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Finding Biographical Data in Secondary Source Materials  
by Curt B. Witcher

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Biographical sources can be the building blocks that spring us back into older generations of data. They can fill in missing pieces of our families' histories as well as provide us with more documents with which to solve inconsistencies and voids in our research. They can really assist us in finding all the evidence for our ancestors. In a very meaningful way, those secondary sources we call biographical materials can help us fulfill the very first requirement of the genealogical proof standard, that being a thorough and reasonably exhaustive search.

Biographies and genealogies are closely related. A basic difference between genealogical materials and biographical materials is that genealogical materials tend to be much more "vertical" in scope and depth -- multi-generational, while biographical materials tend to be more "horizontal" in scope and depth -- usually the information provided primarily focuses on a single individual and covers no more than two or three generations, often his or her children and his or her parents. Biographies tend to not go back as far in terms of generations, but they give you more detail about the person than a typical genealogy does.

There are various types of biographical compilations. The most well-known are the geographically based compilations. Many hundreds of town and county histories have been published over the years with the majority of them sporting significant biographical sections. Many of these biographical sections consistently have been knocked either for only covering the rich and famous or for being

greatly embellished accounts of individuals' lives. While there may be truth to those allegations, why not look for information on one's ancestors anyway? Lead generation can be a wonderful thing; one can pull out all kinds of clues to follow up with additional research. In addition, typically the smaller the town or community the more individuals of all walks of life get included in the biographical sections.

In addition to the geographically based compilations, one can find ethnic, religious, occupational, organizational, and event-based biographical works. If one's ancestor was a brewmaster, a search for the brewing history in his region could reveal biographical details.

In trying to find biographical materials, it is vital to understand how and where historical information tends to be archived and made available. Local public libraries strive to have all the published materials for the areas they serve, whether a town, township, county, or region. That makes them good sources for all kinds of biographical compilations, both the usual and expected as well as the unique. Many state libraries act like the public library for their respective states, collecting heavily in published material such as newspapers, church histories, locality histories, and of course, biographical compilations.

An excellent, free tool for discovering biographical works for your areas or topics of interest is WorldCat.org. This bibliographic database contains more than two billion catalog records for more than ten thousand libraries worldwide. If a biographical compilation exists, it's likely WorldCat will have a record describing it.

Even better than knowing about these biographical works through WorldCat is accessing a number of the actual entities through some amazing websites. Both FamilySearch's Family History Books (<https://books.familysearch.org>) and the Internet Archive (<https://archive.org>) have growing silos of online publications including complete local histories and biographical collections. The Digital Public Library of America (<https://dp.la>) has more than twenty-two million items available for free access on their website. The HathiTrust (<https://www.hathitrust.org>) offers a comparable number of works to the Internet Archive. Why not take a look and see who's who among your ancestors?

Sometimes a number of us shy away from derivative/secondary sources such as biographical materials in our family history research. We have heard so often and with such passion that original/primary sources are where it's at--are what we should seek and focus upon obtaining. I certainly am not going to argue with that; however, I have found that so often it's in the thorough and consistent use of derivative sources that one finds the maximum number of original sources. Those biographical sources can be a boon to our research.

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La Porte County, Indiana Early Probate Records, 1833-1850  
by Melissa Tennant

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Probate records provide a wealth of information for family historians as they are the documents created when disbursing the property of a deceased individual. Not only do these records indicate when an individual died, but they also tell the family's story. One can find within these documents proof that some families worked together to settle an estate, while other families squabbled over

personal items and property.

A variety of records are created during the probate process that can lead to the discovery of other family members. Inventories and assessments of the deceased individual's property and debt notices can indicate the person's financial standing within the community. A bill of sale, which names the individual purchasing an item from the estate, can document a potential neighbor or family member. Another possible record set concerns guardianship for children who had lost a parent and were not of legal age to manage property. Family members were typically assigned guardianship of minor children.

