

Collection #
P 0475

INDIANA FLOOD PHOTOGRAPHS 1904–1959 (BULK 1913)

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Processed by

Barbara Quigley
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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 document case, 1 postcard box, 1 OVA box, 1 OVB box, lantern slide box (use copy prints in document case)	1
COLLECTION DATES:	1904–1959 (Bulk 1913)	
PROVENANCE:	Multiple	
RESTRICTIONS:	None	

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**ALTERNATE
FORMATS:**

**RELATED
HOLDINGS:**

**ACCESSION
NUMBERS:**

0000.0417, 0000.0418, 0000.0452, 0000.0453, 0000.0533, 0000.0534, 1969.1213, 1976.0306, 1976.0307, 1976.0609, 1983.0713, 1983.1223, 1989.0199, 1991.0397, 1996.0014, 1996.0139, 1998.0132, 1999.0280, 1999.0675, 1999.0680, 2000.1132, 2001.0404, 2001.1165, 2002.0552, 2002.0553, 2003.0096, 2003.0144, 2005.0054, 2005.0307

NOTES:

See also: Lambert M. Christie Postcard Album, 1913 (P 0326); Jay Small Postcard Collection (P 0391); Stereograph Collection (P 0402); Indiana Postcard Collection (P 0408); Louis and Elma Gillaspay Hoyt Photographs, 1913 (P 0453)

HISTORICAL SKETCH

Several major floods have occurred in Indiana, including those on the following dates: March 1904, March 1913, February 1933, January 1937, June 1957, and February 1959.

The worst flood in the state's history occurred in March 1913. The flood affected much of the Midwest and Ohio River Valley, especially Ohio and the central two-thirds of Indiana. Over a five-day period beginning on Easter Sunday, 23 March, rainfall totaled six inches in Indianapolis and up to twelve inches in areas north of the city. Previous rains had saturated the ground, causing the excess water to flow to rivers and creeks. In Indianapolis, levees failed, sending water rushing through the city, especially in the western part where some areas were under thirty feet of water. Statewide the flood killed about 200 people and left about 200,000 homeless.

More detailed information about the 1904 Indianapolis flood and the 1913 flood in Indianapolis, Peru, and Rushville, can be found in Photographs, Box 1, Folder 1. These brief historical sketches were written by Pamela Tranfield in 1996.

Sources:

Items in the collection.

Clendenon, Cynthia J. "Flooding and Flood Control." In *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*, edited by Bodenhamer, David J. and Robert G. Barrows. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994: 581-83. General Collection: F534 .I55 E4 1994

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of black-and-white photographic images of flooding and its aftermath in Indiana in various years from 1904 to 1959, with emphasis on the flood of March 1913. The collection is arranged into chronological series, and is arranged alphabetically by name of city or town within each series.

Series 1, 1904: This series is made up of images from the March 1904 flood in Indianapolis, and a brief historical sketch written by Pamela Tranfield in 1996.

Series 2, 1913: This series is composed of images from the March 1913 flood in Brookville, Delphi, Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Jeffersonville, Logansport, Muncie, North Manchester, Peru, and Rushville. Brief historical sketches of the flood in Indianapolis, Peru, and Rushville, written by Pamela Tranfield in 1996, are also included.

Series 3, 1933: This series contains images from the February 1933 flood in Madison.

Series 4, 1937: This series consists of images from the January 1937 flood in Jeffersonville and Madison.

Series 5, 1950s: This series includes images from the June 1957 flood in Portland and the February 1959 flood in Peru.

Series 6, Undated Flood Photographs: This series includes undated flood images from the Bedford area and Terre Haute.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: 1904 Flood

CONTENTS

Indianapolis—Historical sketch written by Pamela Tranfield, July 1996.

Indianapolis—Three views from 28th Street: Illinois Street, North Pennsylvania Street, and Meridian Street (26 March 1904). Written on back: “Mrs. Robert W. Cathcart.” Note on the back of one: “The handwriting, verso, is that of Robert W. Cathcart.”

CONTAINER

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 1

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 2

Series 2: 1913 Flood

CONTENTS

Brookville—Six views showing flooded buildings, river, people gathered, and flooded railroad tracks with train cars.

