer, Paul-Emile Borduas, Emily Carr, A.Y. Jackson, Fred Varley, Will Ogilvie, Lemoine Fitzgerald, Paraskeva Clark, Jack Nichols, André Bieler, Henri Masson, Kazuo Nakamura, Robert Hedrick, Robert 'Scottie' Wilson, Goodridge Roberts and David Milne, for whom PLS director Douglas Duncan was artistic agent from 1938. When Duncan died in 1968, the rooms occupied by the Society and some of its functions were taken over by The Picture Loan Gallery under the management of artist George Rackus.

Scope and content:

Series comprises correspondence to and from Douglas Duncan or the Picture Loan Society, principally from artists whom the PLS represented, including Borduas, Carr, Clark, Jackson, Schaefer, Varley and others. Also included are a photographic portrait of Duncan and two items of correspondence to him from the PLS office.

Notes:

One illustrated letter from Carl Schaefer is in extremely fragile condition and has been replaced by a photocopy in file 11.

Location: box 1

FOLDER/UNIT TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX/ FILE #
Paul-Emile Borduas	1951	1955	2 letters with lists of artworks and prices	1-1
Emily Carr	1938	1939	3 letters, draft letter, list of artworks with prices	1-2

FOLDER/UNIT TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX/ FILE #
Paraskeva Clark	1937	1939	5 letters, receipt for donation	1-3
Lillian Freiman	1942	1943	4 letters	1-4
E.R. (Bob) Hunter	1941	1944	3 letters	1-5
A.Y. Jackson	[19--]	[19--]	4 letters	1-6
Louis Muhlstock	1937	1942	18 letters, note on card	1-7
Pegi [Nicol MacLeod]	[ca. 1939]	[ca. 1939]	2 letters	1-8
Will [Ogilvie]	1939	1939	1 letter	1-9
Goodridge Roberts	[19--]	[19--]	3 letters	1-10
Carl Schaefer	[ca. 1938]	[ca. 1945]	11 letters, 3 drawings	1-11
"Slade"	[ca. 1941]	[ca. 1941]	3 letters	1-12
Jori Smith	[193-?]	[193-?]	2 letters	1-13
Fred Varley	1942	1943	2 letters	1-14
John Walsh	[ca. 1943]	[ca. 1943]	4 letters, note on card	1-15
Scottie Wilson	[194-]	[194-]	2 letters	1-16
Miscellaneous	1939	1966	4 letters (correspondents include Lawren Harris, Sam Borenstein, Hugh Cronyn); 2 receipts for payments by Norman Endicott; 1 newspaper clipping about Wyndham Lewis fleeing a fire at the Tudor Hotel, Toronto in 1943; 1 photograph of unidentified man with paintings; 1 postcard from S. Borenstein	1-17
Madeline ____ (PLS assistant)	1940	1940	3 letters Includes 1 letter from Gordon Webber.	1-18
Douglas Duncan portrait	[1939?]	[1939?]	Photographic portrait of Douglas Duncan by Eugene Haanel Cassidy (signed)	1-29

SERIES 2: DUNCAN-ENDICOTT CORRESPONDENCE

Dates of creation:

1921-1929

Extent:

12 cm of textual records and graphic material
1 photograph : b&w ; 11 x 8 cm

Biographical sketch:

Norman Jamieson Endicott (1902–1979) was a Canadian scholar of English literature and professor at the University of Toronto. He was born in Leshan, China, son of Methodist missionary parents. His family returned to Canada in 1910. He studied at the University of Toronto (1920–1924) and Oxford University (1924–1927) where he was a Rhodes Scholar. Endicott and Douglas Duncan met in 1918 and were students together at Victoria College in the University of Toronto. Norman Endicott married Katherine Elizabeth (Betty) Elliott in 1928. He died in Toronto in 1979.

Scope and content:

Series comprises correspondence between Duncan Douglas and Norman Endicott, with a few letters to and from Betty Elliott and Enid Endicott (Norman's sister, and friend of Betty). The letters cover the period of the 1920s, including their university years, Duncan's bookbinding training in Paris, his travels with Endicott and friends in England, and the opening of his bookbinding studio when he returned to Toronto in 1928.

Notes:

In the listing below, names of the correspondents have been abbreviated. DMD is Duncan Moerdyke Douglas; NJE is Norman Jamieson Endicott; KEE is Katherine Elizabeth Elliott. Duncan referred to Endicott as 'Scholar' while he was at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar.

The letters were arranged by Clare Endicott in a chronological sequence. In the absence of a post-marked or written date, her designation has been followed.