Since these documents may be created over a length of time and organized in multiple court books, it is wonderful to see a resource that abstracts the details from three probate record sets that were created in a particular county during the same time period, such as "La Porte County, Indiana Early Probate Records, 1833-1850" by compiled Harold Henderson (CG), Mary Leahy Wenzel, and Dorothy Germain Palmer (977.201 L31HEA). This volume includes the La Porte County, Indiana Probate Order Book A (1833-1842), Probate Complete Record Book A (1833-1848), and Probate "Loose Papers" (1836-1850), where an individual's probate could appear in one or more of these record sets. The volume contains an index with the names of the deceased and those of others within the documents.

An example of what can be discovered is the estate for Daniel Griffin, initially found in multiple pages of the Probate Order Book. Typically included are the court dates; the names of administrators, some of whom have the surname of Griffin; the names of Daniel's eight heirs and their wives; and a note of inventory, appraisement, and a request to sell the land. Within the Probate Complete Record Book are court dates for Aletha, his widow, who petitioned for her dower. Other details discovered in the abstract include when Daniel died, a description of his land, a note of a guardian being appointed for the minor children, and that his widow received her dower portion.

You can search for similar probate sources at The Genealogy Center catalog on-site or from home at <<http://genealogycenter.org/>> by using the county and/ or state and probate as the search terms. An example is "Indiana probate" or "Clinton, Indiana probate." Using resources such as "La Porte County, Indiana Early Probate Records, 1833-1850" provides researchers with key details about their family and citations for the original records that a family historian should examine within the repository.

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Online Military Indexes and Records  
by Delia Cothrun Bourne

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A researcher who is just beginning to look into a military ancestor can often be puzzled as to where to start. Fortunately, Joe Beine, who administers the fabulous "Online Death Indexes" website, <https://www.deathindexes.com/>, has met and supplied this military need as well.

The "Online Military Indexes and Records" <http://www.militaryindexes.com/index.html> site is divided into specific conflict: Revolution, War of 1812, Mexican War, Civil War, Spanish American

War (including the Philippine Insurrection), World War I and II, Korea, and Vietnam. Each section lists the major collections at Ancestry and Fold3 and indicates that payment is required, but each also lists federal and state collections that are available to search for free, such as muster rolls and other War of 1812 sources from the Delaware State Archives, the Kentucky Secretary of State's Revolutionary War Warrants Database, and the World War II National Memorial Registry. It also includes material that is available for free from FamilySearch, including various Confederate Home and Pension databases.

For example, the "Korean War Air Loss Database" provides an alphabetical listing of downed service people, rank, service, aircraft type and tail number, date of loss, squadron, group or wing and the circumstances of the loss. For example, Air Force Captain Jore J. Lewis, 334th Squadron, 4th Fighter Group, in an F-86E, tail number 51-2760, was shot down by a MiG. His plane had major damage from flying debris, but Captain Lewis returned to base safely.

And the "Mississippi World War I Statement of Service Cards and Indices" provides information about where the soldier was born and his age, current residence, when and where the soldier enlisted, assignments, whether served overseas, ranks and discharge, plus the soldier's service number. For example, Pope M. Cothrun, of Gulfport, Mississippi, service number 1607243, was born in Starkville and was age 19 years and four months when he enlisted in 1917. He was a private, promoted to corporal, in the Quartermaster Corps, and was discharged February 26, 1919. He never served overseas. Because many Army service records were destroyed in the National Personnel Records Center fire, records such of these are of vital importance in determining the service of an ancestor.

The splash page for "Online Military Indexes and Records" also provides a link to Mr. Beine's other sites, the aforementioned Death Indexes, Birth and Marriage Indexes, Passenger Lists, Census Records, Naturalization Records, and The Genealogy Center's Our Military Heritage. Be sure to examine "Online Military Indexes and Records" as you begin or continue your military research.

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Technology Tip of the Month--Continuing with More "What-were-they-thinking" Moments - 1890s  
by Kay Spears

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Women - let's see a show of hands. How many of you have walked into a beauty parlor/styling salon with a magazine clipping of Farah Fawcett/Dorothy Hamill/Princess Diana/Tina Turner and said "I want that hair style"? The results are just never quite right, even with a professional doing the styling. I think about that when I stumble across some interesting styles in old photographs. I know those people in those photographs had to have seen an illustration someplace and thought they would look great in that style. One of the many problems with that manner of thinking is that most of those people did the styling themselves. The other problem is a lot of those fads/styles/fashions are just not attractive and do nothing to enhance most people's appearance.

