



## **William Devol Dobkins Photograph Collection (R1279)**

**Collection Number:** R1279

**Collection Title:** William Devol Dobkins Photograph Collection

**Dates:** circa 1892-1968, bulk circa 1892-1920

**Creator:** Dobkins, William Devol, 1879-1968

**Abstract:** The William Devol Dobkins Photograph Collection contains ninety-two photographs, consisting primarily of contact prints from the original glass-plate negatives. Of these, at least eighty are attributed to William “Will” Devol Dobkins. The majority of these images were shot between 1892 and 1920. They show outdoor views of life in and around Crawford County, Missouri.

**Collection Size:** 0.5 cubic foot  
(6 folders, 92 photographs)

**Language:** Collection materials are in English.

**Repository:** The State Historical Society of Missouri

**Restrictions on Access:** Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at [rolla@shsmo.org](mailto:rolla@shsmo.org). Collections may be viewed at any research center.

**Restrictions on Use:** The Donor has given and assigned to the Society all rights of copyright, which the Donor has in the Materials and in such of the Donor’s works as may be found among any collections of Materials received by the University from others.

**Preferred Citation:** [Specific item; box number; folder number] *William Devol Dobkins Photograph Collection* (R1279); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Rolla].

**Donor Information:** The photographs were loaned for copying to the State Historical Society of Missouri by J.L. Dobkins on December 1, 1992 (Accession No. RA0555). An addition was loaned on December 15, 2010 by Beth Dobkins Garrison (Accession No. RA1512).

**Processed by:** Processed by Leann Arndt, December 15, 2010. Revised by Kathleen Seale, July 17, 2020.

**Biographical Note:**

William Devol Dobkins was born in 1879, on Courtois Creek near Berryman, Missouri in Crawford County. He was one of six children born to Joshua “Bud” and Anna Goad Dobkins. In 1884, Will’s father died and his mother remarried his late father’s cousin, John Wesley Lambert. When his mother and stepfather moved to Oklahoma, Will and his other siblings stayed in Missouri to be raised by relatives. Will, along with his stepbrother Otto Lambert, were raised by his father’s cousin, “Uncle” Charley Dobkins, who lived on Huzzah Creek.

When Will was about twelve years old, he became interested in cameras and photography. He began experimenting and making photographs with any equipment he could find. At about that same time, he also decided to enter the Christian ministry. He started preaching around age 18, speaking at local churches and filling in for local pastors.

Will married Emma Ora Gregory, daughter of Winfield Scott and Susan Jane Compton Gregory on October 22, 1899. Together they had six children, Charles Winfield, Theodore Earnest, Mamie Leyla Opal, Pansey (Patricia) Elizabeth, William Arthur, and Marvin Richard. The family settled on Lost Creek, with Will working at Neely Downard’s sawmill. He also preached in Crawford, Iron, Reynolds and Shannon counties. With his photography equipment and Bible packed, Will’s two-week circuit would begin at Palmer, Missouri, where the outgoing mail started, and on to Belgrade and back, in varying routes. Along the way, he did carpentry work, took photographs, conducted church meetings, performed marriages and funerals, and picked up mail. When he returned home, he would process the photos he had taken and deliver them on his next circuit. His photography helped supplement his income, since preaching paid very little.

Will and Ora followed several other families from the area in 1908, relocating to Stroud, Oklahoma to raise cotton. He continued his ministry and photography there, as well as operating a cotton farm. By 1918, Will and his family left Oklahoma for St. Louis, Missouri, where he did carpentry work and preached at the Salvation Army. Tiring of city life, they returned to Crawford County in 1926, and purchased a farm at Berryman, Missouri. In 1944, with their children gone, Will and Ora moved into a home built by Will in the valley near Steelville. Ora passed away in 1963. Will continued to preach on occasions and lived there until his death in 1968 at age 89.

**Arrangement:**

The collection has been arranged in its original order.

**Scope and Content Note:**

The collection contains ninety-two images of life in and around Crawford County, Missouri. The collection includes portraits of families and their homes, school or church groups outside of community buildings, individuals riding horses or mules, farm scenes showing animal-drawn and steam-powered equipment, threshing, wagons with jerkline team hitches, charcoal production, and the Cherry Valley Railroad and Mine. A few images are studio shots. The collection of glass-plate negatives was stored in an old outbuilding when Dobkins moved to Steelville in 1944. In the early 1990s, the negatives were salvaged by his grandson, J. L. Dobkins.

