

Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library
No. 29, July 31, 2006

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Genealogy Department Microtext Catalog
by Curt B. Witcher

Each month, thousands of new searchable records are added to the FriendsOfAllenCounty.org website. While most of these new records contain Allen County, Indiana, data, there are some months in which other large, significant data files are added. July is one of those months. In addition to updates to the Fort Wayne and Allen County, Indiana obituary file, the South Side High School yearbook index, and the Historical Genealogy Department's Surname File, the end of July brings the unveiling of the department's Microtext Catalog.

Since the inception of the department in the early 1960s, microtext (film and fiche) has been an extremely important part of the collection. Even in the era of the Internet and rapidly expanding technologies, many important sources are available only in a microtext format. Historically it has taken all the cataloging resources devoted to the Historical Genealogy Department just to catalog the published monographic or book materials. In recent years, special efforts have been made to catalog the department's entire collection and have that information available in the library's online catalog. Earlier this year we finished cataloging our more than ten thousand unique periodical titles. Now our sights are set on cataloging our entire microtext collection.

Knowing the time and detail required to catalog nearly 370,000 microtext items according to contemporary cataloging rules, though, we made a decision to enhance our database inventory in such a way as to make it available on the web in advance of being able to catalog our the microtext items in our online catalog. The initial version of our microtext catalog inventory has been made available at the FriendsOfAllenCounty.org website, <www.friendsofallencounty.org/search_microtext.php>. There will soon be a link on the Historical Genealogy Department's homepage as well.

This preliminary microtext catalog is a database of our holdings with geographic and subject access giving collection and title-specific details to the user. The catalog is divided into four general categories: Locality Records, Specialty Records, Ethnic Records, and Other Records. In the "Locality Records" category one can search on states, counties, record types, and international locations; in the "Specialty" category one can call up listings of census records, city & county directories, military records, and passenger lists; in the "Ethnic" category African American, Native American, and Jewish materials are listed; and in the "Other Records" category, family histories & records, periodicals & newspapers, miscellaneous records, and a listing of our National Archives holdings can be found.

The "Locality Records" and "Specialty Records" categories provide you with various lists of options from which to choose while the remaining two categories, "Ethnic Records" and "Other Records," simply list the microfilm in a logical subject order. Every microtext collection is listed in the online database. Users will note that some of the collections listed are hypertext links. Clicking on those hypertext links will provide you with a detailed listing of the contents of the particular collections. As an example, choosing the Revolutionary War under the "Military Records" button and then clicking on the collection "Revolutionary War Records of Military Operations, Service, Pay & Accounts," you will get a roll-by-roll breakdown of that forty-one roll collection detailing which rolls contain pay accounts for which particular years, which contain operations and service orderly books, which contains troop lists from the various colonies, and the like. Though many hundreds of collections have this level of detail associated with them, we still have many hundreds yet to do. Over the next several months, significantly more details will be added to this important finding aid.

We are quite excited about finally being able to make data about our microtext holdings accessible in a searchable form on the Internet. Take advantage of this database when planning your research trips to Fort Wayne. And definitely let us know what you think of this new feature and how we might improve it to better assist you in your research.

Mexican-American War Microform Holdings at ACPL
by Timothy Dougherty

116,000 American men served in the Mexican-American War between 1846 and 1848, and its records are an often over-looked research source. If you are curious about your ancestor's place in the war, why not pay the Genealogy Department a visit?

A good starting point is the Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the Mexican War (Microcopy #M-616). This is an alphabetical index listing the unit with which the individual served.

The Compiled Service Records that go with the index can also be found at ACPL for a few states. These are Mississippi (M-863), Pennsylvania (M-1028), Tennessee (M-638) and Texas (M-278), and for individuals who served in Mormon Organizations (M-351). Records for other states may be obtained from the National Archives. The records include rank, unit, date and place of mustering in and out, payment information and general "remarks." "Remarks" include things such as injury,

sickness, or, as in the case of one private, "absent on detached service to Pueblo since 16 Sept. 1846."

Though soldiers from all states served in the war, Vermont, Maine, Connecticut and Rhode Island did not provide Volunteer units. Alabama, Arkansas, California, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia, as well as the District of Columbia furnished units. Texas and Illinois provided the most regiments.