Brookville—Six images on oversized mounts showing flooded railroad tracks, residential areas, river, and people gathered. Four are duplicates of

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Photographs, Box
1, Folder 3

OVA Box 1, Folders 1-5

those listed above (only folders 2 and 4 are not duplicates).

Delphi—Three real photo postcards showing flooded houses, residential streets, and people gathered. One postcard showing two people rowing a boat down a residential street was mailed from “Charls” to “Mrs Charls Ebert” in Watertown, Wisconsin, postmarked 7 April 1913.

Postcards, Box 1

Fort Wayne—Six real photo postcards showing flooded residential areas with snow on the roofs, Jackson Street, St. Mary’s River, W. Main Street (with building that has a “Bluff St.” sign on it), Ft. Wayne Base Ball Park, people rowing boats down streets, and a horse-drawn wagon on a shallowly-flooded street.

Postcards, Box 1

Indianapolis—Historical sketch written by Pamela Tranfield, August 1996.

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 1

Indianapolis—Six views showing damaged bridges (including W. Washington Street bridge), a horse wading down a residential street pulling a wagon, a small building resting at an angle off its foundation, “first break in levee, at Morris St.,” and “Bridge St. washed out by terrific current when levee broke” (shows aftermath of flood on residential street).

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 4

Indianapolis—Copy photos from lantern slides—twenty-five views showing flooded residential streets, streetcars, crowds gathered on bridges, infantry guarding homes, damaged bridges and railroad coal cars, and removal of cows washed onto railroad tracks.

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 5

Indianapolis—Copy photos from lantern slides—twenty views showing bridges, railroad tracks, gas company, cotton mills, Fall Creek, flooded residential streets, Marion Motor Car Company, Parry Buggy Company, and Water Works (photos by Charles Bretzman of Indianapolis). See also Folder 7, which contains essentially duplicates of Folder 6, but quality varies, so check both folders.

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 6

Indianapolis—Copy photos from lantern slides—twenty views that are essentially duplicates of photos in Folder 6, but quality varies, so check both folders (photos by Charles Bretzman of Indianapolis).

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 7

Indianapolis—Lantern slides. *Use copy photographs listed above.*

Lantern Slides, Box 1
(Use copy prints)

Indianapolis—Twelve copy photographs from a published sheet of half-tone photographs entitled

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 8

Twelve Views of the Indianapolis Flood of March 1913 taken by a daring photographer during the worst of the horrible catastrophe. Shows people rowing in boats down residential streets, snow on rooftops of flooded houses, a man wading down a residential street, a streetcar on a flooded street, damaged bridges and power lines, and flooded industrial areas.

Indianapolis—Folded sheet of half-tone photographs entitled *Twelve Views of the Indianapolis Flood of March 1913 taken by a daring photographer during the worst of the horrible catastrophe.* Published by C.A. Tutewiler of Indianapolis. See description of images above; use copy photographs listed above.

Indianapolis—Thirty real photo postcards showing flooded business and residential streets primarily in West Indianapolis (including Central Ave. at 30th St., W. Michigan St., 30th and Washington Blvd., North and Caldwell streets, Oliver Avenue, W. New York Street, Maryland Street, River Avenue, Pearl Street, and Bridge Street); bridges (including Washington Street, Fall Creek at Meridian Street, Meridian Street, Vandalia Bridge, and the Kingan Packing Co.'s bridge), flooded streetcars, damaged interurban tracks (including tracks washed down a slope on "Southerland Ave."), "break in levee on White River," "I.U. RR. engines washed from tracks by flood," and an interior view of people at the Wolf Hall relief station. Some images show snow on rooftops, people rowing boats down streets, automobiles, and people gathered. One shows a train "carload of coal overhanging old Vandalia Bridge." One showing a couple people walking across the Washington Street bridge has a caption indicating that the photo was taken one hour before the bridge collapsed on 26 March; others show the bridge after it collapsed. Dates on some of the photographs are March 25, 26, 27, and 28. There are a few duplicates. Some postcards have messages and were mailed; some are unused.

Jeffersonville/Clarksville—Five images (there are two copies of three of them) showing flood by railroad tracks ("junction on old Dinky line") (photos by H.H. Duffy of Jeffersonville, 1913). Some show men gathered along tracks with sandbags. One is labeled "Junction Jeff[ersonville] & N.A. [New Albany]."

