

A Guide to the David Probert Papers 1863-1871

David Probert Papers 1863-1871
1863-1871

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History

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Descriptive Summary

Accession number
10776

Language
English

Physical Characteristics
There are 10 items in this collection.

Repository
Special Collections, University of Virginia Library

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions.

Use Restrictions

See the [University of Virginia Library's use policy](#).

Acquisition Information

This collection was purchased from Charles Apfelbaum of Valley Stream, New York, on August 10, 1988.

Preferred Citation

David Probert Papers, 1863-1871, Accession #10776, Special Collections Dept., University of Virginia Library, Charlottesville, Va.

CORRECTED SEQUENCE OF SELECTED ENTRIES IN THE 1864 DIARY OF DAVID PROBERT

Biographical/Historical Information

David Probert (1836?--?) resided in Jersey City and Patterson, New Jersey. He was employed in Tennessee by the Quartermaster Department of the District of Nashville as a carpenter from January 31 to April 1, 1864. Probert received an honorable discharge and eventually was hired by the Bridge Department of the United States Military Railroads in Alexandria, Virginia, on May 4, 1864 at the rate of \$2.40 per day. During the period of his diary Probert was employed primarily at Alexandria and City Point. Accidentally injured in the leg on May 18, he resigned in October, 1864 to return to his home for recuperation. On November 21, 1864 he was hired by the Atlantic and Great Western Railroad Company.

Scope and Content Information

This collection consists of ten items, 1864-1869, a manuscript diary and miscellaneous papers pertaining to David Probert of Patterson, New Jersey, a carpenter employed by the United States Military Railroads in Virginia during the Civil War. The diary itself is a small bound volume ("Diary 1864") of approximately forty pages. Researchers should note that several entries were not recorded on the appropriate daily page; a sequence guideline has been appended to this guide.

The diary's entries are for the period of May 2 to September 1, 1864. The entries (which are brief due to space limitations inherent with the volume) discuss Probert's work and off-duty activities near or in Alexandria, Falmouth, Bell Plains, City Point, Mill Point, Fort Monroe, Aquia Creek, Petersburg, and the Appomattox River. He also mentions structures for he was assigned to repair (Long Bridge, Potomac Creek Bridge, Weldon Railroad) and the battles of Globe Tavern [also known as Weldon Railroad or Six Mile House] and the Petersburg Mine Explosion [the battle of the Crater].

Probert describes his accident (May 18), burials of Union soldiers (June 5 & 18), the arrival of the famous mortar "Dictator" (July 7), the murder of a soldier by another (July 10), reactions to Jubal Early's Washington Raid (July 13 & 14), an explosion at City Point caused by Confederate sabotage (August 9), life in Alexandria and City Point, and construction work such as boat building (June 8). There are also references to blacks (May 16; July 3 & 9), Confederate attacks (August 4, 9 & 25), Union Generals Ulysses S. Grant (July 3 & 4), Philip Sheridan (June 28), and George Meade (July 13 & 28), a Lee Tuttle of the 2nd Ohio Cavalry (August 6), and his friends and members of his family. He comments on the prices he paid for boots, breakfast at Fort Monroe, watermelon, and a rubber blanket (June 16; July 20 & 28; August 27). A slightly more detailed recounting of the August 9, 1864 explosion at City Point may be found on the final two pages of the diary.]

Unrelated entries, 1864-1869, usually not in diary form, pertain to various accounts, expenditures, names and addresses; there are notations for stud activities of bulls, the cost of hay obtained for a church, hog killing, butter and milk production, prices for carpentry supplies, lists of letters sent and received, and similar miscellaneous notes.

The remaining nine pieces are comprised of two receipts and a letter (November 3, 1863) concerning transactions between Probert and the Adams Express Company; a certificate of enrollment from the provost marshal's office in Nashville bearing a physical description of Probert; his honorable discharge which qualified him for transportation at half-fare (April 1, 1864); his oath of allegiance (May 4, 1864); a pass for him and five others to visit Petersburg (August 7); a permit which allowed him to travel on U. S. military railroads (October 14 1864); and, a 1871 obituary published in the *Toledo Blade* concerning the death of his father, Thomas, in Sylvania, Ohio.

