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Our Military Heritage

by Curt B. Witcher

I don't know why this year's Memorial Day celebrations struck a particularly strong chord with me, but they did. Perhaps it was the fact of another Memorial Day when our brave military men and women are actively engaged in the defense of our freedoms and liberties; perhaps it was how today's technologies of 24-7 online news, YouTube, and MySpace can bring such vivid, touching, and meaningful bits of national and personal military history and happenings right to my desktop; perhaps it was remembering how many of the volunteers who provide such meaningful service in our Genealogy Center are themselves veterans of twentieth century engagements; perhaps, too, it was how I continue to be impressed with the vast resources the Allen County Public Library has for those interested in researching their military history and heritage.

From the excellent battle histories and military biographies in our Readers' Services Department to the millions of pages of government documents and publications about military hardware and strategies housed in our Business, Science, and Technology Department, the immense military record holdings of the Genealogy Center are well complemented by the entire library collection. Using the library's online catalog linked right off the homepage is an excellent way to explore the print holdings of the entire institution. Clicking on the orange "Genealogy" link on the library's homepage and then clicking on "Microtext Catalog" will get one an increasingly detailed list of the Genealogy Center's military holdings on microfilm and microfiche.

One might wonder why military records and history are so important for genealogy and family history research. I believe the answer rests in a favorite phrase of mine relative to this important research: "Every generation the possibility." And what does that mean? If you place this country's history along a timeline from before the revolution to this present day,

you will realize that scarcely does a generation go by without some significant military activity. From the French and Indian Wars in colonial times to the founding of this country with the American Revolution; from the War of 1812 to the Indian skirmishes and the Mexican American War; from the War Between the States to the Spanish American War and the Philippine Insurrection; from the World Wars to Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom, the timeline of our country's history is intersected with many military engagements. Hence, if you have ancestors in this country, every generation there exists the possibility one of your ancestors may have provided military service and further, that you may find more information about him through military records, histories, letters, diaries and reminiscences.

Between this Memorial Day and Veterans' Day this November, look for a special announcement about accessing some unique military data online at our GenealogyCenter.Info site. In the meantime, look for your family's military history and the documents that evidence that history--and make a commitment to save those documents for future generations of researchers. And if you have military photographs and diaries that you would like to preserve and share with future generations of researchers, contact the Genealogy Center about getting those valuable items digitized. Whatever you decide to do, take the time to explore your family's military history and heritage.

Planes, Trains, and Automobiles...and Steamships, Canal Boats, and
Prairie Schooners: Transportation Periodicals
by Elaine M. Kuhn

In the December 2006 issue of "Genealogy Gems" we discussed the myriad military periodicals held by the Genealogy Center. (To read back issues, go to the Allen County Public Library's website at <http://www.acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy/ezone/index.html>.) This month's article focuses on periodicals devoted to the means by which our ancestors and their worldly goods moved from one place to the next - in essence, transportation periodicals. Though the idea of a periodical dedicated to canals or roads might seem dry and boring, these publications are anything but. You'll be surprised at some of the fascinating information you can find.

Many transportation periodicals focus on a particular region or body of water. The "Sea Chest" (call no. 979.7 P963s), published by the Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society is one such publication. Another periodical of this type is "Inland Seas" (call no. 977 In52), a quarterly journal published by the Great Lakes Historical Society. Also available in the Genealogy Center is "Canal Record" (call no. 975.9 P191c), published by the Panama Canal Society. "Overland Journal" (call no. 978 Ov1982) focuses on the many trails used by pioneers heading west. Other periodicals devote themselves to one particular transportation route such as the "Lincoln Highway Forum" (call no. 973 L638f) and "Wagon Tracks" (call no. 978 Sa591), the latter being a publication of the Santa Fe Trail Association.

Some transportation periodicals limit themselves to just one method of transportation such as the "Arkansas Railroader" (call no. 976.7 Ar48716r) put out by the Arkansas Railroad Club and

"Heartland Rails" (call no. 977.202 F77trq) from the Three Rivers Railroad Heritage Council. The "AAHS Journal" (call no. 973.006 Am3517ja) published by the American Aviation Historical Society highlights U.S. aviation in all its forms both public and private. "Steamboat Bill" (call no. 973.005 St31a) is another publication of this type. Published by the Steamship Historical Society of America, the journal highlights all manners of self-propelled vessels. Each issue contains photographs and illustrations of a variety of ships. One publication addresses not only the means of transportation, but also the passengers who traveled. That periodical is "Crossroads" (call no. 973 Or699c), published by the Orphan Train Heritage Society of America. "Crossroads" is chock-full of stories, first-hand accounts, and photographs of former orphan train passengers.

