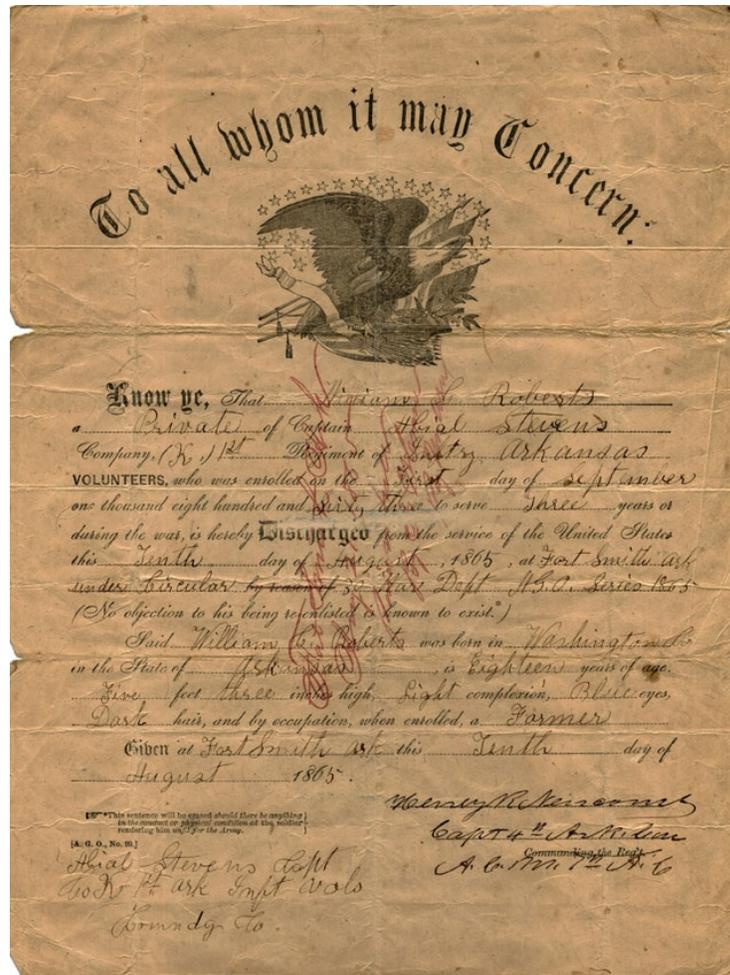


# Donation of the Month

## Discharge Paper



1995.61.1

Donated by William C. Roberts

The soldiers from Arkansas who fought during the American Civil War came from all walks of life. Many were from small towns and were farmers, lawyers, and merchants. They even fought on different sides of the battlefield; some sought to help preserve the Union while others were sympathetic to cause of the Confederacy. In many cases, families were split between causes and brothers and fathers often fought against one another.

Such is the case with Private William C. Roberts, to whom this formal document belonged. This document states that William C. Roberts, a Private in the Union Army, was discharged from service on August 10, 1865. Roberts served under Captain Stevens in Company K, 1st Arkansas Volunteer Infantry. Roberts enlisted in September of 1863 to serve three years. His occupation, prior to becoming a soldier, was listed as farmer. Roberts saw conflict in battle at Camden and Jenkins Ferry, among other places. Personal conflict also emerged. Though Roberts served with the Union Army, his father William C. Roberts, Sr. and two brothers served with the Confederate Army in a company from Texas.

Roberts was born in Fayetteville, Washington County, Arkansas in 1850, according to the Historical Review of Arkansas. According to his discharge papers, when he left the army in 1865 he was eighteen

years old. Records indicate he joined the army in 1863, which would make him only 13 years old when he entered and 15 or 16 when he was discharged. We may never know the reasons behind this difference in dates and ages, but perhaps Roberts claimed he was older in order to enlist or perhaps an error was made in the recorded dates.

Upon reading this document, we know that Roberts survived the war. He went on to become deputy sheriff of Washington County and deputy county clerk. After attending law school, he practiced law in Fayetteville and in Madison County, Arkansas. He also married Narcissa Naylor, of Fayetteville, in 1873 and had four children. Eventually, he was elected to the State Legislature and came to Rogers in 1898. In 1906, he was appointed postmaster of Rogers and was a member of several fraternal organizations and local committees involved in the development of the town.

#### **CREDITS**

Black, J. Dickson. History of Benton County. Little Rock, AR: 1975. Hempstead, Pat. Historical Review of Arkansas. Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1911. "Voices from the War" from [http://www.nps.gov/archive/peri/voices\\_intro.htm](http://www.nps.gov/archive/peri/voices_intro.htm) Rogers Historical Museum Donor and Research Library Files.