For example, let's take what my mother lovely called the "spit-curl." I'm sure that's not really what they were called; I think we could probably call them pin-curls. Whatever the name, sometime around the 1880s, some women started wearing curls on their foreheads. Do not confuse those curls with the crimped, frizzy bangs. No, no, these were curls that were made even more attractive

because they appear to have been oiled. It is an interesting look.

Speaking of interesting looks, around the late 1880s when women were still wearing bustles, there appeared on the shoulders a teeny-weeny bump. This bump morphed in to giant sleeves. During the 1890s these sleeves grew and grew. Decorations of all kinds were added to these sleeves. Once again the mutton sleeve made its appearance. At least the bustle disappeared. Thankfully, the mutton sleeve only stayed around for about 10 years.

Also in the 1890s, in order to balance out the giant sleeves, a number of women styled their hair so that a knot rested on the top of their head. To this knot one could add all kinds of things to make it even higher. Think Moulin Rouge and Toulouse-Lautrec.

Except for the waxed mustaches and large sideburns of the 1880s, men relatively escaped fashion extremes.

Next article: A look at photography studio props.

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#### Quick-Tip of the Month for Preservation—Labeling Photographs

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Photographs are such important parts of a family's records. We all know, and appreciate, how the old saying came about that a picture is worth a thousand words. An important preservation step is to make sure we label all of our photographs--and yes, even the digital ones. (Or perhaps I should say especially the digital ones!) When labeling photos, it is very important to use the person's name rather than "Mom" or "Grandpa." Future generations won't know which "Mom" or "Grandpa" you are referencing.

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#### PERSI Gems--School Days

by Adam Barrone and Mike Hudson

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The yellow buses have passed their annual inspections. Teachers have completed their summertime efforts to standardize curriculum. Building roofs have been sealed and walls have been painted. Physicians have examined would-be participants in fall sports. Marching bands are on their practice fields learning formations and memorizing music. Supplies fill the stores. The new school year is at hand.

Public schooling has been widely available to Indiana children for more than 150 years, first in township schoolhouses and city schools and, more recently, in schools operated by large consolidated districts. The framers of the Indiana State Constitution envisioned an educational system "open to all". As a consequence, schooling has been a shared experience for children for generations.

As you conduct research and gather information and stories from your relatives, keeping schooling in mind. Write to schools seeking copies of transcripts. Seek stashes of report cards in family papers. Look for yearbooks in libraries, on internet auction sites, and in used bookstores. When

chatting with relatives, ask about their time in school. They will have stories to tell.

The Periodical Source Index (PERSI), cites a wide variety of school records, histories, news, and recollections which may be useful in your research. Try a search here:

<http://search.findmypast.com/search/periodical-source-index>

Here are few examples:

Chillingham School building and clergy not an avaricious illiberal set, Parish Register item, 1835  
Cleveland (Eng.) Fam. Hist. Soc. Journal, v.4n.3, Jul. 1989

Don A. Jacobson recalls 6th grade at Moran Grade School, and revenge on a bully named Harrison, 1940  
Nostalgia Magazine (Spokane, WA), v.11n.12, Dec. 2009

Florence Green Purple George letter, Mattishall village and school memories, 1905-1996  
Mid-Norfolk (Eng.) Fam. Hist. Soc. News Letter, v.3n.8, Aut. 2003

Halifax Word Peak and son Word Day Peake business and school leadership activities, 1871-1954  
Times of Franklin (VA) Before & After 1786, Aug. 2010

Jim Ford recalls happy days at Hiseville High School, wife Moss Etta Everett, 1950-1959  
Kentucky Explorer, v.25n.3, Aug 2010

Little Red Brick School House box supper pranks and vandalism, night of deviltry, 1907  
Seedling Patch (Lawrence Co. Hist. & Gen. Soc., IN), Spr. 2012

Paxton School wagon, Milner and Dinah Morgan drivers, photo and note, n.d.  
Sullivan Co. (IN) Hist. Soc. Newsletter, v.37n.6, Nov. 2010

Slates in schools abolished, ending filthy habit of expectorating on them to clean them, 1910  
Craighead Co. (AR) Historical Quarterly, v.49n.2, Apr. 2011

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History Tidbits: Sunbathing  
by Allison DePrey Singleton

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When did American society become obsessed with having tanned skin? Why did it become in vogue to have sun-kissed skin? Let's explore the history of sunbathing and tanning.