**Container List:**

f. 1-6	Photographs
Box 001	f. 1 Index and CD, no date
	f. 2 No. 1-20, 1890s, no date
	f. 3 No. 21-40, 1890s-1900s, no date
Box 002	f. 4 No. 41-60, 1890s-1900s, no date
	f. 5 No. 61-80, 1890s-1900s, no date
	f. 6 No. 81-92, 1890s-1920s, 1968

**Index:**

Index Term	Folder	Image
Berryman (Mo.)	1-3	Yes
Charcoal industry--Missouri	1, 4-5	Yes
Charcoal kilns--Missouri	1, 5	Yes
Cherry Valley Mine (Crawford County, Mo.)	1, 4	Yes
Cherry Valley Railroad (Mo.)	1, 4	Yes
Compton, Gemima Lewis	1, 3	Yes
Compton, William E.	1, 3	Yes
Cook, Alfred	1, 4	Yes
Crawford County (Mo.)	1-6	Yes
Dent County (Mo.)	1	Yes
Dobkins family	1-2, 5-6	Yes
Dobkins, Ora Mae Gregory, -1963	1, 6	Yes
Dobkins, William Devol, 1879-1968	1, 6	Yes
Farm life--Missouri	1-6	Yes
Garrison family	1-2	Yes
Gregory family	1-6	Yes
Hawkins Bank School (Dent County, Mo.)	1-2	Yes
Huzzah (Mo.)	1, 3	Yes
Iron mines and mining--Missouri	1, 4-5	Yes
Jamison, Abe	1, 5	Yes
Lambert family	1-2	Yes
Murphy, Milton Franklin	1, 5	Yes
Osage (Mo.)	1, 3, 5	Yes
Rural clergy--Missouri	1, 6	Yes
Sanders family	1-3	Yes
Schools--Missouri	1-2, 4	Yes
Shirley (Mo.)	1, 4	Yes
Steelville (Mo.)	1	Yes
Washington County (Mo.)	1	Yes
Whitecotton, Cain, 1848-	1, 5	Yes

**Appendix:** This appendix provides a detailed description of each image, plus some added genealogical and historical information. Beth Dobkins Garrison, the granddaughter of William D. Dobkins provided the identifications and much of the added information.

Folder	Image	Description
2	1	Rear, L to R: Joshua Sanders, Etta Dobkins Sanders. Front, L to R: Joshua Franklin Dobkins (brother of Will Dobkins), possibly Alfred Garrison or Otto Lambert, Lenna Lee Sanders, James Herkley Sanders, unknown girl.
2	2	L to R: Laura Lambert, Earl Lambert, Anna Goad Dobkins Lambert, unknown woman, John Wesley Lambert, John's father John Chambers Lambert, and John's only sibling, Augustus "Gus", who worked as a muleskinner at the Cherry Valley Mine.
2	3	Jemima Dobkins Willis and husband, Richard Willis on front porch of home.
2	4	Unidentified school with group of children.
2	5	Unidentified school with group of children.
2	6	Unidentified school with group of children.
2	7	Unidentified school with group of children.
2	8	Hawkins Bank School with group of children. Hawkins Bank was an iron ore mining area, and a railroad spur was built to it in 1878-79, from the Salem-to-Cuba branch of the railroad (built by St. Louis & Little Rock Railroad).
2	9	Unidentified school/church with group of people. Possibly the old Shirley (Missouri) School House, which was also used as a church.
2	10	Unidentified school with group of children.
2	11	Unidentified people in a hack, or horse-drawn wagon.
2	12	Unidentified location, cows in field.
2	13	Group of people, mostly unidentified. Seated, L to R: Possibly John Halbert, Lorenzo Harold Gregory (later the brother-in-law of Will Dobkins), and rest unidentified. Back row, L to R: Lou Gregory (married Cap Skaggs), possibly Gertie Halbert (wife of John Halbert), unidentified girl, and possibly Zella Wymer Gregory (married to Lorenzo) and rest unidentified. [Man in center of front row is in #28.]
2	14	Hawkins Bank School with group of children, October 12, 1895.
2	15	Old Jimmy Huitt place on Highway 8, L to R: Sarah & John Dobkins, and James (John's brother) & wife, Mary Staples Dobkins. Upper porch is unidentified. [same house as in #38]
2	16	Unidentified people making hay.
2		Unidentified landscape.
2		Dr. W. Parker, on main street in Berryman, Missouri. The dog, Grandpa Will said, went along to chase snakes from the roads and lanes, to guard the buggy, and he was also trained to take the reins and move the horses to graze if a house call was of an extended time.
2	19	Unidentified people in front of house. [same people as #20]
2	20	Unidentified people in front of house. [same people as #19]
3	21	Unidentified people with pump organ on porch of house.
3	22	Unidentified people in front of house.
3	23	Unidentified men on horses/mules on the old dirt road that went through Berryman/Osage—now Highway 8.
3	24	Couple on the far right: William E. Compton and wife, Gemima Lewis, a Cherokee woman. Gemima and William were the parents of Susan Jane Compton, who married Winfield Scott Gregory. They were the parents of Ora Mae. Others are unidentified.
3	25	Unidentified people in front of house.

