# Robert S. Anderson collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Robert S. Anderson collection</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collection No:</td>
<td>MSS.54-41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent:</td>
<td>0.01 cubic feet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inclusive Dates:</td>
<td>1862-1889, 1962</td>
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**Abstract:**
The collection comprises correspondence, a diary and photographs documenting Robert S. Anderson’s service with the 81st Ohio Volunteer Regiment and the 59th U.S. Colored Infantry during the Civil War.

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<tr>
<td>Processed by:</td>
<td>Gerald Chaudron, June 2015.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access:</td>
<td>Open to all researchers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language:</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preferred Citation:</td>
<td>Robert S. Anderson collection, Preservation and Special Collections Department, University Libraries, University of Memphis.</td>
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**Publication date:** June 2015
Biographical information

Robert S. Anderson was born circa 1838 and was living in Brush Creek Township, Scioto County, Ohio, at the beginning of the Civil War. He had a brother James R. and possibly a sister, Mary Brown. Anderson enlisted on August 30, 1862, and Company H of the 81st Ohio Volunteer Infantry was organized in Adams and Scioto Counties in September. Anderson was made sergeant and his company was among five which joined the regiment in October in Corinth, Mississippi. He served in Mississippi and Alabama until mid-1863 and then in Tennessee near Pulaski until April 1864. On May 18 he was discharged from the 81st Regiment and joined Company K of the 59th U.S. Colored Infantry Regiment in Memphis as a sergeant. The regiment fought at Brices Cross Roads and Tupelo, Mississippi, and Anderson was mustered out as a 1st lieutenant on January 1, 1866. After the war he rented a plantation in Mississippi and later may have moved to Kansas where his brother lived.

Scope and contents

The collection comprises correspondence, a diary and photographs documenting Robert Anderson’s service with the 81st Ohio Volunteer Regiment and the 59th U.S. Colored Infantry during the Civil War. There is also a letter from Mary Brown which refers to Anderson during this period, and a payment order from 1889 from Anderson to his brother in Kansas. A songbook published in 1882 has some genealogical notes by Grace Brown.

Subject terms

Anderson, Robert S.
United States. Army. Colored Infantry Regiment, 59th (1864-1866)
United States. Army. Ohio Infantry Regiment, 81st (1862-1865)

Inventory

Correspondence:
Robert Anderson, Corinth, Miss., to mother, 1863 March 7. Reports he is well, though many in the company have measles and two soldiers have died.
Mary Brown, Mt. Joy, Penn.?, to sister, 1864 May 26. Informs sister of the death of their father. Met a man from Robert Anderson’s company and the mother of another man from the same company. Learned that Robert had left his regiment “and is gone into a black Regiment”.
Robert Anderson, Camp of the 59th U.S. Colored Infantry, Memphis, Tenn., to brother, 1863 (1864?) November 14. Notes they are building their winter quarters and he and the
captain are building a wooden room of 12 feet square to be shared by both. Is sure
President Lincoln, “Father Abraham”, will be re-elected.

Robert Anderson, Camp of the 59th U.S. Colored Infantry, Memphis, Tenn., to brother, 1865
August 18. Notes he had been visiting family in Pittsburgh. Experienced an earthquake
the previous day in Memphis which caused some inhabitants of the city to rush out into
the street in panic.

Robert Anderson, Anderson’s Plantation, Austin, Tunica County, Miss., to brother, 1866 July
21. Anderson is renting a plantation from Major J.H. Anderson. Notes that he may not be
able to work the crop because labor is scarce, which allows weeds to grow and will affect
the value of the crop. James Anderson is apparently living near Sedalia, Kansas, and
Robert asks many questions about his situation.

Payment order: Notarized order for $2.15 to be paid by Lt. Robert Anderson to James Anderson
from his back pay, dated Kansas City, 1889 January 28, written by Mrs. M. Brown.

Diary: Pocket diary kept by Robert Anderson, 1862-1864. Entries covering his enlistment and
service between August 1862 and officially joining the 59th Colored Infantry Regiment in
September 1864. Scattered references to combat.

On December 20, 1862 he records: “Great excitement about the Rebels advancing under Gen
Bragg. all necessary preparations were made to receive them expected them for dinner on
Christmas”. On May 15, 1863 notes speech by Adjutant General Thomas where reference
was made to arming African Americans which caused “great dissatisfaction”. On November
29, 1863, records disagreeable task in cold weather of “ferrying our train…big drunk among
officers and men considerable fighting but no body hurt Bachus done the fighting”. On April
28, 1864 he wrote: “Remained in camp the Troops at this Post was Paraded to witness the
hanging of sergt. Myers 7th Ill. Infty for shooting his Captain “Dec 1862””.

Also includes notes on money owed him, the roll of Company K, 59th Colored Infantry
Regiment among other information related to his service.

Photographs: Cartes de visite:

Day, 338 Main Street, Memphis, Tenn.

Robert Anderson in military uniform, undated. Photographer: Cargo’s, 69 Fifth Street,
Pittsburgh, Penn.

Publication: “The Good Old Songs We Used to Sing. ’61 to ’65.”, Springfield, Ill.: O.H.
Oldroyd, 1882. Contains notes on the title page related to family history by Aunt Grace
Brown, born in Belleville, Illinois, on December 22, 1876, to Peter and Paul Hallock, dated
1962.