

# WHITEWATER VALLEY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Box 941

Connersville, IN 47331

Vol. 8 No. 4

December 2008

Individual membership dues are \$9 annually payable in June of each year.

Meetings are held the third Tuesday of each month except December.

Website: [www.wvgen@verizon.net](http://www.wvgen@verizon.net)

## COMING EVENTS

January 10, 2009 - Organizational meeting for Rush County Genealogical Society at 1:00 p.m. at the Rushville Public Library. Ron Darrah from the Indiana Genealogical Society will be present.

January 20 and February 17 – WVGA meetings at Trinity Episcopal Parish House at 7:00 p.m.

April 25, 2009 – 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference of IGS at Marriott Center East, 7202 E. 21<sup>st</sup> Street, Indianapolis. Emphasis will be on military genealogy. (It has been decided to alternate the conferences between Indianapolis and Fort Wayne thus the 2010 conference will be in Fort Wayne and 2011 in Indianapolis.)

## WELCOME

Welcome to new members: John Johnson, Sue Frank and Karen McQueen. John Johnson gave the program in October about Alquina and Jennings Township.

## CEMETERY SURVEY

By the 2009 IGS Annual Conference the plan is to have the final volume of 17 counties done. Sharon Howell has done a tremendous job on this project. She has spent countless hours putting this project together. If you have not already purchased one or all of the 3 CDs that are out, you can go to [www.indgensoc.org](http://www.indgensoc.org) and order these. They are very well done as they list the names of cemeteries, specific location (if known) and driving directions.

## COUNTY GENEALOGIST

Pat Summan has been appointed by the Indiana Genealogical Society as genealogist for Fayette

County. Some of the responsibilities including promoting genealogical and historical research and education in the county and being familiar with IGS and its functions. The county genealogist is not expected to do personal research for others.

## QUERIES

Karen McQueen, one of our new members, is searching the following names: Wing in Indiana, Buck in Indiana, Smelcer in Tennessee and Hux in Tennessee. If you have any information you can contact her at 269 N. Dorsett Drive, Connersville (825-3074) or [KKM719@yahoo.com](mailto:KKM719@yahoo.com).

Barbara Craig, one of our members in Toledo, Ohio is looking for information on the Ephraim Myres family. He died in the 1840's. Wife was Polly (probably Mary) Lawson, eldest son was Aaron, there were daughters America and Katrina. There are probably others. Contact Barbara at 5217 Oakridge Drive, Toledo, Ohio 43623 (419) 472-7262 or [bjncraig@buckeye-express.com](mailto:bjncraig@buckeye-express.com).

## WITCHING GRAVES

At our September meeting, President Karen showed us how to witch or dowse graves. The following information was taken from the "web".

First you cut two pieces of wire – No. 9 steel wire, copper wire or metal coat hangers. After these are cut you bend them into "L" shapes. The short ends or handles can be inserted into pieces of PCV pipe so that the wires can move freely.

The technique is to hold the rods out in front of you parallel to the ground with forearms parallel to ground and your elbows at the waist. Beginners should start on a marked grave until they get a feel for the technique. Do not hold the rods tight as the handles must be held loosely in the circle of your fingers and thumbs. The rods will cross over each other or pull back towards your shoulders depending on whether a male or female is buried in the grave. An infant grave can be located by marking the short distance from when the wires begin to move and

when they return to their normal position. Not everyone can witch graves. Once you have seen this done you become a believer.

### **FROM THE FILES**

*Connersville Daily Examiner* December 4, 1895

An Examiner reporter interviewed Charley Wolf, who was arrested Tuesday on the charge of setting fire to the stables of John Banks and Ed Beckett and received the following story.