Logansport—Forty-one real photo postcards showing flooded residential and business streets

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Postcards, Box 1

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 9

Postcards, Box 1

(including Broadway, Canal, Court, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Linden, Market, Ottawa, Sycamore, and Wilkison), Court Park, Cicott Street Bridge collapsed, Franklin School, Eel River at Tenth Street Dam, people rowing boats down streets, and rescue work being done by boat and by horse-drawn wagon. One image is of rescue work being done by Culver cadets.

Muncie—One real photo postcard of people gathered at railroad depot with high water and damaged tracks and railroad cars. Caption reads: “Birdseye of P.C.C. & St.L Depot & Track-North.”

Postcards, Box 1

North Manchester—Two photographs of flooding by buildings.

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 10

Peru—Historical sketch written by Pamela Tranfield, July 1996.

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 1

Peru—Thirteen views including bridge, flooded railroad tracks, wrecked houses; flooded street scenes showing businesses, houses, the post office, a Baptist church, and other buildings (including East Main Street, Broadway, and East Fifth Street). One shows people rowing boats in the street.

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 11

Peru—Five photographs showing the flood and its aftermath, upturned houses, and men with a horse-drawn J.O. Cole ice delivery wagon. These photos and a two-page description of the flood are from Col. George E. Meeker.

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 12

Rushville—Historical sketch written by Pamela Tranfield, July 1996.

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 1

Rushville—Thirty-four real photo postcards (some duplicates) showing flooded residential and business streets, flooded railroad tracks, people gathered, people in a boat, pedestrians and horse-drawn carriages wading through streets, people standing by risen river with trees under water (some photos by C.H. Wolf of Rushville).

Postcards, Box 1

Series 3: 1933 Flood

CONTENTS

Madison—Four photographs showing river, trees and houses in high water, including Hanover Road (west of Madison) and the yard of the Lanier Home (26 February 1933).

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Photographs, Box
1, Folder 13

Series 4: 1937 Flood

CONTENTS

Jeffersonville—Five photographs showing Highway 62, railroad track, Nance greenhouse, dog track, McCulloch School, **Arland Young** carrying buckets of water, post office and park after water had receded, and damaged houses on Indiana Avenue after the flood.

Jeffersonville—Three large photographs on textured paper of aerial views showing U.S. Quartermaster Quadrangle, post office, library, courthouse, and large area near Ohio River, all flooded (27 January 1937).

Madison—One photograph of a boat on a flooded residential street.

Madison—Five real photo postcards showing Milton Bridge, flooded streets, damaged buildings, people rowing a boat down the street, and the Lanier Memorial standing in water.

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Photographs, Box
1, Folder 14

OVB Box 1, Folders 1-3

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 15

Postcards, Box 1

Series 5: 1950s Floods

CONTENTS

Portland (Jay County)—One photograph of aerial view showing flooded business district (photo by Frank Kenyon, 28 June 1957).

Peru—One photograph showing policeman and other men with sandbags trying to stop the flow of water. Businesses, houses, and a church are in the background (*Peru Tribune* photo by Harold Chatlosh, February 1959).

CONTAINER

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 16

Photographs, Box
1, Folder 16

Series 6: Undated Flood Photographs

CONTENTS

Bedford—“Monon track to Indiana Quarries Co.’s Quarry” shows flooded railroad tracks and buildings (photo by Jackson of Bedford, Ind.).

Bedford—“Bedford Water Works” shows buildings under water (photo by Jackson of Bedford, Ind.).

Bedford—“Bridge on Wagon Road from Bedford to Oolitic” shows buildings and trees under water and people in boat.

CONTAINER

OVA Box 1, Folder 6

OVA Box 1, Folder 7

OVA Box 1, Folder 8

Bedford—"B & O SW Bridge – ½ Mile South of Bedford" shows damaged railroad bridge.

OVA Box 1, Folder 9

Bedford—"B & O SW Bridge 3 miles South of Bedford": two photographs showing damaged railroad tracks.

OVA Box 1, Folders 10 and 11

Bedford—"Monon Bridge over White River 2 ½ M South of Bedford."

OVA Box 1, Folder 12

Terre Haute—Two photographs of the flooded Big Four railroad trestle (one on the Terre Haute side and one on the St. Mary's side) (photos by E. Spitz, n.d.).

Photographs, Box 1, Folder 17

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, P 0475).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.