

**Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library
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Directories--A Tremendous Collection & An Invitation

Curt Witcher, Manager

The many record collections of the Historical Genealogy Department combine with the knowledge and research experience of our staff to create a very supportive and comfortable environment in which to explore one's family history. The collections of census records, military records, immigration sources, family histories, periodicals, British Isles records, and Canadian sources are among the more frequently used major collections. Another major department resource is our collection of directories.

The breadth and scope of our directory collection is truly amazing. From church and school yearbooks to alumni and ethnic directories; from directories of landowners to directories of military personnel; and from city and county directories to lists of police officers, clergy, and lawyers, the researcher will find many of these special resources for locating a particular individual in a specific place and time. For a number of decades, the department has served as a Polk repository library, receiving one copy of most Polk directories published in a given year. Many years we have received one copy of everything Polk has published. Indeed, our city directory collection is so substantial that we have city directories on microfiche (late 1700s to 1860), on microfilm (1861 to 1935), and in books (mid 1900s to present).

Our reference staff likes to remind researchers that directories can often be used as great census complements. While census records are the documents most often used to identify individuals in a particular place, directories can indicate to the researcher more specifically when an individual or family came to a locale and departed from that locale. And the amount of detail that can be found in older city, county, and rural directories can be eye-popping on occasion. When one looks to incorporate the use of directories into his or her research, it is amazing how many can be found.

Though our department's the collection is quite robust, comprising many tens of thousands of microtext items and 50,000 print volumes, we are always interested in obtaining more of these valuable documents--particularly school yearbooks, old alumni directories, professional and occupational directories, and church directories and yearbooks. We are especially interested in school yearbooks (from grade school to college) and the periodic church directories that are published by thousands of denominations and churches across the country.

We fear that many individuals and families have a limited interest in these directories as they get older and more worn. Children often aren't interested in their parents' school directories; and when some families get a new church directory, the old one is recycled. We invite you to send us your unwanted directories and yearbooks of all types. Give us your "poor and tired" directories--

and we will find a great home for them! Simply send them to the attention of the Historical Genealogy Department. Thanks in advance!

Microtext Source: Civil War Unit Histories

Delia Cothrun Bourne

The Civil War is one of the most written about eras in American history. Higher literacy levels among the common people made it possible for the participants to record and analyze their experiences. These writings include regimental histories; personal reminiscences, such as diaries or letters written to families and friends; statistical accounts or rosters from the states; and histories of specific battles or campaigns. *The Civil War Unit Histories*, a microfiche project of University Publications of America, which makes many of these items easily accessible for researchers, is available at the Allen County Public Library.

Researchers can use Blair Hydrick's four-volume *Guide to the Microfiche Edition of Civil War Unit Histories* (973.74 AA1HY) or the Catalog in the Microtext Area, to locate information concerning an ancestor's regiment. Each item identifies the regiment(s) involved and home counties of those regiments. The set also includes Adjutant Generals' Reports and other general material.

Leander Stillwater, 61st Illinois, wrote *The Story of a Common Soldier of Army Life in the Civil War* in 1917 for his son who had requested that his father record his experiences. Stillwater states that his narrative was based on his weekly letters to his family. He disclaims any "pretensions to being a literary man." Gilbert Sabre, 2nd Rhode Island, published *Nineteen Months a Prisoner of War* in 1865, just as the war was ending. The work shows a definite bias against the Southerners who held him captive. Sabre also states that he is not "striving for literary effect." *Reminiscences, or Four Years in the Confederate Army* was written by John Will Dyer, First Kentucky Cavalry, CSA, in 1898. Dyer felt that future generations should know more than just the great leaders. His reminiscences were meant to provide information on the common soldier and he felt it was representational for Union as well as Confederate soldiers.

The Battles and Campaigns section includes *Programme: Reunion: Army of the Potomac and Army of Northern Virginia at Gettysburg, 1888*, which contained histories and descriptions of that battle. Other items include *Casualties in the Union Forces Operating against Richmond, October 1864*; *Fort Pillow Massacre: Report of the Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, May 6, 1864*; and *Photographic History of the Civil War*.