“I was drunk Monday night and on going to my boarding house – William Dawson’s – on eleventh street, was refused admittance on account of being drunk. I then went to my mother’s, Mrs. John Bank’s and for the same reason was refused admittance there. Three weeks ago she run me off from home for the same reason, for which I bear her no blame, as it was my fault. On being refused admittance at my home I went into Ed Beckett’s barn, corner eighth and Sycamour streets, to sleep, but there was no straw there, so left. Do not remember having any fire there at all. From there I went to Bank’s barn and laid down to sleep on the straw. Feeling a cigar in my pocket I took it out, lighted it and threw the match down, and before I could put it out the fire was beyond my control. IF I done anything it was purely accidental, as I hold no spite against anyone. I suppose that I will go over the road for it; and it will be hard for two of us to be in Jeffersonville. If I ever get out of this, I want you to understand I am done with whisky.”

Wolf seems to take his imprisonment rather hard, and seems to think he has a sure thing of being convicted.

The preliminary was held this afternoon and he was bound over to court.

### **ELOWAH COUNCIL**

About twenty-five members of Pocahontas lodge, of Connersville went to Fairview Tuesday evening to institute a lodge. Thirty-five charter members were ready for adoption, the following chiefs were duly elected and raised up to their respective stumps. Miss Jeffrey, Prophetess; Mrs. Piper, Pocahontas; Mrs. Jordan, Winona;

Mrs. McKee, powhotan; Miss Ira Brown, keeper of records, Mrs. Reese, keeper of wampum, Miss Emma Jordan, first scout; Miss Thorp, second scout; Mrs. Gray, runner. When the business of the evening had been relegated to its place, the happy company sat down to a feast of good things fit for the gods. Wednesday morning at six o’clock our Red Men came home.

### **DEATH**

William Chrisman died at the home of his son, David, north of the city, Tuesday afternoon at three o’clock of heart failure. He had worked outdoors all morning and complained of the cold, but was as well as usual and was holding a small child on his knee, when he fell off his chair, dropping the child and dying instantly. The deceased was the father of Mrs. W. N. Young of this city, and seventy-five years old. The funeral will take place in Valley Grove church, Thursday afternoon, Revs Tevis and Miller officiating.

### **PASSED AWAY**

At nine o’clock this morning, John L. Spangler died at his home on Eleventh street of old age, aged eighty years. The deceased was the father of Mrs. Gus Sinks and J. W. Spangler of this city, and E. R. Spangler of Liberty, Kentucky where he will be taken for burial, Thursday. A short service will be held at the house at eight o’clock tomorrow evening.

### **MEETS DEATH**

Charley Wise, who has been attending the Hankins school, about three miles north of town, died under peculiar circumstances Tuesday during the noon hour. The boy, who is eight years old, had been playing like the rest, when he was discovered by his older brother to be standing near a clump of bushes wiping blood away from his face. His brother says he asked Charlie if his nose was bleeding but without answering he sank down exhausted from loss of blood. Some of the scholars tried to staunch the flow but without effect. In less than ten minutes the lad was dead.

How the boy met his death is a mystery. A small wound in the soft part of his face was examined by a physician, who is at a loss to account for the instrument used. A supposition is that the boy in

his play had fallen on a limb which pierced his throat, was given but is not wholly accepted.

The boy, is the second son of David Wise, who lives on a farm owned by F. R. Beeson of this city.

The funeral will take place Thursday morning at ten o'clock, in Valley Grove church.

### **THE YEAR 1908**

This will boggle your mind,  
The year is 1908  
What a difference a century makes!  
Here are some statistics for the Year 1908.

The average life expectancy was 47 years.

Only 14 percent of the homes had a bathtub.

Only 8 percent of the homes had a telephone.

There were only 8,000 cars and only 144 miles of paved roads.

The maximum speed limit in most cities was 10 mph.

The tallest structure in the world was the Eiffel Tower.

The average wage in 1908 was 22 cents per hour.

The average worker made between \$200 and \$400 per year.

A competent accountant could expect to earn \$2,000 per year, a dentist \$2,500 per year, a veterinarian between \$1,500 and \$4,000 per year, and a mechanical engineer about \$5,000 per year.

More than 95 percent of all births took place at home.

Ninety percent of all doctors had NO COLLEGE EDUCATION! Instead, they attended so-called medical schools, many of which were condemned in the press AND the government as 'substandard.'

