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Amanda Jane Robertson diaries

Title: Amanda Jane Robertson diaries
Collection No: MSS.412
Creator: Amanda Jane Robertson (1840-1922)
Extent: 0.25 cubic feet
Inclusive Dates: 1864-1899

Abstract: The collection consists of two manuscript diaries covering the period May 1864 to December 1865, written by Amanda Jane Robertson (1840-1922), a young woman from Johnsons Grove, in western Crockett County, Tennessee.

Donor: Purchased from Charles Apfelbaum, June 2001.
Processed by: James E. Montague, January 2002; Gerald Chaudron, July 2014.
Access: Open to all researchers.
Language: English
Preferred Citation: Amanda Jane Robertson diaries, Preservation and Special Collections Department, University Libraries, University of Memphis.

Publication date: July 2014

Biographical information

Amanda Jane Robertson was born on October 7, 1840, near Johnsons Grove, Crockett County, Tennessee, the daughter of Gabriel A. (1816-1904) and Millie White Robertson (1816-1897). She met James Ransom Worrell (1845-1916) in 1865 and they were married on January 2, 1866. Worrell was born in Davidson County, Tennessee, and served in Company I, Captain E.S. Elliott's Company, of the 14th Tennessee Cavalry during the Civil War. His leg was amputated below the knee on January 18, 1866.

In 1869 the Worrells were living on the Patterson place and James was working as a miller. The couple had six children, including three sons—only Noah Turner (1866-1870) survived beyond birth—and three daughters: Mary Caroline (1869-1940), Maria Jane (Jennie) (b. 1879), and Jimmie (1885-1905). In 1900 James was a merchant and operated a saw mill. When her husband died in 1916, Amanda Worrell was living in Bells, Crockett County, Tennessee. She died in 1922.

Scope and contents

This collection consists of two manuscript diaries covering the period May 1864 to December 1865, written by Amanda Jane Robertson, a young woman from Johnsons Grove, in western Crockett County, Tennessee. There are a total of 117 pages with entries about her everyday life during and after the Civil War. She tells of her household duties and spinning and weaving, going to church on Sundays, and the day-to-day happenings in her town. When she mentions the war itself, it is often news she has obtained from neighbors such as noting soldiers passing by with some stopping in for a meal, the winding down of the war and the death of President Lincoln. The war came closest to her when her brother was imprisoned briefly in late 1864.

Folder 1 contains the 1864 volume. Folder 2 contains the second volume which covers the year 1865 but also contains some entries from 1866 when Amanda Jane married James Worrell, to 1899, and there are entries by other people. Some miscellaneous material on the family is also included in Folder 2. Folder 3 contains a notebook—author unknown—containing a handwritten transcript of the first few pages of the 1864 diary, and some notes.

Subject terms

SUBJECTS:

Johnsons Grove (Tenn.)

United States—History—Civil war, 1861-1865—Personal narratives.

NAMES:

Worrell, Amanda Jane, 1840-1922.
Worrell, James Ransom, 1845-1916.

Inventory

Box 1

Folder 1. Diary, 1864 May 1-December 31.

Excerpts:

May 26: "4 soldiers tuck Breakfast here this morning and after Noon 4 more past by..."

June 4: "...the Ware is yet a going on and I dont see eny prospect of peas yet But I am in hops that peace Will be mad one tim more and that our friends Will return a gaine"

June 7: "heard to day that Johnsons armye Was badley cut to peases but I am in hopse that it is falce I heard to day that J. M. Was kild and it makes me feel vury solom on this ocasion but I do hope and trust in the lord that may be folce

June17: "heard to day that forest has Whipe the yankes a gaine With a considerble lose."

June 18: "...heard to day that capten hicks is in the nabor hood"

June 23: "Mr Track is in this nabor hood conscripten men and taken them to diersburg the nabor hood is in a gradeel of confusion and no prospect of peese as yet"

June 29: "...the dark shads of a nother nite is huvring over us and the War is yet going, on and no porospect of times geting eney beter yet We can hear all most evry day that our friends are falling ops(?) on the rit and on the left it is a so solom thot"

July 28: "I have lerned to day that thare is a grat meney soldiers in the nabor hood, oh this is and offle time Just reflect for a moment Whare is the young men & mared men of this nabor hood gon some in fair distent lands"

August 20: "heard last nit bad news last nit from our friends in Johnsons army Some ded & some Wonded oh a solom time"

September 22: "the people in this nabor Hood is vury much confused at this time on the a count of the malishey beeing orderd out I doo hope and Pray that Wee may have pees"

October 6: "a grat meney reports but nothing sertan some thinks the yankees is comen & it mei bee so I can not tell. I hop time Wont get no Worse"

October 16: "coostmon and his men Went throu the nabor hood to day a gradeel of confusion in the nabor hood at this time"

October 22: "Som say that forest is comen in this nabor hood & I think that We Will have a gradeel of troble in heare if he does"

November 1: "some soldiers has binn hear to day"

November 19: "Capten Hicks is in the nabor hood some say that he is going to conscripten"

December 15: "bad News to day Brother is in the gard hous at Paducah"

December 19: "Pa started to paduca this morning but hee got news that morning that brother Wos out of prison and be come backe"

Folder 2. Diary, 1865 January 1-December 31. Includes some later entries, 1866-1899, and some loose notes, 1896-1906.

Excerpts:

March 4: "Meney good friends have binn separated since this Wicked and this evell Wore commenced"

April 14: "heard to day that the south wos whiped and I am sory for it but I wont this ware to end some time if it is going to end a tol"

April 18: "it has been reported all throu the nabor hood that peese Will soon be made I hoop With all of my hart that it may bee so peese is one of the gratest things"

April 19: "heard to day that leecon was ded"

April 20: "heard to day that the yanks was at Brownsville I am a fraid we are a going to have troble"

April 27: "heard that the yankees was at friendship in dyer co"

May 1: "The dark wor cloud is yet hurving a round us yett our contry sill mornes and grones at evry border we have looked foured for peese a long time but no prospect of peese yet as I see I am a fraid this wore Will gou on a long time yet"

May 6: "heard to day that the yankes was in brounsville"

May 29: "Mr. John grigory returned from Memphes this evning he went to bee paroled a gradeel of talk a bout the niggrous being freed at this time & I am a fraid troble has Just comenced in this nabor hood"

June 17: "some yanks leave to day on their way to brounsville"

August 1: "a bigge nigger barbecue to day at brounsville"

August 7-13: talks about the big religious "meeting"

December 24: "My self and Mr Woorll had a conversation this evening on matrimony all thou things was note dissided exackly but will bee in a shorte time"

December 31: "...I mete Mr Worls me and him had a few words for our laste un till Tuesday it is the day set for us to gete married"

Folder 3. Notebook: Incomplete handwritten transcription of 1864 diary, author unknown.
Notes, author unknown.