Fashions, ideas, and people become popular and then disappear over time. Women and men become slaves to any of these and then can change their views whenever it has become passé. This has yet to be the case with sunbathing. Once it became popular, it has remained so over the decades. There have been advancements in skin care and safety in the sunbathing, but neither has affected its popularity.

Prior to the 1920s, high society women and men attempted to keep their skin pale, especially the women. Tanned skin was associated with working outside and being of lower class. Women went out of their way to keep their skin pale with long sleeves, parasols, hats, and staying in shaded locations. This all began to change at the turn of the century and by the 1920s, sun-kissed skin was popular.

Popular culture holds that Coco Chanel was the source for the change in the popularity of sunbathing in 1923. Actually, she just jumped on the bandwagon of the time for having sun-tanned skin. An article from 1922 appeared in many newspapers titled, "Bronze Skin is Latest in Paris." An article from 1918 has the subtitle of "Sun Bathing Popular." Even as early as 1875, an article extolled the virtues of sunbathing, and there were mentions of the pastime as early as the 1860s. According to articles in newspapers from the turn of the twentieth century, sunbathing became popular in Europe and slowly spread across the United States along with other fashion changes.

Around this time period, medical doctors began to realize the importance of the sun for the production of Vitamin D. They began recommending that people spend small amounts of time in the sun. Of course, they also advised that it should be done under a doctor's care and sparingly. As time went on, the popularity of sunbathing had less to do with medical concerns and more about vanity.

As more research has been done on the effects of the sun on the skin, the importance of sunscreen and the need for protecting the skin for extended times in the sun has arisen. Extended time sunbathing is now one of the leading causes of skin cancer in people of all ages. For this reason, many people have begun embracing their untanned skin. Despite this fact, there is still a strong cultural appreciation of sun tanned skin. What is your and your family's experience with sunbathing? Has it changed over the years? Something as simple as sunbathing history can teach you more about the cultural experiences of your ancestors.

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Library Catalog Insider--More on Military Subject Headings  
by Kasia Young

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Welcome back! In this month's newsletter we are continuing our discussion on military subject headings. Last month we focused on the military headings entered as subdivisions under place names. This month we are introducing military headings for individual wars, which are entered directly by their names.

\* Denotes military headings that can be further subdivided by geographic location heading (see *Genealogy Gems* No. 168, February 28, 2018)

King Philip's War, 1675-1676  
(see also: Indians of North America--Wars--1600-1750)

Napoleonic Wars, 1800-1815

Black Hawk War, 1832  
(see also: Indians of North America--Wars--1815-1875)

\*Mexican War, 1846-1848

Pig War, Wash., 1859

\*Korean War, 1950-1953

\*Persian Gulf War, 1991

\*Spanish-American War, 1898

\*World War, 1914-1918

\*World War, 1939-1945

\*Vietnam War, 1961-1975

\*Afghan War, 2001-

(see also: Operation Enduring Freedom, 2001- and War on Terrorism, 2001-2009)

Iraq War, 2003-2011

(see also: War on Terrorism, 2001-2009)

As with the military headings introduced in *Genealogy Gems* No. 172, June 30, 2018, these headings also can have one of the following subdivisions attached to them:

Campaigns

Casualties

Missing in action

Personal narratives, American

Prisoners and prisons

Regimental histories

Registers

Registers of dead

Veterans

For example:

"World War, 1939-1945--Regimental histories" (this search yields 545 records pertaining to histories of World War II regiments)

"World War, 1939-1945--Regimental histories--United States" (this search yields 445 records pertaining to histories of World War II American regiments)

"World War, 1939-1945--Indiana--Allen County" (this search yields 4 records pertaining to Allen County, Indiana World War II experience)

Bonus tip for August:

Use "Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945)" for materials pertaining to works on the genocide of European Jews during World War II.