Sugar cost four cents a pound.

Eggs were fourteen cents a dozen.

Coffee was fifteen cents a pound.

Most women only washed their hair once a month, and used Borax or egg yolks for shampoo.

Canada passed a law that prohibited poor people from entering into their country for any reason.

Five leading causes of death were:

1. Pneumonia and influenza
2. Tuberculosis
3. Diarrhea
4. Heart disease
5. Stroke

The American flag had 45 stars.

The population of Las Vegas, Nevada, was only 30 !!!!!!!!

Crossword puzzles, canned beer, and ice tea hadn't been invented yet.

There was no Mother's Day or Father's Day.

Two out of every 10 adults couldn't read or write. Only 6 percent of all Americans had graduated from high school.

Marijuana, heroin, and morphine were all available over the counter at the local corner drugstores. Back then pharmacists said 'Heroin clears the complexion, gives buoyancy to the mind, regulates the stomach and bowels, and is, in fact, a perfect guardian of health.' (Shocking)

Eighteen percent of households had at least one full-time servant or domestic help.

There were about 230 reported murders in the ENTIRE! USA! And organized Barbershop didn't exist.

Try to imagine what it may be like in another 100 years.

IT STAGGERS THE MIND !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

## **MORTALITY SCHEDULES**

Adapted from *Indiana Genealogist* June 2008

You like cemeteries? You like reading tombstones? In short, do you like to see as much of dead people as you can? Browsing a mortality schedule can be as enjoyable as walking through a cemetery, with no grass stains to worry about.

Mortality schedules, those non-population census schedules that list deaths in the census year, have been under utilized by most researchers. There are many reasons for this including: ignorance of their existence, lack of availability online and difficulty in determining which individuals might be listed.

Overcoming these obstacles will provide you with a source of death data that you might otherwise lack.

### **Mortality Schedules Exist**

Mortality schedules are particularly valuable as official records of death before Indiana required death registration. They are also useful when no gravestone or obituary can be located, or to document children who were born and died between census years. The fact that they only document deaths in the twelve months preceding the census date and that many deaths likely were unreported, limit their usefulness, but the value of a find makes them well worth searching.

For the state of Indiana, mortality schedules were completed along with the 1850, 1860, 1870 and 1880 population censuses. Mortality schedules contain an entry for each person who died in the census year. For each of the above census years, the official census date was June 1<sup>st</sup> so the 1850 schedules, for example include deaths between 1 June 1849 and 31 May 1850.

The data included for each person is similar to that which appears on the population schedules for living individuals, and includes the name, sex, age, color, marital status (blank implying single), place of birth, month of death, occupation, cause of death and number of days ill. The 1870 schedules added the family number from the related population schedule

entry and an indicator for whether the person's parents were foreign born. The 1880 schedules had individual fields for the birthplaces of the mother and father, and added length of residence, the name of the attending physician, the township of residence and a field for notes.

### **Mortality Schedules Are Becoming More Readily Available Online.**

Many county genealogical societies, libraries, or INGenWeb sites have transcribed the mortality schedules for their counties. The Ancestry.com website has an index to the 1850 and 1860 mortality schedules for Indiana. Note, however, that this index may not be exhaustive.

The most exciting web-related news is that FamilySearch has the entire 1850 mortality schedule images online at <http://labs.familysearch.org>. To browse the images by county, click Record Search, Sign In, and then select the 1850 United States Census (Mortality Schedule), from the "Browse Images in a Collection" column. There is also an index, but it is not currently complete.

For other census years, an index and the microfilm images are available at the Indiana State Library. The index is called Indiana Mortality Records Index and is available in the Genealogy Division. Microfilm containing the images is available in the Microforms Area. The schedules are also available at some local libraries.

Because the mortality schedules are not large for most counties, it is recommended that you browse the entire listings in counties where you have an interest. In this way, you may pick up children whose existence was previously unknown or make other serendipitous discoveries.

### **QUOTE OF THE DAY**

Genealogists don't die, they just find themselves on the mortality schedules."

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE.