Location: boxes 1, 2

FOLDER/UNIT TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX/ FILE #
NJE to DMD	1921	1921	2 letters to Daytona Beach, Florida from Toronto with 1 fragment, no addresses	1–19
DMD to NJE	1922	1922	8 letters to Toronto from New York*, Rome, Naples, Chamonix, Paris, Biervliet (Netherlands) and aboard <i>RMS Mauretania</i> ; also 1 fragment (no addresses); *One includes instructions for the dispersal of his books in case of death	1–20
NJE to DMD	1922	1922	3 letters to Naples, London (England) and Interlaken (Switzerland) from Toronto	1–21
DMD to NJE	1923	1923	3 letters within Toronto (?)	1–22
NJE to DMD	1923	1923	5 letters to Lake Rosseau (Ont.) and within Toronto	1–23
DMD to NJE,	1924	1924	17 letters, from Mille Roches (Ont.), and within Toronto; letter to NJE (in Vienna) from a British from Toronto customs official	1–24
DMD to NJE	[ca. 1924]	[192-]	7 letters (whole or partial) from Muskoka (Ont.) and England Included is a typed enclosure with quotes on several authors from Philip Guedella's <i>A Gallery</i> (Anatole France, John Galsworthy, Proust, Kirriemuir & Bernard Shaw)	1–25
NJE to DMD	1924	1924	11 letters to Toronto, Paris and Mille Roches from Toronto, Mortimer's Point, Ont. and Oxford (England) 1 postcard from Warwick, England	1–26
DMD to NJE	1925	1925	9 letters to Oxford from Toronto 1 postcard; 1 photograph of a man and woman	1–27

FOLDER/UNIT TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX/ FILE #
DMD to KEE	1925	1925	2 letters to Betty Elliot (nicknamed 'Heggs' in both letters) in New York	1-28
KEE to DMD	1925	1925	3 letters from New York	2-1
NJE to DMD	Jan 1925	June 1925	5 letters from Oxford	2-2
NJE to DMD	July 1925	Dec 1925	14 letters to Paris from Oxford, Edinburgh, London, Vienna, Chatham (Ont.)	2-3
NJE to DMD	Jan 1926	June 1926	9 letters; 1 postcard to Paris, London from Oxford, London	2-4
NJE to DMD	July 1926	Dec 1926	9 letters to Paris from Oxford and London. 1 letter includes a pencil drawing	2-5
DMD to NJE	1926	[1927?]	4 dated letters; 3 undated letters, Paris to Oxford	2-6
DMD to Isabel Acheson	1926	1926	1 letter from Paris	2-7
Travel expenses	[1927]	[1927]	2 sheets with lists of expenses and payment, in DMD's hand. In the summer of 1927 Douglas, Betty Elliott, Norman and Enid Endicott travelled in England and Europe.	2-8
NJE to DMD	1927	1929	11 letters; 3 postcards to Paris (except 1 to Plymouth, England) from Oxford, London, Cherbourg, La Roche-en-Ardenne (Belgium) and Toronto	2-9
DMD to NJE	1927	1927	6 letters to Toronto (?) from Paris	2-10
KEE to DMD	1927	1927	2 letters to Tours and Paris from New York	2-11
DMD to NJE	[1927?]	[1927?]	2 letters (no addresses)	2-12
NJE to DMD	1928	1928	3 letters to Paris from Toronto	2-13
Telegram	1929	1929	1 telegram to DMD from the French telegraph service	2-14

SERIES 3: DAVID MILNE RECORDS

Dates of creation:

1946-1954

Extent:

0.5 cm of textual records
10 photographs : b&w ; 10 x 12 cm

Scope and content:

Series comprises correspondence from Canadian painter David Milne (1882-1953) to Norman Endicott's wife Katherine Elizabeth Endicott; a radio script for the CBC on Milne by Norman Endicott; and photographs of Milne taken in his studio in 1946.

Notes:

An explanatory note by Clare Endicott for the undated Milne letter is included.

Location: box 2

FOLDER/UNIT TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX- FILE #
David Milne	1946	1954	2 letters, one undated in Milne's hand and one (July 7, 1953 from Bancroft, Ont.) dictated and signed 1 radio script (6 p.) 10 photographs of Milne in his studio with artworks, in envelope addressed to Douglas Duncan with notation on envelope "Wyb's set"	2-15

SERIES 4: SCOTTIE WILSON RECORDS**Dates of creation:**

1944-1971

Extent:

3.5 cm of textual records and graphic material

1 photograph : b&w ; 21 x 15 cm

Scope and content:

Series comprises correspondence to Norman Endicott, exhibition notices, and other records of British "Outsider" artist Robert 'Scottie' Wilson. Included is a photograph of the artist.

Notes:

'Scottie' Wilson (1888-1972) was born Louis Freeman in Glasgow, Scotland. He stayed in Canada ca. 1932-1945 and then lived in England. He was associated with Douglas Duncan and the Picture Loan Society chiefly during 1942-1945 and corresponded with Norman Endicott up to the time of his death in London at the age of 84.

Location: box 2

FOLDER/UNIT TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX- FILE #
Scottie Wilson artworks, exhibitions	1944	1971	Notices of exhibitions, price lists or related materials; an essay or script (4 p.); handwritten notes on artworks; poem (printed, 1 p.); 1 photograph of the artist (1965?)	2-16
Scottie Wilson correspondence	1945	1968	9 letters (1 to Betty Endicott) in various hands, signed by Scottie Wilson 4 note-cards with greetings in various hands, signed by Scottie Wilson 3 letters from Mervyn Levy of <i>The Studio</i> magazine (London, England) 1 letter from Sir Roland Penrose	2-17

FOLDER/UNIT TITLE	START DATE	END DATE	CONTENTS	BOX- FILE #
Scottie Wilson clippings	1946	1969	Articles, etc. from newspapers, magazines. Included are 2 copies of the June, 1946 issue of <i>Horizon</i> , with reproductions of pen drawings by Scottie Wilson.	2-18