The Genealogy Center also receives transportation periodicals of a scholarly nature. One such publication is "Canal History and Technology Proceedings" (call no. 973.006 C16a) from the Canal History and Technology Press of the National Canal Museum in Easton, Pennsylvania. Another scholarly publication is "Northern Mariner" (call no. 971.006 C164n) from the Canadian Nautical Research Society. "Northern Mariner" articles are published in English and French, and each issue contains a number of book reviews related to maritime events and inland waterways.

As with most periodicals in the Genealogy Center, transportation publications are indexed in the Periodical Source Index (PERSI), a database at HeritageQuestOnline.com - just one of many electronic resources available through the Allen County Public Library's computers. In these transportation periodicals and in thousands of other publications you will discover a host of articles related to the movement of people and goods. For example, to find articles about the history of railroads in Minnesota, try searching in the Places section of PERSI by selecting the state "Minnesota" and entering the keyword "rail*" (the asterisk at the end of rail will pick up rails, railway, railroad, etc.) and the record type "History." To find articles about diaries written by travelers on the Oregon Trail, search the Places section, leaving the state as "All" and entering under keyword the terms, "oregon trail diar*". To find articles about Jesse Williams, engineer of the Wabash & Erie Canal, search the People section by entering the surname "Williams" and the keyword "canal."

Sacramental Records for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend
by Delia Cothrun Bourne

In the late 1980s, the Genealogy Center was fortunate enough to acquire microfilmed copies of sacramental records for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Consisting of 43 rolls of microfilm, the records cover the early parishes of the diocese in the 14 counties of northeast Indiana: Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Elkhart, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Marshall, Noble, St. Joseph, Steuben, Wabash, Wells, and Whitley. The sacramental records include baptisms, first communions, confirmations, marriages, and deaths or burials.

The amount of information included in the parish records varies by time period, parish, and rector. Most records are in Latin, or a mixture of Latin and the most common language of the parish – French in the early records of Sacred Heart parish, Hungarian at Our Lady of Hungary Parish, both in South Bend. Records start with the formation of the parish, as early as 1830, and go to the end of the volumes that were present in the archives during the microfilming process, occasionally as late as the 1970s.

Baptismal records typically include child's name, parents' names, birth date and place, baptismal date, sponsors, and priest. Some records contain notes with the child's death, marriage or other information. Marriage records usually include the principals' names and witnesses. Death records often provide dates of death and burial, birth place, cemetery, and officiating priest, as well as notes which could include hospital of death or where the deceased stood in relation to the Sacraments. As might be expected, the later records include more information. Most are arranged by sacrament and date, and only a very few have some type of index. Also in the set are the University of Notre Dame Campus Cemetery Records, which includes funerals, lot purchases, and a list of those interred.

Selected records of two orphanages are also included in the Diocesan records. St. Joseph's Orphan Asylum and Manual Labor School was founded in 1867 in Rensselaer, Jasper County. At one time, more than 60 children were residents, but in 1876 the boys were transferred to a new facility in Lafayette, and the girls sent to St. Vincent's in Fort Wayne in 1887.

The St. Vincent Orphan Asylum took children from all over the Diocese, and the records are varied. Baptismal records list age, birthplace, parents when known, and sponsors. Some children are listed as foundlings, others as illegitimate or half-orphans, with one or both parents identified, and notations such as "parents divorced in civil court." Occasionally, a baptism was a "conditional baptism," when the priest or caregivers did not know if the child had already been baptized a Catholic, or baptized in a non-Catholic ceremony that would have been valid under canon law. Other notes on the baptismal record could include when, where and to whom the child married many years after coming to the orphanage. Reception records include the date the child arrived at the institution, residence, age, notes concerning parents, confirmation record, from whom the child was received (usually a parish priest or another orphanage but occasionally an identified parent), to whom the child was released, date and place of birth, and death and burial, if the child died in the orphanage. Other records include inmate listings and correspondence, such as the 1931 letter from Mrs. James Plunkett of Kentland, who was searching for information concerning her recently deceased mother, Mary Riley.

For a researcher in northern Indiana, these records can be a valuable vital record substitute. Other researchers might want to examine the material to see what information Catholic records elsewhere could yield.