3	26	Possibly the canning plant at Huzzah, Missouri. Locally grown tomatoes were canned and sold. It is unknown whether they were sold locally or shipped elsewhere. The enterprise didn't survive long.
3	27	Unidentified girls with Crown pump organ outdoors.
3	28	Unidentified people in front of house, possibly the Wymer family. If correct, Zella, who married Lorenzo Harold Gregory, would be 3 <sup>rd</sup> from left. Midgie & Dimple were sisters of Zella but are unidentified. [The man 4 <sup>th</sup> from left is also in #13.]
3	29	Unidentified people in front of house.
3	30	Unidentified people in front of house.
3	31	Raymond Parker Gregory, son of Winfield Scott and Susan Jane Compton Gregory riding a mule on the old dirt road which went through Berryman/Osage - now Highway 8. Later Raymond became a brother-in-law of Will Dobkins. He died December 1, 1911, at age 18 years, and is buried in the Lea Cemetery, Leasburg, Missouri, where his parents are also buried.
3	32	Unidentified man on mule.
3	33	Front center, next to the children, are Winfield Scott Gregory and his wife, Susan Jane Compton Gregory. The woman in the back row, far right, with the dark dress and large lace collar is their daughter, Anna Jemima, sister of Mrs. Will Dobkins. [Note man in center with wooden leg. This is same house with some of the same people that are in #51.]
3	34	Unidentified men and women standing and riding horses/mules. This is the old dirt road which went through Berryman/Osage - now Highway 8.
3	35	Unidentified people.
3	36	Sanders Family group photo, L to R: Frank Dobkins, who was raised by their sister, Etta Dobkins Sanders; John W. Dobkins; unknown Sanders; Joshua Sanders and Etta Dobkins Sanders, with James Herkley "Herk" Sanders and Milas "Sam" Sanders; Lenna Sanders (in front); others are unidentified. "Herk" was a master fiddler who made wild turkey calls and was also a chef. "Sam" played the guitar.
3	37	Unidentified people in front of house.
3	38	William Green Gregory family, L to R, back row: William Gregory, daughters Louetta and Parthenia Gregory, his wife Ellen Bell Smith Gregory, and son, William Evertte Gregory. (The names of some of the children in the front row are Jessie May, Edward Clark, Levi Harrison and Hallie Eunice but individual identities are unknown.) [same house as in #38; same family as in #40]
3	39	Sanders Family group photo: Back row, 4th and 5th from left are Etta Dobkins Sanders and Joshua Sanders, sister and brother-in-law to Will Dobkins. Children in front of fence are Will's siblings, L to R: Earnest Dobkins, Leora Dobkins and Frank Dobkins.
3	40	William Green Gregory family, L to R, back row: William Gregory, daughters Louetta and Parthenia Gregory, wife Ellen Bell Smith Gregory, and son William Evertte Gregory. (Names of some of the children in the front row are Jessie May, Edward Clark, Levi Harrison and Hallie Eunice but individual identities are unknown.) [same family as in #38]
4	41	Studio portrait of unidentified people.
4	42	Three unidentified men on horses, possibly Henry Farrar on far left.
4	43	Unidentified people with steam tractor and other equipment in wooded field possibly making hay.
4	44	Unidentified people in front of house with fence.
4	45	Unidentified school/church with group of people. Possibly the old Shirley (Missouri) School House, which was also used as a church.
4	46	Unidentified group of children in front of unknown school. In the back row, fourth from right in the light-colored dress, is Ora Gregory.
4	47	Unidentified horse and wagon.

