

Collection #  
M 1135  
OM 0567

**JOST-ALLEN  
FAMILY COLLECTION, 1859–1945**

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Processed by

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## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 half manuscript box, 2 photograph folders, 1 half graphics box, 2 OM folders, 1 OVB photograph folder, 3 tintypes, 2 cased images, 1 panoramic photograph, 10 artifacts

COLLECTION DATES: 1859–1945

PROVENANCE: Lois Smith, Indianapolis

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2005.0223

NOTES:

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Charles Jost (1855–1934) was born in Monon, White County, Indiana. Census records indicate that his father was German and his mother was English. While in Monon, he made his living as a farmer. In 1883 he married Mary Wilson (1861–1919), with whom he had two children, Brooks (also known as Brook, b. 1893) and Elizabeth (b. 1897). By 1910 the family had moved to the near southwest side of Indianapolis, where Charles and Brooks worked at automobile factories. In 1913 Brooks Jost married Ruth Morgan, a divorced woman with a one-year-old daughter named Bennie; the couple had several more children after marrying. During the First World War, Brooks served in the U.S. Army Air Corps at the rank of private first class. By 1920, Brooks, Ruth, their children, Ruth's sister Nellie Etchison, Charles, and Elizabeth were all living together on Arsenal Avenue on the city's near east side. Both Elizabeth and Nellie worked as box makers.

Jacob (b. 1863) and Laura A. (b. 1868) Allen married in 1894. Jacob was a tool maker who had attended school through eighth grade; Laura had completed two years of high school. They had three sons: Harry Karl (1895–1979), Horace, and Maurice. Though Harry Allen filed for Conscientious Objector status during WWI, he served in the 40<sup>th</sup> Ambulance Company on the Sixth Division Sanitary Train in France, beginning in 1918. Late in 1918 he was (for reasons unknown) sent to Camp Hospital 26 in Noyers, France. He returned home in 1919.

In 1920, Harry Allen and Elizabeth Jost were married in Indianapolis. Four years later they had a daughter, Lois (1924–2011). Though Harry Allen had worked as an auto mechanic before the war, after his return he trained as a film projectionist. This was a relatively well-paying trade; in 1930 the family owned their own home on the east side of Indianapolis, and 1940 census records list their yearly income as \$3200. In 1946 Lois Allen married Norman Smith (1920–2004), a Second World War veteran who worked for Conrail. The Smiths retired in Florida.

Sources:

Collection Materials

Indiana Death and Marriage Records

National Cemetery Administration. *U.S. Veterans' Gravesites, ca. 1775–2006*.

“Norman H. Smith Obituary.” *Franklin Daily Journal* 19 July 2004.

United States Census Records

United States WWI Draft Registration Records

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection comprises materials related to the Jost and Allen families, who are related by marriage. While this collection would be of most interest to those researching Jost or Allen family history, it may also be of use to researchers looking into the history of postcard collecting.

The first of the collection's six series includes miscellaneous papers, such as school attendance certificates, a WWI war risk insurance certificate, and several WWII ration books.

Series two includes correspondence, nearly all of which is on postcards. Most notable are postcards sent to or from Harry Allen during his WWI service and Lois Allen's Paris Exchange Club messages. The WWI postcards are mostly to Harry from his mother, containing family news and expressions of worry. The Paris Exchange Club, in which Lois Allen participated as a teenager, was an international club whose members traded postcards, stamps, photographs, and other ephemera. The club had a detailed list of numerically coded phrases that allowed members to communicate across language barriers. Due to their facilitation of correspondence, the club's rule booklets are included in this series in addition to the numerical messages Lois received from other collectors.

The third series comprises family photographs, including a formal portrait of Charles, Mary, Brooks, and Elizabeth Jost; five tintypes; and a panoramic WWI military group portrait. The identity of the men in the panorama is unknown, but it is possible (or even likely) that it depicts Harry Allen's ambulance company. There is also a folder of snapshots, several of which depict cars in the 1910s.

