

Collection #  
BV 0085,  
SC 1655

**SLIGO IRON FORGE ACCOUNT BOOK;  
KEPHART, MCELRATH FAMILY PAPERS,  
1845–CA. 1919 (BULK 1845–1880)**

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**COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF  
COLLECTION: One bound volume, one folder, one artifact

COLLECTION  
DATES: 1845–ca. 1919 (bulk 1845–1880)

PROVENANCE: Mrs. Louise Tyrrell Fogle, 2941 N. E. 54 Avenue, Portland,  
Oregon, January 1942.

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1942.0101

NOTES: Collection formerly titled "Elizabeth Kephart Papers."

## BIOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL SKETCH

Charles Crocker (1822–88) arrived in Indiana in 1836. He established an iron forge at Sligo, Marshall County, in 1845. Crocker left Indiana for the California Gold Rush in 1850 and became a merchant in Sacramento in 1852. He was elected to the California state legislature in 1860. Crocker was a founder of the Central Pacific Railroad and supervised its construction across the Sierra Nevada mountains to its junction with the Union Pacific Railroad. He became president of the Southern Pacific Railroad in 1871.

Jacob Kephart (b. circa 1801) worked as a hammerman at Charles Crocker's iron forge during the 1840s. Elizabeth Kephart (b. circa 1818) may have kept the books for the business.

The Kephart and McElrath families were residents of Plymouth and Sligo, Marshall County, Indiana, from the 1840s through the 1880s. The 1860 Indiana census indicates that Caroline McElrath (age 16) was a housekeeper at the home of Jacob and Elizabeth Kephart. Jacob and Elizabeth's children are listed in the 1860 census as Alice (age 8) and Elizabeth (age 1).

### Sources:

Census of Indiana, 1860.

"Crocker, Charles." In *Dictionary of American Biography*. New York : Scribner's, c1964. rr E 176.D563 v.2, p.552  
*Pre-1850 Marriage Database*. Indiana State Library <http://www.statelib.lib.in.us/www/indiana/genealogy/mirr.html>  
"Kephart, Elizabeth" or "Kephart, Jacob" [cited 12 October 2001].

McDonald, Daniel. *History of Marshall County, Indiana, 1836–1880*. Chicago: Kingman Brothers, 1881. F532.M6 M32 1881

McDonald, Daniel. *Twentieth Century History of Marshall County, Indiana, vol 1*. Chicago: Lewis Publishing, 1908. F532.M6 M34 1908

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains an account book believed to be kept for Charles Crocker by Elizabeth Kephart of Sligo, Marshall County, Indiana, between 1845 and 1850. Crocker operated an iron forge where Elizabeth Kephart's husband

was employed as a hammerman. The account book is arranged by customer name. Transcripts of the account book entries are available as SC 1655.

The volume (BV 0085) also includes annotations, poems, letters, and musings written in pencil between the ledger entries. The writings date from the 1840s to circa 1880, and may have been the work of several generations of women of the Kephart, McElrath, Rinehart, and Hoover families. The entries are not chronological, and most are not dated. Individual names entered as annotations include Mollie and Allie [Alice?] Hoover of Plymouth, Indiana; Mollie McElrath; Caroline [McElrath?]; Beatrice C. McElrath; and Elizabeth Rinehart. An annotation on the end pages of volume lists Jacob Kephart, Caroline McElrath, and "Elizabeth." The entries include single statements (e. g. "Mollie McElrath but not her book"), and poems or confessionals concerning romantic love. The following passage is typical of the tone presented by these annotations:

"dear loved one where art thou to night [sic]-/I am lonely, oh so lonely...shall/I ever kiss those loving lips again? /Friend Noah, Plymouth, Indiana, Sept. 30 [1869]."

An entry written in proximity to the above passage presents a different tone:

"27 July 1869. As I am very lonesome this evening, please permit me to pass my time away in writing a short note to you. Perhaps it would not receive as warm a welcome as though it was from Susie [emphasis included] but if you..." [end].

The genealogical relationships among the Hoover, McElrath, Kephart, and Rhinehart families are not clear. According to the Indiana State Library index "Marriages before 1850," Elizabeth Rinehart married Daniel McElrath in Marshall County in 1842. An annotation in the account book, dated 9 April 1865, is signed "Mollie McElrath." There were a number of branches of McElrath and Rinehart families in Marshall County in 1860. It is possible that the account book was used by one of these families at various times as a diary, and/or a source of notepaper.

The single artifact in this collection consists of a china plate commemorating the driving of the last spike in the Union Pacific Railroad. This item is stored in Box 6a, Artifacts Storage, as artifact no. R 286.

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China Plate	Artifacts: Box 6a, Artifacts Storage (R 286)

## CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, BV 0085).

5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.