For Civil War researchers, this set is not to be missed. Ask a staff member to show you this informative source.

Printed Source: Allen County Probate Records

ACPL has received custody of 55 volumes of probate records from the Allen County clerk's department. These materials are now available for use by researchers.

They cover the period 1852-1966. Included are executors' applications, bonds and oaths, letters of guardianship and other administrative documents. They are all originals. Although the scanty titles on the spine of most volumes vary, they contain essentially the same records.

They have been classified in six series, three before 1927 and three after. In both periods, there were three sets of records being kept at the same time. There is no discernable reason for the overlap. For researchers, it means that you will probably have to look in three volumes for any given year looking for the probate you wish.

No wills are included. There are also a number of volumes missing.

It seems that the change in series in 1927 occurred when responsibility for maintaining these records passed from the Circuit Court to the Superior Court #2. The earliest records are from the Court of Common Pleas (1852-1878).

The volumes have a rudimentary index in each, probably for the name of the deceased, but there are many other personal names, with relationships to the deceased stated, in the records. It is hoped that eventually someone will compile an every-name index to the 55 volumes. That will make them much easier to use.

Recourse to the computer catalog will be necessary to determine which volumes you need. The easiest way to access all six records at once is to do a SUBJECT search, entering <Allen County Ind Probate records> in the search line.

HOTEL OF THE MONTH

Each issue we will feature a local hotel, for visitors from out-of-town.

LaSalle Bed and Breakfast
517 West Washington Blvd., Fort Wayne 46802
260 422 0851; fax 260 422 0851
email lasallebb@hotmail.com; website www.LaSallebb.com

The LaSalle Bed and Breakfast is a small hotel in a charming old house only a block from the old ACPL building. It is about five blocks from the current library, an easy walk for the energetic. There are suites with baths and kitchens, and also rooms with shared bath. Telephone and voice mail are included in every room (free local calls). LaSalle serves the standard American breakfast, but the proprietor is French and offers breakfasts styled to other tastes, including French bread and French toast! There is a library and a hot tub, and an enclosed parking area to ensure security and comfort. Nearby restaurants include Subway, King Gyros, Taco Bell, McDonalds and a family-run by-the-slice pizza place which is a favorite of some library staff. Henry's, a bar with exceptional food, is two blocks away.

Rates start at \$45 with breakfast for single occupancy, \$75 for a suite, with reductions for longer stays. Airport pickup can be arranged.

AREA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Allen County Public Library
3rd floor atrium display area
Passages: Immigration

Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana (ACGSI)
<http://www.ipfw.edu/ipfwhist/historgs/acgsi.htm>
No meeting until September 8, 2004. The meeting will be held at the Dupont Library.

Computer Users Group
No meeting until September 15, 2004. The meeting will be held at the Aboite Library

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)
First Wednesday of each month in the Genealogy Department 9am – 3pm.

Expert help from members of the DAR in becoming a member of that organization

Federation of Genealogical Societies

www.fgs.org

September 8 – 11, 2004

Austin, Texas / Austin Convention Center

"Legends Live Forever: Researching the Past for Future Generations"

