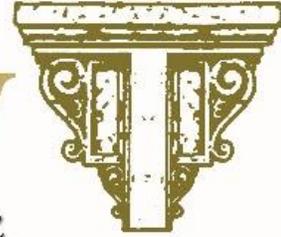


Monroe County History Center

Where the past and present meet.



News from the Library Online Edition

Dear Nicole,

Welcome to the third edition of the Monroe County History Center's online version of News from the Library.

I hope you will find helpful information in this issue. In the last two months, the Research Library has acquired some valuable new tools and sources that we are ready to share. We had interesting new materials donated, a good response to a recent call for yearbook donations, and several digitization projects completed or nearing completion.

Comments to the newsletter are always welcome and may be emailed to mchclibrary@gmail.com. Thank you all for your support of the Monroe County Historical Society.

Best wishes,

Elizabeth Schlemmer
Library Manager
Monroe County History Center



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New Books on the Shelves

**Memories of Dr. Anthony (Tony) Pizzo as told to E. Wainright Martin, Jr., 2012. Gift from author.*

Looking Back on the Library Reception

Earlier this month, a reception was held to honor a bequest made to the Research Library by the Lola Burkhart Estate. Guests included Mrs. Burkhart's nieces Winnie Mechem (L) and Carolyn Young (R), shown above. The Burkhart family was presented with flowers and gifts as a token of the History Center's appreciation.

A plaque commemorating Mrs. Burkhart's gift will sit permanently on the bookshelves in the library.

Many thanks to Library Committee members who helped put on the event!

* *Memories of Rudolph Otto (Rudy) and Dorothy (Doti) Pozzatti, as told to E. Wainright Martin, Jr.*, 2012.

Gift from author.

* *Hoadley Markers and Tree-Trunk Monuments*, by David Hoadley, 2013.

Gift from author.

* Ellettsville High School Yearbooks, *The Lllamarada*, 1935, 1936, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1944, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1956, 1961, and the 1945 Senior Diary.

Gift from Lucy & Marion Jacobs.

Coming Events

Cemetery Workshop

The workshop will be a two-day event featuring an orientation and a hands-on restoration work day. All are welcome to the free orientation. Participants in the restoration workshop must register and also attend the orientation.

Featured Resource

Monroe County Probates
Probate records document the estate of a recently deceased person. They may

Cemetery Workshop Orientation -- Friday, June 7th

Monroe County History Center

6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

"What Not to Do at the Cemetery: Indiana Laws Related to Cemeteries and Common Cemetery Symbols" with Jeannie Regan-Dinius

Join us for an informative talk on Friday, June 7th discussing Indiana cemetery laws and other important parts of cemetery restoration. The presentation will be followed with a Q&A session. The Friday portion of the workshop is free and open to the public. Workshop attendees must attend this portion if they wish to work hands-on in the cemetery the next day.

Jeannie R. Regan-Dinius, Director of Special Initiatives, has worked for the Division since 2000. She has a B.A. in Public History from Ball State University and an M.S. in both Urban Planning and Library Science Information Management from Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis.

Hands-On Restoration -- Saturday, June 8th

Rosehill Cemetery

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Cost: \$20.00 (\$10.00 for MCHC members)

Submit Registration Form to the Monroe County History Center

[Cemetery Workshop Registration Form](#)

This workshop will focus on restoring broken stones and re-setting stones that were knocked over. Participants will observe safe and correct ways to reset stones as well assist with various cleaning and restoration activities.

This workshop will be held regardless of weather, and all participants will be involved in the hands-on session. There will be opportunity to talk with speakers and trainers.

include details about the deceased's heirs, assets and debts, and personal property-- sometimes including a complete inventory of their estate!

For example, the probate of Edmund Bingham, who lived in the cabin on display at our museum, tells us that among his possessions he owned one loom, two axes, two washboards, one set of plates, and an unfinished quilt.

The Research Library holds Monroe County's Probate records from the county's beginning through the 1950's. These records are indexed to about 1900.

Become a member today!

The Monroe County Historical Society supports itself through members like you! Some of the benefits of membership include:

- free admission to the museum**
- 10% discount in the museum store**

Lunch will be provided and is included in the registration fee. Registration deadline is: Wednesday, June 5th. No refunds after the deadline. Please see registration form for more details.

Annual Garage Sale Extravaganza

The History Center's annual garage sale is just around the corner! This year's sale will be Friday, June 14th 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. and Saturday, June 15th 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at the COOK Pharmica warehouse off of Rogers St.

This is *not* your ordinary garage sale. Please come and shop our large selection of antiques, furniture, books, and household items or bid on this year's large ticket items, including a 1967 Ford Mustang, cherry red with low mileage and one previous owner.

Donations will be accepted through Wednesday, June 12th.