4	48	Unidentified group of children in front of unknown school. Ora Gregory, is wearing the light-colored dress and is standing on the right side of the photo behind the little girl in the front row that is wearing the large cross necklace. [Same school and some of the same children as in # 46]
4	49	Unidentified threshing crew with horses/mules, wagons, and steam-powered tractor and separator.
4	50	Possibly the Chazelle Brothers' farmhouse on Highway 8 near Shirley, Missouri. People on porch and in front of house with Appaloosa horse are unidentified.
4	51	Seated in front: Dick Gregory and wife Lula, his mother-in-law, and his children. Second row starting 6 <sup>th</sup> from left: Hiram Vance, his wife Molly (daughter of Winfield Scott), Winfield Scott Gregory, and his wife Susan, William Greene Gregory, 2 unidentified women, Ora Gregory, unidentified man, Anna Jemima Gregory, and unidentified man. In the back row on the porch, standing on the far right is Edward Franklin Gregory. Dick Gregory was an uncle of Will Dobkins' wife, Ora Gregory, and was born in 1864. He died in 1937, and is buried at Berryman, Missouri. Winfield Gregory served in the Civil War (Co. E, 50 <sup>th</sup> Missouri Infantry) near Potosi. He was 16 when he enlisted on February 14, 1864. [This is same house with some of the same people that are in #33.]
4	52	Unidentified people in front of house and unidentified man in background doorway.
4	53	Unidentified group of men with horses/mules and wagons.
4	54	Cherry Valley Railroad mine train with three unidentified men. Man standing in back on the train coupling is possibly William Gregory. The Cherry Valley Railroad was built in 1877, and went from Steelville and the Midland community to the Cherry Valley mine.
4	55	Unknown farmhouse, buildings and landscape.
4	56	Alfred Cook (on right) and unidentified man in front of log cabin. Cook married Effie Coleman and had several children. His father, Riley P. Cook, was twice married and had over a dozen children. Riley P. Cook was a Justice of the Peace in Crawford County, and performed the marriage ceremony of Will Dobkins' sister Etta, to Joshua Sanders, her first husband, at Berryman.
4	57	William Gregory with team of mules and wagon loaded with lumber. An early settler of Crawford County, he was an uncle of Ora Gregory. This type of hitch was known as a 'jerkline' team, since the harness was set up to be worked (or jerked) with an attached rein or 'line.'
4	58	Unidentified group of men with a 'jerkline' team of mules pulling a large steam boiler on wheels.
4	59	Unidentified group of people with steam tractor, wagons and horses/mules.
4	60	Unidentified group of men working at Cherry Valley Mine. This is Pit #1, which was a 'dry pit'; Pit #2 was a 'wet pit', or filled with water, and was just down the hill from Pit #1. It was mined by hand with shovels and picks until 1928-29, when mechanical shovels were brought in. This mine covered nearly 9 acres, and produced iron pyrite.
5	61	Unidentified men with wagons and horses/mules making hay.
5	62	Portrait of three unidentified men with their rifles and hunting dogs. Man in center is possibly Earnest Albert Dobkins, brother of Will Dobkins.
5	63	Sisters Parthenia and Lou Gregory, daughters of William Green and Ellen Bell Smith Gregory, posing with their Queen pump organ outdoors.
5	64	Unidentified group of people in front of house and sitting on fence.
5	65	Unidentified group with mule-drawn hay cutting equipment. Person driving the mules is possibly Susan Gregory (Will Dobkins mother-in-law).
5	66	Group of men working in field. Second from left is Abe Jamison, one of the only families of African-Americans living in Crawford County. He had several descendants who continued to live in the county, and owned property there. One of the most loved of those descendants was Harry Jamison, who is still remembered fondly by today's county residents.