Regular Army enlistments are not included with the Compiled Service Records. These will be found in Registers of Enlistments in the United States Army, 1798-1914, M-233. Listed here are soldiers in units not provided by specific states. Birthplace, occupation and additional service information are included.

The department also has the Mexican War Index to Pension Files, 1887-1926 (T-317), as well as the actual Selected Pension Application Files for Members of the Mormon Battalion, Mexican War, 1846-48 (T-1196). Any of the other pension records may be acquired from the National Archives. The pensions themselves contain fascinating genealogical information, such as family records, war-time depositions, and medical reports. Widows' pensions often include maiden names and may contain marriage certificates.

Also featured is an impressive collection on microfiche, the Mexican-American War Unit Histories and Personal Narratives. This includes general, personal and unit-specific histories dealing with various aspects of the war.

Orders of General Zachary Taylor to the Army of Occupation in the Mexican War, 1845-1847, M-29, rounds out the microform holdings. As the title suggests, these three reels contain the general and specific orders issued by General Taylor during the conflict.

Indiana Obituary Collections and Indexes
by Ryan Taylor

Curt Witcher's column (above) mentions new entries in the library's index of Fort Wayne/Allen County obituaries. Elsewhere in Indiana, there are busy volunteers who clip, copy and index obituaries from local newspapers--making them much more accessible than they were in the days when we had to scroll through the papers on microfilm to find a dead relative.

Two of the busiest are Patricia Dyson and Judith Richter, longtime users of our library. They are currently working on obituaries from four nearby counties, Whitley, Noble, DeKalb and Wells. When they started they produced a volume a year, but Noble County's 2005 obituaries required three volumes! They kindly supply an every-name index with their works, which means not only the deceased person but all their relations are accessible.

Austin Cox has been working for many years on obituaries from the Winchester and Union City newspapers (Randolph County). As well as current years (1986-2005), he is collecting retrospectively, filling in missing years as he goes. So far, his earliest volume covers 1926-1927. An earlier project extracted wedding and engagement announcements, 1947-1953 from the same papers.

Grant County has coverage in Mrs Wayne Gribbin's Obituaries from the Oak Hill Times.

These are all collections of current obituaries. There are many volumes in our collection for older death notices, such as those for the Tell City Anzeiger which covers 1870-1912. Roselyn Wells' extracts from Butler newspapers currently cover 1894-1939.

Finding these obituary volumes is quite simple. Do a subject search in the catalog using the place name and 'obituaries' as the search term. If you need help, ask at the reference desk.

Family History Month Extravaganza!

October, better known as Family History Month in these parts, will soon be upon us. To celebrate and share in the fun, the Historical Genealogy Department plans a wealth of programs for researchers of all sorts. For the first time ever, the department will offer events on every single day in October! The events range from classes on beginning genealogy and Civil War research to the early years of Fort Wayne television and preserving family heirlooms. The Allen County Genealogical Society and the Mary Penrose Wayne Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution will host a number of speakers and workshops, all open to the public. And, of course, our ever-popular Midnight Madness Friday will return for researchers who can't get enough of genealogy sleuthing! For more information about the upcoming October programs, go to the library's website at <www.acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy/2006FamilyHistoryMonth.pdf>

Preservation Tip of the Month

by Becky Schipper

ACPL's Preservation Technician Becky Schipper offers advice on conserving your documents:
Textiles: If you are storing wool or silk, it is suggested that you line the storage box and interleaf the textiles between the folds with *unbuffered* acid-free tissue. If the material is linen, cotton, or jute *buffered* acid-free tissue should be used.

Countdown to Conference 2007!

Just a little more than one year from now, the Allen County Public Library will be hosting the Federation of Genealogical Societies' Annual Conference here in Fort Wayne, Indiana! The four-day event is planned for August 15 - 18, 2007 at the Grand Wayne Center. Mark your calendars now--you will certainly want to reserve those dates.

The first day of the conference, Wednesday, August 15th, will be a day devoted to genealogical society management classes, managing a Family History Center, the Association of Professional Genealogists' management seminar, and other classes. The remaining three days of the conference will be filled with lectures on a great variety of research topics. And of course, the Grand Wayne Center's fantastic exhibit area will be filled with genealogical vendors offering the best and latest in genealogical products and services.

Each of the next twelve "Genealogy Gems" will contain more information about the conference. You simply won't want to miss this event!

