

A Guide to the David Ross Papers, 1813, 1822

David Ross Papers, 1813, 1822
1813, 1822

A Collection in the Library of Virginia 37815
Library of Virginia
2002

History

Processed by: Alex Lorch
Funding: Web version of the finding aid funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Title Statement

A Guide to the David Ross Papers, 1813, 1822

Subtitle: Ross, David, Papers, 1813, 1822

Collection: 37815

Author: Alex Lorch

Sponsor: Web version of the finding aid funded in part by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Publication Statement

File size: 2 KB

Date: © 2002 By the Library of Virginia.

Publisher: Library of Virginia

[Conditions of Use](#)

Profile Description

Creation: Machine-readable finding aid derived from Marc record. Created by Renee M. Savits 4 May 2002

Language Usage: Description is in English

Revision Description

Feb 14, 2004 PUBLIC "-//Library of Virginia//TEXT (US::Vi::vi00317::A Guide of the David Ross Papers, 1813,1822)//EN" "vi00317.xml" converted from EAD 1.0 to 2002 by v1to02.xsl (sy2003-10-15).

Feb 27, 2004 converted to conform to eadVIVA.dtd by vivastrict.xsl

2014-01-08 Converted to schema conforming EAD by dtd2schema.vh.xsl.

Descriptive Summary

Accession number

37815

Language

English

Physical Characteristics

3 pages

Physical Location

Personal papers collection, Acc. 37815

Repository

Library of Virginia

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Acquisition Information

Purchased 23 June 2000.

Preferred Citation

David Ross. Papers, 1813, 1822. Accession 37815, Personal papers collection, The Library of Virginia, Richmond, Virginia.

Biographical/Historical Information

David Ross was one of the richest of all planters in Virginia in the 1780's. Born in Scotland about 1739, Ross immigrated to the United States in the mid-1750's. By the time of the American Revolution, he had established himself as a leading tobacco merchant and shipowner in Richmond and Petersburg. Ross also owned and managed a large plantation at Point of Fork at the junction of the James and Rivanna Rivers. By the late 1780's, when his wealth reached its peak, he had amassed over 100,000 acres of land scattered across twelve Virginia counties. Ross also owned more horses than anyone in the state; owned the second most amount of cattle; and claimed ownership of 400 slaves, the fifth highest amount in the state.

Early in the war, Ross had to defend himself against loyalist charges; though, he successfully subverted all attempts to slander his name, in part by supporting patriot troops financially. In late 1780 Ross began a tenure as commercial agent for Virginia, a position whose responsibility was the supply of state troops with clothing, weapons, and ammunition. He drew heavily upon his own wealth to suffice the troops' demands. In April 1782 Ross resigned his post in order to take a position in the Virginia General Assembly. After the war Ross expanded his investments and developed the most important industrial property he had acquired during the war years, the Oxford Iron Works. This pig-iron juggernaut was located south of the James River eight miles from Lynchburg. In fact he had acquired the Works around 1776 and began almost immediately to exploit the wartime demand for iron. By the early 1780's, Thomas Jefferson estimated that the Works produced more pig iron than any other industrial furnace in Virginia. Yet for several reasons Ross, the Works, and his estate fell on hard times in the early 1800's. The provisions of his will and the necessity of settling his debts were the prime factors behind the sale of the Oxford slave force following Ross' death in 1819.

Scope and Content Information

This collection includes an agreement (1 p.), a receipt (1 p.), and a property list (1 p.) pertaining to David Ross (1739-1817) of Albemarle, Botetourt, Buckingham, Campbell, Cumberland, Fluvanna, Goochland, Mecklenburg Counties, and Richmond, Virginia. Agreement, 28 Jan. 1813, between David Ross' son, David Ross, Jr. (1768-1857), and Walter Lloyd Fontaine (1787-1860) for the purchase of two mules. Receipt, 1 Feb. 1822, issued by Robert Hill for funeral services rendered and payed for by Walter Lloyd Fontaine and George M. Payne (b. 1768), executors of David Ross. List, n.d., of 22 slaves and 4 horses appraised by Buckingham County Court commissioners following the death of David Ross in 1819. For related material see Acc. 37824.