5	67	Unidentified men working at unknown charcoal or coke production business. Many of these businesses were on local farms, such as my great-grandfather's farm. They burned local hickory and oak wood, which was cut into charcoal and hauled to the Midland mine furnaces to process ore. Some even made its way to the Sligo and Scotia mines.
5	68	Man with mule-drawn wagon, possibly Gus Lambert who was a muleskinner for the mines, or one of the Davis family, for which Davisville, Missouri, was named.
5	69	Group of people in front of barn with ox-drawn wagon and several mules/horses. "Miss Effie" Staples, the midwife for Crawford County, is on the horse. She delivered many children, though never having any of her own. At an advanced age, she was still midwife for the Berryman/Huzzah area.
5	70	Unidentified men with mule-drawn lumber wagon.
5	71	Group of men playing baseball in front of the store in Butts, Missouri. A weekly game was played there on Sundays in season. Players were chosen at random if no established team held together during the season. The store in Butts is no longer standing.
5	72	Man on horse, possibly one of the Davis family of men.
5	73	Man on horse, Raymond Parker Gregory, on the old dirt road which went through Berryman/Osage - now Highway 8.
5	74	Cain Whitecotton, blacksmith in Berryman, Missouri was born in 1848, and lived to be over 100. The Whitecottons were two of the first settling families in Crawford County. They emigrated from Virginia by wagon. Cain had the first smithy in Berryman. When the business waned with the loss of the industries there, he moved his smithy business to Steelville. He married Anna Lea, and his children were Laura (who married into the Bass family of Steelville), Ben, Anna, Champ, William, Hazel, and Beth. Anna married one of the Gregory men.
5	75	Portrait of unidentified woman.
5	76	Portrait of unidentified soldier wearing a cavalry shell coat.
5	77	Portrait of soldier Milton Franklin Murphy. [Identification from Missouri State Genealogical Association Journal, Vol. 14, No. 1 (Winter 1994), 'Escape from Andersonville Prison.']
5	78	House in Oklahoma, circa 1916. L to R: Will Dobkins, William Arthur Avery (in wagon, front), Theodore Ernest Dobkins (in wagon, back), Mamie Leyla Opal Dobkins (behind wagon) and Pansey Elizabeth Dobkins. Will preached and share-cropped there briefly before returning to Missouri.
5	79	Group of people in front of house, 1900. L to R: unidentified on horseback (possibly Cain Farris), Earnest Albert Dobkins, Sarah (Sally) Walton Dobkins, Frank Dobkins, Will Dobkins, Otto Lambert, Lenna Lee Sanders, Etta Mae Dobkins Sanders, Joshua Sanders holding James Herkley (Herk), Joshua Sanders' brother (with bicycle).
5	80	Portrait of Leora Dobkins Gibson (Will's sister). At a very young age, she married John Gibson, who was of Cherokee descent. She later served as a lady's maid and nanny and was on the <i>Titanic</i> when it sank. Because she had children in her care, she was taken into one of the lifeboats. You can find her name (Mrs. L. Gibson) on "lifeboat 6" list from the <i>Titanic</i> as a survivor.
6	81	Reverend Will Dobkins and wife with their first daughter, Opal.
6	82	Portrait of Sarah Thompson Dobkins, Will Dobkins grandmother.
6	83	Portrait of Susan Jane Compton Gregory (Will Dobkins mother-in-law). She married Winfield Scott Gregory when she was 15 and he was 23. He passed away in 1919, and Susan lived until 1932. Her mother, Gemima Lewis, was full-blooded Cherokee and was married to William E. Compton.
6	84	Portrait of Anna Gemima Gregory, daughter of Susan Jane Compton and Winfield Scott Gregory, and sister-in-law to Will Dobkins. She died at the young age of 16 or 17 during one of the epidemics of the day.

6	85	Arlis and Ernest Hanson on horses in the snow. They were neighbors of Will Dobkins and worked at the same mill with him.
6	86	Marvin Dobkins (far right), son of Will & Ora Mae Dobkins, with unidentified woman and child posing with a train engine in St. Louis, circa 1920.
6	87	Portrait of young Hallie Parker, daughter of one of the two Dr. Parkers in the Berryman area.
6	88	Charles Winfield Dobkins, first child and son of Will and Ora Dobkins, born July 9, 1900. He died in 1904, of cerebro-spinal meningitis and is buried at the Courtois Baptist Church in Crawford County, Missouri. His father Will often preached at this church. The land for this church was donated by Will's grandparents, John and Sarah Thompson Dobkins.
6	89	John and Sarah Thompson Dobkins, Will Dobkins' grandparents [from family tin type].
6	90	Joshua Dobkins, father of Will Dobkins [from family tin type].
6	91	Reverend Will Dobkins, age 20, at ordination.
6	92	Will Dobkins, photo used for his obituary, circa 1968.