Countdown to Conference 2007!

by Elaine M. Kuhn

As we approach the final months before the FGS/ACPL 2007 Conference to be held in Fort Wayne on August 15th-18th, now is the time to tie up those last important conference details before all of your summer activities kick in. Have you made your conference and hotel reservations? There is still time to register online and save thirty dollars before the June 1st early registration deadline! Remember that you can quickly and easily register online at the conference website at <http://fgsconference.org/index.php>. Also remember that rooms can still be reserved at several of the lodging facilities in Fort Wayne. Check out the list of hotels at <http://fgsconference.org/lodging.php>.

Are you a librarian who will be attending the conference? If so, remember to sign up for the Librarians' Day activities to be held on Wednesday, August 15th. The day will be filled with knowledge sharing, an in-depth tour of the newly-expanded Allen County Public Library's main facility and the Genealogy Center, and plenty of camaraderie. Plus, you get lunch! Registration for the Librarians' Day events is free. You can sign up at the conference website at www.fgsconference.org/librarians.php.

Finally, are you looking for a roommate to share hotel expenses? FGS is offering a Roommate Service again this year. You can go to the conference website at www.fgsconference.org/roommate.php and fill out the form. You'll be notified by email if someone looking for similar room requirements is available. Hey - you save money and make a new friend to boot!

So, before you get caught up in the debate over whether Roger Clemens can pull off another summer with the Yankees or planning your trip to the lake with the grandkids or even Harry Potter Mania, get your genealogy to-do list in order. You won't want to miss out on all of the excitement and learning opportunities waiting for you in August!

Preservation Tip of the Month
by Becky Schipper

Summer holidays and reunions are a good time to ask family members questions concerning the provenance of family treasures. Family gatherings also create opportunities to compare notes, identify old photos, record stories and anecdotes, and photograph relatives.

Area Calendar of Events

Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana (ACGSI) Wednesday, June 13, 2007, Main Library at 900 Library Plaza: Annual Dinner and awarding of First Families and Homesteader certificates. A registration form can be downloaded from their website at www.acgsi.org/meetings.htm.

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) "First Wednesday" program of lineage assistance is Wednesday, May 2nd from 9A – 7pm. Expert help from members of the DAR on becoming a member of that organization.

Driving Directions to the Library

Wondering how to get to the library? Our location is 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, on the block bordered on the south by Washington Boulevard, the west by Ewing Street, the north by Webster Street, and the east by the Library Plaza, formerly Webster Street. We would enjoy having you visit the Genealogy Department.

To get directions from your exact location to 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?formtype=address&addtohistory=&address=900%20Webster%20St&city=Fort%20Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802%2d3602&country=US&geodiff=1>

**From the South

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 102. Drive east on Jefferson Boulevard into downtown. Turn left on Ewing Street. The Library is one block north, at Ewing Street and Washington Boulevard.

Using US 27:

US 27 turns into Lafayette Street. Drive north into downtown. Turn left at Washington Boulevard and go five blocks. The Library will be on the right.

**From the North

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton to Washington Boulevard. Turn right on Washington and go three blocks. The Library will be on the right.

**From the West

Using US 30:

Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Road. Coming up to an angled street (State Street.) make an angled left turn. Turn right on Wells Street. Go south on Wells to Wayne Street. Turn left on Wayne Street. The Library will be in the second block on the right.

Using US 24:

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

**From the East

Follow US 30/then 930 into and through New Haven, under an overpass into downtown Fort Wayne. You will be on Washington Blvd. when you get into downtown. Library Plaza will be on the right.

Parking at the Library

At the Library, underground parking can be accessed off of Wayne Street. Other library parking lots are at Washington and Webster, and Wayne and Webster. Hourly parking is \$1 per hour with a \$7 maximum. ACPL card holders may use their cards validate the parking ticket in the Great Hall of the Library. Out of county residents may purchase a subscription card with proof of identification and residence. The current fee for an Individual Subscription Card is \$65.

Public lots are located at the corner of Ewing and Wayne Streets (\$1 each for the first two half-hours, \$1 per hour after, with a \$4 per day maximum) and the corner of Jefferson Boulevard and Harrison Street (\$3 per day).

Street (metered) parking on Ewing and Wayne Streets. 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 garage 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 Center Queries

The Historical Genealogy Department hopes you find this newsletter interesting. Thank you for subscribing. We cannot, however, answer personal research emails written to the e-zine address. The department houses a Research Center that makes photocopies 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 a general information question about the department, please email:

Genealogy@ACPL.Info.

Publishing Note:

This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Genealogy Center, 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 made 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.

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Curt Witcher, editor pro-tem