

Guide to Dr. David M. Anderson journal and daybook, 1874-1891

Summary Information

Collection No.:	MS 2022-089
Title:	Dr. David M. Anderson journal and daybook
Inclusive Dates:	1874-1891
Author:	Carolyn Friedrich, Margaret Deitzer and Nancy Martin
Repository:	Peters Township Public Library 616 East McMurray Road McMurray, PA 15317
Creator:	David M. Anderson
Extent:	2 boxes (2 bound journals)
Language of materials:	All materials are in English.
Abstract:	Dr. David M. Anderson was a physician in Peters Township in the late 19 th century. This collection consists of a journal and a daybook created by Anderson from 1874 through 1891 as part of the recording keeping for his medical practice. The journal documents the households he treated and the fees he charged. The daybook records the amounts and nature of payments to Anderson for his medical services.

Biography/History

Dr. David Miller Anderson was born in Beaver County, Pennsylvania on November 30, 1837. He died February 16, 1903 at age 65 at his home in Venetia, PA. Dr. Anderson was a well-known physician in the Peters Township area.

During the early days of the California Gold Rush (circa 1848), Anderson accompanied his father to California and remained there for about five years. He then moved to Chile, where he was general manager of a flour mill owned by an English syndicate. He returned to the United States at the start of the Civil War, enlisted in February 1864, and served as an active medical student at Camp Curtin, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

Anderson next studied medicine in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and was commissioned as an Assistant Surgeon of the 12th Regiment of U. S. Colored Infantry. Following his honorable discharge in June 1865, he attended Bellevue Medical College in New York City and graduated circa 1866. Shortly thereafter, Anderson moved to Peters Township, Pennsylvania and began to practice medicine, along with his brother-in-law, Dr. C. W. Townsend. The two were among the earliest physicians in Peters Township.

Anderson married Charity Wright, daughter of Reverend Joseph Wright, circa 1867. The couple lived on land they inherited from her father and moved into Charity's childhood home on the property. There, they raised two children. Their son, Alexander Hopkins Anderson, became an attorney and served as a soldier in the Philippines during the Spanish-American War. Their daughter, Elizabeth Eleanor Anderson, married David Rees. Rees worked for Anderson as a mine supervisor and later took over his coal mining company.

Around 1880, Anderson opened and operated a coal mine in the village of Venetia, PA. The Pennsylvania Mining Company (Pittsburgh Coal) purchased the Anderson Mine in 1901. The Pittsburgh Southern Railroad operated along the southern border of Peters Township and transported coal from the Anderson Mine and other area mines. A railroad branch was constructed in Venetia and the new railroad station on this branch was named Anderson Station after Dr. Anderson.

Anderson was active in political affairs. He served four terms in the Pennsylvania State Legislature as a Washington County representative during the following sessions: 1893-1894, 1895-1896, 1901-1902, and 1903-1904, with his final term cut short by his death on February 16, 1903.

Scope and Content Note

Records consist of two bound volumes created by Dr. David Miller Anderson as part of his daily record keeping for his medical practice between 1874 and 1891.

The first volume is a journal created by Dr. Anderson to record financial transactions related to his medical practice in Venetia, Pennsylvania from 1875 through 1891. Entries consist of the names of the heads of the households visited, the date of each visit, and the amounts charged, including for medication. Many patients are not named, but are referred to according to their relationship to the head of the household, e.g. wife, child or uncle. Occasional mentions are made of the conditions treated.

The second volume is a daybook created by Dr. Anderson to record the repayment of debts owed him for the period 1874 through 1881. Many transactions were payments in kind, including the butchering of hogs, loading of coal, or supplying of food, rather than payment in cash. Entries consist of the names of debtors, the date the debt was paid, the nature of the payment and, in many cases, the associated dollar value of the payment in kind.

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions:

Access is limited due to the fragility of the materials. Researchers are directed to use the digital copies available on PA Power's PA Photos and Documents in the Peters Township Public Library's online collection:

Dr. David M. Anderson daybook, 1874-1881

https://digitalarchives.powerlibrary.org/papd/islandora/object/papd%3A287318?overlay_query=anderson#page/1/mode/2up

Dr. David M. Anderson journal, 1875-1891

https://digitalarchives.powerlibrary.org/papd/islandora/object/papd%3A281937?overlay_query=anderson#page/1/mode/2up

Acquisition Information:

The journal and daybook were gifted to the PTPL Archives anonymously.

Custodial History:

Unknown.

Accruals note:

No further accruals are expected.

Preferred Citation:

Peters Township Public Library Archives, MS 2022-089, Dr. David M. Anderson journal and daybook, 1874-1891

Processing Information:

This collection was processed by Carolyn Friedrich and Margaret Deitzer in January 2023 and revised by Nancy Martin in January 2025.

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Related Archival Materials: Additional records created by Dr. Anderson can be found at the Heinz History Center in Collection MSS 0752 Wright-Anderson-Rees Family Papers and Photographs. A description of this material can be found at

<https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3AUS-QQS-mss752/viewer>

Note:

The description and digitization of these records was made possible by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's Historical Archives and Records Care (HARC) Grant, a program funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The creation of this finding aid and the

digitization of the journal and daybook were part of the project, “Providing digital access to fragile collections in the Peters Township Public Library Archives.”

Contents List

Box 1	
PTPL2022.089.001	Dr. David M. Anderson journal, 1875-1891 (363 pages)

Box 2	
PTPL2022.089.002	Dr. David M. Anderson daybook, 1874-1881 (222 pages)