<http://www.fgs.org/2004conf/FGS-2004.htm>

ACPL LIBRARIANS ON TOUR

Sue Kaufman

September 8-11 Austin, TX: Federation of Genealogical Societies

www.fgs.org

Steve Myers

August 27-28 Minneapolis, MN: Irish Genealogical Society International

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~irish/>

October 24-30 Research Academy in Salt Lake City: Irish Research

www.genealogicalstudies.com/SLC.htm

Ryan Taylor

September 25 Waterloo, ON: Waterloo Region Branch OGS workshop

September 26 Brampton, ON: Halton-Peel Branch OGS branch meeting

September 27 Toronto, ON: Toronto Branch OGS branch meeting

October 2 Barrie, ON: Simcoe County Branch OGS workshop

October 24-30 National Institute for Genealogical Studies

Research Academy in Salt Lake City: English Research

www.genealogicalstudies.com/SLC.htm

Curt Witcher

July 12 Indianapolis, IN: Church & Synagogue Library Association Conference

August 27-28 St. Louis, MO: St. Louis Public Library Genealogy Seminar

September 8-11 Austin, TX: Federation of Genealogical Societies

www.fgs.org

September 18 Farmington Hills, MI: Farmington Genealogical Society Program

October 9 Lancaster, OH: Fairfield County Genealogical Society Seminar

October 23 Elkhart, IN: Elkhart County Genealogical Society Fall Seminar

November 13 Cincinnati, OH: Hamilton County Genealogical Society Program

DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO THE LIBRARY

Wondering how to get to the library? Our exciting temporary location is 200 E. Berry, Fort Wayne, Indiana. We will be at this location until late 2006. We would enjoy having you visit the Genealogy Department.

To get directions from your exact location to 200 E. Berry, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?country=US&countryid=250&addtohistory=&searchtab=address&searchtype=address&address=200+E+Berry+St&city=Fort+Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802-2706&search=++Search++&finditform=1>

From the South

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 102. Come east on Jefferson Blvd. into downtown. Turn left on Barr St. to Berry St. The library is located on the corner of Berry and Barr streets.

From the North

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112, coming south on Coldwater Rd. Follow this south, merging onto Clinton St. Continue south on Clinton, the library will be on your left when you cross Berry St.

From the West

Using US 30:

Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Rd. Coming up to an angled street (State St.) make an angled left turn. Turn right on Wells St. Go south on Wells to Wayne St. Left on Wayne. When you cross Clinton, the library will be on your left on Wayne St.

Using US 24:

After crossing under Interstate 69, follow the same directions as from the South.

From the East

Follow US 30 into and through New Haven, under an overpass into downtown Fort Wayne. You will be on Washington St. when you get into downtown. Turn right on Barr St. Turn left on Berry St. The library is on your left on Berry St.

PARKING AT THE LIBRARY

Lot in front of the library, east side

Available for short-term library parking. Limited to one hour.

Tippman Parking Garage

Clinton and Wayne streets. Across from the library, however the skybridge is NOT accessible. Hourly parking, \$1.25 per hour up to a maximum of \$5.00 per day.

Park Place Lot

Covered parking on Barr St. at Main St., this lot is one block away from the library. Hourly parking Monday through Friday, 9am to 6pm.

Street (metered) parking on Wayne St. and Berry St.

On the street you plug the meters 8am – 5pm, weekdays only. It is free to park on the street after 5pm and on the weekends.

Visitor center/Grand Wayne center

Covered parking at Washington and Clinton streets. This is the Hilton Hotel parking lot that also serves as a day parking garage. For hourly parking, 7am – 11 pm, charges are .50 for the first 45 minutes, then \$1.00 per hour. There is a flat \$2.00 fee between 5pm and 11pm.

Genealogy Department Queries: The Historical Genealogy Department hopes you find this newsletter interesting. Thank you for subscribing. We, however, cannot answer personal research emails written to the ezine address. The department houses a Research Center that photocopies of material and conducts research for a fee.

If you have a general question about our collection, or are interested in the Research Center, please telephone the library and speak to a librarian who will be glad to answer your general questions or send you a research center form. Our telephone number is 260-421-1225. If you'd like to email us a general information question about the department, please email: CWitcher@ACPL.Lib.in.us. Look for a general genealogy query email address coming soon.

Publishing Note: This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Historical Genealogy Department, and is intended to enlighten readers about genealogical research methods, as well as inform them about the vast resources of the Allen County Public Library. We welcome the wide distribution of this newsletter and encourage readers to forward it to their friends and societies. All precautions have been taken to avoid errors. However, the publisher does not assume any liability to any party for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions, no matter the cause. If you do not want to receive this e-zine, please send an email to kspears@acpl.lib.in.us with "unsubscribe e-zine" in the subject line.

Sue Kaufman, Editor