For questions about the sale, call [812-332-2517 ext. 2](tel:812-332-2517).

All proceeds benefit the operations of the Monroe County Historical Society, Inc.

Monroe County Commissioners Book A Recently Digitized

The earliest Monroe County Commissioners book, spanning the years 1818-1824, is available for viewing on CD in the Research Library. With the assistance of IU Librarian Lou Malcomb, interns at the Herman B Wells Library recently digitized the original Commissioners Book, which is in the History Center's possession, and provided copies of the scanned images on CD to be made available for public use.

Commissioners books contain minutes from the meetings of the county commissioners. Book A includes motions to appoint the first Monroe County officials, to establish the boundaries of each township, and to arrange the original sale of Bloomington town lots and the establishment of the county's first courthouse square, school, jail, and roads.

The original ledger books of the earliest Commissioners Records through

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events**

**Levels:
Student/Teacher \$20
Basic \$35
Family \$60
Sustaining \$100
Patron \$500**

**To become a member or
receive more information
on membership, please
email Hillary Detty at
admin@monroehistory.org**

the year 1871 are held in the Research library, and the first two books are also transcribed and available in print. If you are interested in reading these transcriptions, or viewing images of the ledger books, please stop by and request them at the Research Library.

Smithville Museum New Regular Hours

During the past few years, the Smithville Museum, which holds a lot of material about people from the area, has been open only by appointment. During the summer, to coincide with the Smithville Farmers' Market, the museum will be open every third Saturday from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Hours during the remainder of the year will be scheduled based on the response this summer.

Now Introducing: the Archive Alcove

Ledgers, docket, and various logs have been waiting for some time to be found in the storage room of the Research Library. The History Center is pleased to announce that the miscellaneous archives in our library's collection, over 60 volumes in total, are now cataloged and available for researchers.

Library intern Meredith Hylton recently completed her project of cataloging the archives held in the library's storage room side room, now dubbed the "Archive Alcove."

These archives are now searchable via our on-site electronic museum database Past Perfect.

A sampling of the ledgers in the Archive Alcove include:

- Auditors Record of Appraisal, Monroe County, 1869
- Grocer Log Book, Bloomington, 1870-1871
- Voting Records, Monroe County, 1890
- Assessors Books, various Monroe County Townships, c. 1896-1898
- Enumeration of Males Over the Age of 21, various townships, 1901, 1907, 1925, 1931
- Court Cases, Bloomington, 1897-1899

The Case of Miss Mary Spaulding: The "Wealthiest Colored Woman" in Town

By Elizabeth Schlemmer

Last month the library received an intriguing request for research. The patron provided an obituary and asked one broad question: What more is

Our Top Ten Resources for Finding Your Female Ancestors

10. Marriage Records-- marriage application books (which we have from 1905 to the 1954) list brides' occupations and their parents' names and places of birth.

9. Obituaries-- many women's deaths are listed in the paper. The public library indexes its obituary collection online.

8. Funeral Records-- Day Funeral home keeps good records of everyone who used their services as early as the 1930s.

7. Probates-- may list heirs of the deceased including wives. A few women also have probates.

6. Community Files-- list local events and gossip news from small towns in the county and mention women frequently.

known of this woman? The obituary read as follows.

Bloomington Telephone, 13 November, 1913

Miss Mary Eliza Spaulding, the wealthiest colored woman in this city, died suddenly while sitting in her chair this morning at her home on east Kirkwood avenue. She had been suffering with asthma for the past two weeks and had been out of bed only a short time when death came. Miss Spaulding sold her home recently for \$4,000 and was to have given up possession of her old home last week but was taken sick and remained. Her home was very dear to her and for many years she had refused to sell the property which had become so valuable as it was on east Kirkwood.

Miss Spaulding was 52 years old and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Spaulding, deceased. She leaves one sister, Mrs. Anna Campbell, of Indianapolis. Miss Spaulding was an active member of the 6th St. A.M.E. church and the funeral will be held Wednesday afternoon at 2:30 at the church in charge of Rev. Gile, burial at Rose Hill.

Because the obituary described Miss Spaulding as a wealthy woman, the patron supposed that perhaps she was very accomplished, and that the library would have additional information about her. I was also curious and hopeful.

I set to work to exhaust a checklist of possible resources. In the end, I found many references to her father William; but apart from the obituary and a couple censuses the client provided, nothing else surfaced about Miss Spaulding. What I did find about her family painted a somber picture.

Miss Spaulding's father William was a Civil War veteran.[i] William and his wife Matilda and children moved from Kentucky to a small home on East Kirkwood Avenue in Bloomington by the 1870s.[ii] The lot where the house was located is now occupied by Panda Express.[iii] In 1875, William was indicted for petit larceny by the Monroe County Circuit Court. The court docket notes that he unlawfully stole "one dead dressed goose at the value of 40 cents." [iv] Perhaps this was to feed his family? Or was it to spite John Wooley, the lawful owner of that supper?