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#### DNA and Genealogy Interest Group

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Have you done a DNA test for genealogical purposes? Do you completely understand the results you received? Do you need advice in interpreting your results? Are you interested and wonder what the best test is for you? Come to the DNA & Genealogy Interest Group Meetings on the 1st Thursday of the month to share and learn from each other! Basic information meeting is from 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m., followed by a more advanced discussion from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The next meetings are Thursday, August 2, 2018 in the Discovery Center. Come in and share!

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#### Summer Days at The Genealogy Center

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In August, we are hosting the Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference "On the Three Rivers: Past, Present & Future." Taking place August 22 through 25, 2018 at the Grand Wayne Center, just a block from The Genealogy Center, there is plenty of fun, food and fabulous research! See [www.fgs.org](http://www.fgs.org) for more information!

The Genealogy Center's Summer Days will continue in September with John Beatty on "Public Member Trees on Ancestry: Exploring, Evaluating, and Adding Value," on September 22, 2018 at 10:00 a.m., in Meeting Rooms A&B. Everyone uses Ancestry's Public Member Trees. They index millions of names; and while sometimes wrong, they can provide a wealth of valuable clues. How do you know if the information is right? This talk discusses some strategies for researching the trees and assessing whether the proposed information is correct. It will also discuss ways that Ancestry users can add value to their own trees, making them more valuable to your own research and to others. To register for this free event, call 260-421-1225 or email [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info).

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#### Plan for Family History Month 2018 Now!

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A full line-up of program for Family History Month 2018 has already been planned. Check it out. <http://genealogycenter.org/docs/default-source/2018-brochures/2018FHM-2>

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#### Staying Informed about Genealogy Center Programming

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Do you want to know what we've got planned? Are you interested in one of our events, but forget? We are now offering email updates for The Genealogy Center's programming schedule. Don't miss out! Sign up at <http://goo.gl/forms/THcVOwAabB>.

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### Area Calendar of Events

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#### Mary Penrose Wayne DAR Chapter Library Help Day for Prospective Members

August 1, 2018 - The Genealogy Center, Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 10 - 4 p.m. Members of the Mary Penrose Wayne Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution will provide help to those interested in joining the D.A.R. who would like advice and assistance in their research. No appointment is necessary.

#### Children of the American Revolution Library Help Day for Prospective Members

August 15, 2018 - The Genealogy Center, Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 10 - 4 p.m. Members of the Mary Penrose Wayne Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution as well as Children of the American Revolution members will provide help to those interested in joining the C.A.R. who would like advice and assistance in their research. No appointment is necessary.

#### Miami Indian Heritage Days

August 4, 2018 - Chief Richardville House, 5705 Bluffton Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. The Miami Artist with Cathy Mowery. Admission: Adults - \$7.00, Seniors (65+) and Youth (3-17) - \$5.00, Members and children under 3 are free.

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### Genealogy Center Social Media

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GenealogyCenter/>  
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/genealogycenter/>  
Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ACPLGenealogy>  
Blog: <http://www.genealogycenter.org/Community/Blog.aspx>  
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/askacpl>

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### Driving Directions to the Library

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

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 302. 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 312. 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 Ave. which dead-ends at West State Blvd. Make an angled left turn onto West State Blvd. 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.

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#### Parking at the Library

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At the Library, underground parking can be accessed from 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 library card holders may use their cards to validate the parking ticket at the west end of 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 \$70.

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. The meters take credit cards and charge at a rate of \$1/hour. Street parking is free after 5 p.m. 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 5 p.m. and 11 p.m.

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### Genealogy Center Queries

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The Genealogy Center 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](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info).

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### Publishing Note

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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.

To subscribe to "Genealogy Gems," simply use your browser to go to the website: [www.GenealogyCenter.org](http://www.GenealogyCenter.org). Scroll to the bottom, click on E-zine, and fill out the form. You will be notified with a confirmation email.

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

Curt B. Witcher and John D. Beatty, *CG*, co-editors