New Building News

We have a date!! The Allen County Public Library administration has announced that the last day of service for the Historical Genealogy Department in our temporary location at Renaissance Square (where we have been for the last several years) will be Saturday, December 23, 2006, with the department closing at 6 pm that day. Again, we will officially close at the end of business that day and will re-open with a grand celebration in a greatly expanded and wonderfully renovated library on Saturday, January 27, 2007. Mark your calendars now--both to get some good research in before the holidays AND to attend the grand opening celebration on January 27th! Over the next several months, we will use this column to bring you updates on how things are progressing during these very exciting times.

HOTEL OF THE MONTH

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

Candlewood Suites

5251 Distribution Drive, Fort Wayne 46825
telephone: 260-484-1400; fax 260-482-8656
toll-free reservations: 1-877-226-3539

This hotel is the newest in Fort Wayne, on the site of the old Days Inn at I-69 and Lima Road (exit 111A). It is an easy ten-minute drive to the library straight down Lima/Clinton to the city center. Each suite offers a kitchen with microwave, dishwasher, stove-top burner and refrigerator. (Meijer's is nearby.) Amenities include a DVD/CD player and the hotel offers a movie library for your pleasure, a self-serve laundry, indoor pool and fitness center. For work, there is high speed wireless internet and a spacious desk area. It sounds like the perfect spot for genealogists coming for a week-long stay. Studios start at \$90.

AREA CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana (ACGSI)

Refreshments at 6:30, meeting at 7:00. Questions: contact Marge Graham, 260 672-2585 or gramar57@aol.com

No meetings during the summer; they resume in September.

Computer Users Group

The computer group does not meeting during the summer. Join them again in September!

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)

First Wednesday of each month in the Genealogy Department 9am - 7pm.

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

ACPL LIBRARIANS ON TOUR

Curt Witcher

18 August: Wertman Family Reunion 2006, Don Hall's Guesthouse Hotel & Conference Center, Fort Wayne, "Peopling the Midwest."

30 August-2 September: Federation of Genealogical Societies Annual Conference, August 30-September 2, 2006, Boston, MA; "The Future of the Past: Rights and Responsibilities," "Your Society Wants You! Effective Recruiting Strategies for Genealogical Societies," "Lookin' & Bookin': Effective Use of Record Repositories," "Fingerprinting Our Families: Using Ancestral Origin/Ethnicity as a Genealogical Research Key."

14 September: Woodburn Branch Library, 4701 State Road 101 North, Woodburn, "Beginning Your Family History."

23 September: Permian Basin Genealogical Society Conference, Odessa, TX, "Doing the History Eliminates the Mystery," "Doing Effective Genealogical Research in Libraries," "Mining the Mother Lode: Using the 'Periodical Source Index,'" "Pain in the Access: Getting More from the Internet for Your Genealogy."

29-30 September: Pennsylvania Genealogy Conference, Pittsburgh, PA, "The Road Not Taken: Mega Internet Sites for Genealogists Off the Beaten Path" and "Pain in the Access: Getting More from the Internet for Your Genealogy."

John Beatty

22 September: Clan Ewing Family Association Reunion, Don Hall's Guest House, Fort Wayne, "The Ewing Family of Fort Wayne and their Fur Trading Empire."

Elaine Kuhn

17 August: Genealogical Society of Whitley County, Public Library, Columbia City, "PERSI".

Ryan Taylor

18 September: Noble County Genealogical Society annual dinner, "Creating a Family Cookbook"

DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO THE LIBRARY

Wondering how to get to the library? Our exciting transition 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. Drive east on Jefferson Blvd. into downtown. Turn left on Barr Street to Berry Street. The library is located on the corner of Berry and Barr Streets.

From the North

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton, the library will be on your left when you cross Berry Street.

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. Left on Wayne Street. When you cross Clinton, the library will be on your left on Wayne Street.

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. Turn right on Barr Street. Turn left on Berry Street. The library is on your left on Berry Street.

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 Street at Main Street. This lot is one block away from the library. Hourly parking Monday through Friday, 9am to 6pm.

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

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 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 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 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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If you do not want to receive this e-zine, please follow the link at the very bottom of the issue of *GenealogyGems* you just received or send an email to kspears@acpl.lib.in.us with "unsubscribe e-zine" in the subject line.

Ryan Taylor, editor