William would later encounter more grave trouble with the law. In 1896, William Spaulding was charged with murder. The newspaper headline reports, "FATAL STAB of Wm. Spaulding Ends the Life of David White" and adds with melodrama, "Two Colored Men Carve Each Other and Death Results-Full Details of a Sad Affray." [v]

To briefly summarize the event: David White, a young black man and acquaintance of William Spaulding, approached the older man while he was washing clothes on his front lawn on Kirkwood. White was drunk and angry. The two men argued about a personal matter regarding a gun. White threatened Spaulding and cut him in the abdomen with a pocket knife. White tried to escape, but Spaulding overtook him and slashed his

5. City Directories-- when a married man is listed as a head of household for a residence, his wife's first name is also provided. When a woman is living alone and employed, her occupation and employer is given.

4. Newspaper clippings-- the index cards in our card catalog include wedding and birth announcements, as well as news such as, "Mary Thrasher Visits her Aunt in Indianapolis."

3. Vertical Files-- the library holds several files devoted to subjects related to women's history, including a new file of biographies of accomplished local women.

2. Church Registers-- list women for baptisms, marriages, and joining and leaving the church.

1. Land Records-- for hard-to-find women, check land records. Every time a man sells land, his wife is listed and signs for her interest in the

attacker across the neck. White ran several blocks before stumbling to his death. Spaulding survived his injuries. After an appeal of his initial trial, William Spaulding was acquitted for self-defense.

William and Matilda Spaulding divorced and were living at different residences in Bloomington by 1900.[vi] William died shortly afterwards, and when his estate was probated in 1902, he left no real estate or personal property to his heirs, only a one hundred dollar debt for penal sums.[vii]

Mary continued to live with her mother at East Kirkwood. The two women are each listed in the census with the occupation "washerwoman." [viii] Mary kept the house after her mother's death in 1907. This brings the story, as far as we can know it, up to Mary Spaulding's obituary. Mary and her parents are buried in Rose Hill Cemetery, and their recorded plots have no tombstones.[ix][x]

How do these facts help us interpret the obituary? My conclusion is that Miss Mary Spaulding was the wealthiest black woman in Bloomington at her death only because she had just sold her house, whose value had surely risen ever since the university relocated a few blocks east in 1884.[xi] She never enjoyed the profit of this sale, and probably did not experience much wealth in her lifetime. Her position as a black woman at the turn of the century likely afforded her few privileges.

What I can say certainly is that Mary Spaulding's position afforded her little opportunity to appear in the historical record. An anonymous person once told me, "In the past, a lady only made the newspaper three times-when she was born, when she married, and when she died." Well, Mary's birth date precedes state birth records,[xii] and she never married, so she only made print once.

Wealth buys prominence, and this is also true within history. By this, I mean "history" to be the train of documents available for study. Conversations about history do not have to be limited to surviving written evidence. The case of Miss Spaulding encourages thoughtful speculation about what is missing from the historical record and why.

[i] National Archives and Records Administration. U.S., Civil War Pension Index: General Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934 [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2000.

[ii] It is not certain when the Spauldings moved to Indiana as neither William nor Matilda have verifiable listings in the 1870 Federal Census. Members of the family appear in various Monroe County records beginning in 1875.

[iii] Monroe County, IN GIS Property Assessment Detail Report for 425 E. Kirkwood, IN. Monroe County GIS. <http://monroein.egis.39dn.com/#>

[iv] Monroe County Civil Court Records. Box 172: State of Indiana vs. William

property.

Spaulding.

[v] The Bloomington World. 28 July 1896.

[vi] Ancestry.com. 1900 United States Federal Census. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004. Year: 1900; Census Place: Bloomington, Monroe, Indiana; Roll: 392; Page: 39B; Enumeration District: 0099; FHL microfilm: 1240392.

[vii] Monroe County Civil Court Records. Box P-180: Probate docket for William Spaulding Estate.

[viii] Ancestry.com. 1900 United States Federal Census. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations Inc, 2004. Year: 1900; Census Place: Bloomington, Monroe, Indiana; Roll: 392; Page: 39B; Enumeration District: 0099; FHL microfilm: 1240392.

[ix] Rosehill & White Oak Cemeteries 1818-2008: Bloomington Indiana. Database from City of Bloomington Information Technology Services by Mary Lou Stonecipher. 2000-2008 Additions by Crystal Matjasic. (Pages unnumbered.)

[x] Visit to Rosehill Cemetery by Elizabeth Schlemmer on 8 May 2013.

[xi] History of Indiana University Timeline

<http://www.iub.edu/about/history.shtml>.

[xii] Indiana Birth Records were first recorded in 1882.

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