

# Davis, David M., Ledger

David M. Davis Ledger

1875-1896



## Title Statement

Davis, David M., Ledger David M. Davis Ledger, 1875-1896 Ms.1940.003

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## Profile Description

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## Descriptive Summary

### Unit ID

Ms.1940.003

### Unit Date

1875-1896

### Language

The materials in this collection are in English.

### Abstract

The collection contains a ledger of David M. Davis, farmer, proprietor of clothing/shoe store, treasury clerk, and resident of Washington, D.C. and Fauquier County, Virginia. It also contains daily transactions of clothing/shoe store, including customer name, goods purchased, and prices paid; accounts with farm workers; and daily diary entries for summer months of 1890-1892.

### Extent

0.2 Cubic Feet 1 box

### Repository

Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech

## Administrative Information

## Conditions Governing Access

The collection is open for research.

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## Source of Acquisition

The David M. Davis Ledger was acquired by the VPI Agricultural Branch Library in 1939 or 1940 and transferred to Special Collections and University Archives in 1955.

## Processing Information

The processing, arrangement, and description of the David M. Davis Ledger commenced and was completed in March 2011. Initial description was completed in or prior to May 1970.

## Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: [identification of item], [box], [folder], David M. Davis Ledger, Ms1940-003, Special Collections and University Archives, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Va.

# Biographical Note

David M. Davis was born in New York in 1843. He married Sarah E. Porter (born in 1842), the daughter of Henry N. and Helen Polson Porter. The 1870 census describes David Davis as a treasury clerk, residing in Washington, D.C. Also in the household are Sarah Davis and two children: Charles (five) and Helen (two). Washington newspapers of 1874-1875 contain notices under the name of D. M. Davis, advertising ties and boots for sale at his store, located at the corner of F and Twelfth streets. The Davis family is again listed as residents of Washington, D.C. in the 1880 census, with the addition of two younger children, Henry (eight) and David (three). (The record notes that all of the children had been born in Washington, with the exception of Helen, born in New York.) An 1897 newspaper account mentions that D. M. Davis, a Republican, had lost his job in the Bureau of Engraving to a political shakeup in 1893. Materials within this collection show that the Davises were living in Fauquier County, Virginia between 1895 and 1896, though it appears likely that the family maintained residences in both the capital and in Fauquier for a number of years. Sarah E. Davis is listed in the 1900 census as a 57-year-old widow living in Washington, D.C., with her three surviving children: Henry, 29; David, 23; and Helen, 32. The census again records Sarah Davis living with her family in Washington, D.C. in 1910. No further record could be found.

# Scope and Content

This collection contains a ledger maintained (at least in part) by David M. Davis of Fauquier County, Virginia. The ledger contains a number of different types of entries. The first section consists of a daybook, apparently for a clothing, shoe and accessories business opened by Davis at the corner of Washington D. C.'s F and 12th streets in January, 1875. Over the course of several weeks, the entries detail sales of footwear, lace and other clothing goods. Beginning on March 3, 1875, the entries describe only general transactions, with no lists of goods purchased. These entries continue through November, 1875, perhaps indicating a settlement of the business's accounts. The account entries are followed by entries, apparently written in a different hand, detailing work performed by various farm laborers, together with wages paid in both cash and goods. Among the other items in the ledger's pages are a sharecropping agreement with William Brown, receipts, livestock records, and copies of letters.

Also in the ledger is the daily journal of an unidentified individual, presumably a woman, perhaps Sarah E. Davis. The entries span July-October 1890, May-October 1891, and May-October 1892, indicating that these were the months that the family was present on the Fauquier County farm. In brief entries, the journal describes daily work on the house and farm, activities of family members, visitors, and weather.

The collection also contains several loose documents that had been kept within the ledger. Among these are a sharecropping contract with J. W. Cabbage and an employment/poultry business contract with G. W. Bailey. Also included is a contract in which Davis agrees not to press trespassing charges against John Mann with the proviso that Mann will relinquish one of his horses to Davis should he be "detected in trespassing [sic] and committing any unlawful act upon the property of said Davis..."

# Keywords

Ledgers (account books)

Local/Regional History and Appalachian South

# Rights Statement for Archival Description

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# Arrangement

The collection is arranged by item type.

# Description of Subordinate Components

## **Ledger**

**Unit Date** 1875-1896

**box** 1

**Container** 1 (folder)

## **Documents**

**Unit Date** 1895-1896, n.d.

**box** 1

**Container** 2 (folder)