

## **Fort Baker/Porter Family Collection**

### **Collection Number**

1999.18

### **Contact Information**

The Library, Special Collections  
Humboldt State University  
One Harpst Street  
Arcata, California 95521

### **Processed By**

Edie Butler, MA, CA; William Rich; Karen Raskin

### **Date Collection Processed**

2009

### **Language**

English

### **Collection Creator**

Porter Family

### **Dates Covered by Collection**

ca. 1875 - 1912

### **Size of Collection**

1 cubic foot

### **Abstract**

The day-by-day farm and homestead activities of the Porter Family's large sheep ranch in southeast Humboldt County, CA are detailed in business receipts, daybooks, correspondence and a small number of photographs. The activities recorded in this collection took place in Eureka, Fort Baker, Hydesville, laqua and other areas of rural Humboldt County.

### **Access**

The collection is open for use by appointment.

## **Copyright**

Copyright has not been assigned to the Humboldt State University Library.

## **Acquisition Information**

The collection was gifted by Alice Porter in 1993. She also donated the Save The Redwoods League - Humboldt County Group Collection, at an earlier time (1999.16).

## **Scope and Content of the Collection**

These accumulated materials give day by day details about activities and expenses of the Porter Family ranch in southeastern Humboldt County in the late 19th century and the early 20th century through day books, letter press books, photographs, and a wide variety of business receipts. The collection includes three bundles of business receipts, ten day books, two letter copying books, and 31 photographs.

## **Arrangement of the Collection**

As processing began it was apparent that groupings of like materials had already been made. That arrangement has been maintained and forms four series: Receipts, Letterpress copy books, Day Books, and Photographs.

Where possible the materials have been arranged in chronological order. The materials are housed in 14 folders in one records storage box. The container list was compiled by Karen Raskin and William Rich in conjunction with their search for information relevant to studies being done in the Fort Baker area.

## **Container List**

Box 1

Series: Receipt Bundles

- 1-9 The three receipt bundles are for the years 1897, 1903, and 1905-1906. Each bundle was tied together.
  - 1905-06 Receipt Bundle: Groceries Receipts, Lighting Receipts, Telephone Bills, Hardware Receipts, Medical Bills, Foundry Receipt, Bank Deposit Receipts, Freight Receipt
  - 1903 Receipt Bundle: Groceries Receipts, Scale Receipt, Newspaper Subscription, Medical Bills, Laundry Receipt, Drug Store Receipt, Contractors Bill, Jewelry Receipt, School Books Receipt, Candy / Ice Cream Receipt, Music Lessons Receipt
  - 1897 Receipt Bundle: Groceries Receipts, Lighting Receipts, Telephone Bills, Bank Receipts, Personal Loan Receipts, Steam Shopping Receipt,

Livestock Freight Receipts, Odd Fellow Membership Receipt, Poll Tax,  
Ranch Worker Boarding Tally

Series: Letterpress Copy Books

- 10-11 Letters July 1909 - June 1910. Letters subjects include:
  - Misc. business - Personal check letters; wool sales, land rental tally; land lease; land purchases; purchase of hunting dogs (puppies) sent up from Santa Paula; letters to a disinfecting solution company; refusal to pay for goods damaged during freight; cattle sales; land for cattle exchange; wage checks and explanation of wages; grain purchases; horse purchase; sale of Hydesville store; regarding squatters on Ft. Baker Ranch, reference to sending squatters to Round Valley Reservation.
  - Labor wanted - sheep shearers, hunters (to protect flock), herders and cook.
  - Personal Letters- Written to "Friend Jack", inquiring of family, to "Dear Auntie" regarding estate of deceased family member, and "Dear Lizzie" regarding land and business dealings.
- Letters June 1910 - December 1911. Letters subjects include:
  - Misc. business - Personal check letters; wool sales, land rental tally; land lease; land purchases, purchase of automatic sheep shearing machine; letters to a disinfecting solution company regarding bathing the animals to reduce "scab"; fence construction; oat and wheat grain purchase.
  - Labor wanted - sheep herder employment (references to non English speaking herders from Berkeley).
  - Personal Letters - written to an uncle in Palo Alto regarding estate of deceased family member. Purchase of fish hooks for the ranch.

Series: Day Books (1875-1896), 11 items

- 12
  - 1875 - No Cover; entries include taxes, building materials, and parcel descriptions.
  - 1884 - "Pacific Coast Diary" Blank.
  - c. 1885 - "Fine Groceries; Return to Christy and Wise"; taxes, assessments.
  - c. 1885 - No Cover; building floor plans.
  - 1894-1896 - "Iaqua May 1894"; Lists names of workers on ranch
  - Five other day books with few or no legible entries; 1884-1896.
  - Price List for Geo. Keller Mouldings, Mirrors, and Picture Frames; 1877.

Series: Photographs, 31 items

- 13 - Identified Photos
- Five of the photographs depict people engaged in activities and landscapes/buildings. The other photographs are formal portraits.
- Labeled photos are listed below:
  - Edith Porter, 9 yrs.; 1710 E St.
  - T.M. Brown
  - Fort Baker? / Gift of Alice Porter
  - Robert D. Porter (Dollison)
  - Tom Sweasey's and Robert Porter's Stable / Hydesville
  - Tom Smith was R. Porters bookkeeper for many years
  - Theo Porter-Age 17 / Taken in Front of the Porter Store Hydesville
  - Grocers Picnic 1912 (Samoa?)
  - Constance at 5 years
  - North Pacific Steamship (with horse, loaded wagon, and driver)
- 14 - Unidentified Photos

### **Subject Headings**

Humboldt County (Calif.) -- History

Ranch life – California – Humboldt County

Agriculture – California – Humboldt County