

**See also UPA microfilm:**  
MF 5735, Series B, Reel 4

**CLARKE (POWHATAN) DIARY**  
Mss. 893

Inventory

Revised by Luana Henderson  
2013

Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections  
Special Collections, Hill Memorial Library  
Louisiana State University Libraries  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University

Reformatted 2007

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**SUMMARY**

- Size.** 1 volume
- Geographic locations.** North of Alexandria, La. to Camden, Arkansas; New Iberia, La.
- Inclusive dates.** 1862-1863
- Bulk dates.** 1862-1863
- Language.** English
- Summary.** Diary of Dr. Powhatan Clarke, surgeon and professor of chemistry at Louisiana State Seminary of Learning in Rapides Parish. The diary records wagon trips from Ulster Plantation (Alexandria) to Camden, Ark., New Iberia, La. and Shreveport, La.
- Restrictions on access.** No restrictions. Photocopies must be made from microfilm.
- Related collections.** David French Boyd Papers, Mss. 40, 99, 794, 890, 893, 1400, 1612, 4234
- Copyright.** Copyright of the original materials is retained by descendants of the creators in accordance with U.S. copyright law.
- Citation.** Powhatan Clarke Diary, Mss. 893, Louisiana and Lower Mississippi Valley Collections, LSU Libraries, Baton Rouge, La.
- Stack location.** MISC: C
- Also available on:** Microfilm 5735, Series B, Reel 4

### **BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL NOTE**

Dr. Powhatan Clarke, a native of Virginia and educated in Paris, France. He was a surgeon and professor of chemistry at the Louisiana State Seminary of Learning in Rapides Parish during the mid-nineteenth century. He also served as aide-de-camp for Brigadier General D.M. Frost. His father-in-law, Judge Henry Boyce of Ulster Plantation, was a planter near Alexandria in Rapides Parish.

Colonel David French Boyd served as captain of engineers on General Richard Taylor's staff beginning in 1863. An educator, Boyd taught at Louisiana State Seminary of Learning and helped to preserve the institution during Reconstruction. He then served as its president (1870-1880, 1884-1886) when it became Louisiana State University.

### **SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE**

The diary of Dr. Powhatan Clarke, surgeon and professor of chemistry in Rapides Parish, records trips by wagon from Ulster Plantation, north of Alexandria, to Camden, Arkansas and return. He then traveled with Judge Henry Boyce to New Iberia to secure salt, returning by stagecoach. He went on to Shreveport to meet Captain Lindsay. The entries give distances traveled each day, expenses incurred for repairs to the wagon and for food, condition of roads, and names of persons encountered on the way. Clarke mentions the salt works at Lake Bistineau, meeting exchange prisoners and discharged soldiers, and the rental of his wagon to the Confederate States Army Quartermaster at New Iberia to haul lumber to build a road from New Iberia to Avery Island.

Colonel David F. Boyd later used Clarke's diary to keep military and topographical notes of the area between Sicily Island in Catahoula Parish and Water Proof in Tensas Parish when he was on General Taylor's staff (1863).

## **COLLECTION DESCRIPTION**

The diary of Powhatan Clarke, native Virginian, surgeon and professor of chemistry at Louisiana State Seminary, Rapides Parish, Louisiana describes a trip by wagon from Ulster Plantation north of Alexandria to Camden, Arkansas, where he joined Brigadier-General D. M. Frost. He traveled through Rapides, Grant, Natchitoches, Bienville, Webster, and Claiborne parishes.

At Camden, Arkansas, he met Major Haney, an acquaintance from his time in Paris. He visited a friend of his father, Bartholomew Egan at Mount Lebanon in Bienville Parish. He comments on the salt works at Lake Bisteneau where three to four thousand persons were there at a time making salt.

He returned to Ulster Plantation on Jan. 3, 1863. Four days later, he left with his father-in-law Henry Boyce for Opelousas. He then traveled alone through Lafayette and Iberia parishes with a wagon and six mules to get salt for Ulster. Since it was impossible to reach Avery Island, the wagon was hired out to the Confederate States quartermaster to haul lumber for the construction of a road to the island. After General Taylor arrived with his staff, and the wagons from Esperanza arrived, he purchased 3,000 lbs. salt for \$135.00 and returned to Ulster Plantation.

On May 7, 1863, the family left Ulster Plantation. Clarke returned to the plantation two days later where a Union soldier captured him. He quickly escaped (May 10, 1863) and traveled to Shreveport then back to Ulster on June 2, 1863.

David F. Boyd most likely made his notes in Clarke's diary while on General Frost's staff, supervising the construction of Fort De Russy. Notes describe the road leading through Sicily Island, Lovelace Lake, and the ford on the Tensas River three miles above Kirk's Ferry, as well as the north bank of Choctaw Bayou to Waterproof in Tensas Parish. Entries provide a sketch of the landscape, describe road conditions, and give the names of plantation owners. The volume also contains a sketch of the fort at Waterproof.

**INDEX TERMS**

Bienville Parish (La.)  
Boyd, David French, 1834-1899.  
Caddo Parish (La.).  
Camden (Ark.).  
Catahoula Parish (La.).  
Confederate States of America. Army. Corps of Engineers.  
Egan, Bartholomew, 1795-1879.  
Fort De Russy (La.).  
Iberia Parish (La.).  
Lafayette Parish (La.).  
Lake Bistineau (La.).  
Natchitoches Parish (La.)  
Rapides Parish (La.).  
Salt Industry and Trade – Louisiana.  
Taylor, Richard, 1826-1879.  
Tensas Parish (La.).  
Ulster Plantation (La.).  
Louisiana – History – Civil War, 1861-1865.

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