In the fourth series are other graphic materials. With the exception of an amateur copper rubbing of a 1912 Mercer Raceabout car, all materials in this series are postcards. Most depict locations in the United States, including Indianapolis and Baltimore. However, there are two sets of European postcards from the late 1930s that Lois Allen almost certainly obtained via the Paris Exchange Club. One set depicts locations in Assisi, Italy, and the other set is from Montaignet, France.

The final series is of artifacts, mostly personal adornment items such as pins, tie bars, and a set of 1890s baby clothes. Also included are a doily made by Laura Allen and a metal pocket Bible cover used by Harry Allen during WWI.

## **SERIES CONTENTS**

### **Series 1: Miscellaneous Papers**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
News Clipping, “Early” and “Modern” Film Projectors, not dated	Box 1, Folder 1
Jost Family School Certificates, 1859–1912	Box 1, Folder 2
Jacob Allen Primary School Diploma, 1879	OM 0567 Folder 1 of 2
Marriage Licenses and Certificate, 1883–1920	OM 0567 Folder 2 of 2
Harry Karl Allen War Risk Insurance Certificate, 1918	Box 1, Folder 3
Indianapolis Rivoli Theatre Inaugural Program, 1927	Box 1, Folder 4
Allen Family WWII Ration Books, 1941–45	Box 1, Folder 5

### **Series 2: Correspondence**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Correspondence, 1903–37 and not dated	Box 1, Folder 6
Allen Family WWI Correspondence, 1918–19	Box 1, Folder 7
Lois Allen, Paris Exchange Club Booklets, 1936–37	Box 1, Folder 8
Lois Allen, Paris Exchange Club Correspondence, 1936–38 and not dated	Box 1, Folder 9

### **Series 3: Photographs**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Elizabeth Jost Class Portrait (Group), circa 1912	OVB Photographs Folder 1 of 1
Jost Family Formal Portraits, circa 1903–14	Photographs Folder 1 of 2

Snapshots, 1914–35 and not dated	Photographs Folder 2 of 2
“Co. H 334 <sup>th</sup> Infantry, Camp Zachary Taylor Louisville KY, December 1917,” 1917	Panoramic Photographs Folder 1 of 1
Charles and Harry (Henry?) Jost, not dated	Tintypes 1 of 3
Ingo Young Straley, not dated	Cased Images 1 of 2
Jane Orr Wilson, not dated	Tintypes 2 of 3
Mary Wilson Jost, not dated	Tintypes 3 of 3
Unidentified Woman, not dated	Cased Images 2 of 2

#### **Series 4: Graphic Materials**

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
Copper Rubbing, “1912 Mercer Raceabout,” not dated	Graphics Box 1, Folder 1
Military Themed Postcards, circa 1918	Graphics Box 1, Folder 2
Indiana Postcards, early–mid 20th century	Graphics Box 1, Folder 3
Miscellaneous Postcards, early–mid 20th century	Graphics Box 1, Folder 4
Assisi, Italy Postcards, circa 1937	Graphics Box 1, Folder 5
Montaiguet, France Postcards, circa 1937	Graphics Box 1, Folder 6
American Postcards, mid–20th century	Graphics Box 1, Folder 7

Baltimore Postcards, mid–20th century

Graphics  
Box 1, Folder 8

**Series 5: Artifacts**

CONTENTS

Assorted Jewelry, not dated

Assorted Keys, not dated

Eyelet Baby Bonnet, not dated

Doily Made By Laura Allen, 1880

2 Thimbles, 1880

Harry Allen's Baby Clothes, circa 1895

Metal Travel Mirror and Cloth Case, 1914

American Expeditionary Forces Pin, circa 1918–19

Harry Allen's Metal Pocket Bible Cover, 1919

Victory Medal with France Clasp, 1920

CONTAINER

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## 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, M 1135).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.