

Martin County, Names in Diaries of Mary Matthews of Loogootee, 1932–1933

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Diaries provide insights into the daily lives of individuals from a different time. While talking to elderly family members about their memories of days long past is rewarding, nothing quite matches the detail and honesty of the thoughts captured in a journal or diary. By looking at these sources, one can come to understand not only the tasks of daily life, but also the social situation in which people existed, the events that excited them, and the networks that surrounded them.

The diaries of Mary Matthews (1914–1938), held in the William H. Smith Memorial Library at the Indiana Historical Society, offer this direct connection to the community of Loogootee, Indiana, during the Great Depression. Mary’s diaries, stretching from 1932 to 1935, capture glimpses of social and daily life in rural Martin County.¹ Within their pages, Mary writes about church affairs, visits from family and friends (including one unfortunate individual referred to as “Chicken”), and working in a local shirt factory. Mary was born on February 27, 1914, in Daviess County, Indiana, to John and Elizabeth Matthews.² Sometime between 1920 and 1930, the family moved from Barr Township in Daviess County to Perry Township in Martin County.³ The four extant diaries appear to have been written in this new home. Each is small in form, about 3” x 5,” and some appear to have been produced as advertising slips for a local insurance company. The following names are extracted from the first two diaries, chronologically, ranging from August 21, 1932, to February 10, 1933.

Notes

1. Paul Brockman, “Mary Matthews Diaries, 1932–1935,” Collection Guide, M 1075, Indiana Historical Society. Diaries are in Box 1, Folder 1.

2. Indiana State Department of Health, Daviess County, Barr Township, certificate no. 8141, Mary Mathews, February 27, 1914, in “Indiana, Birth Certificates, 1907–1940” database, Ancestry.com.
3. 1920 U.S. census, population schedule, Indiana, Daviess County, Barr Township, enumeration district 1, page 6A, dwelling 103, family 103, John S. Matheus household, Ancestry.com, citing NARA microfilm T625, roll 428; 1930 U.S. census, population schedule, Indiana, Martin County, Perry Township, enumeration district 57-11, page 2A, dwelling 26, family 26, John S. Matthews household, Ancestry.com, citing NARA microfilm T626, roll 618.

Diary 1: August 21, 1932, through September 4, 1932

Sun. Aug. 21, 1932

Joe Madden
[---]idlie Clements
Eileen Helen
Helen
J. W.
Earl D., Joe
Joe M.
Joe P.
Bernard
Sh[or]ty S.
Margaret G.

Mon. Aug. 22

Shorty
Bernard

Tue. Aug. 23

Betty Daily
Dwyers
Nillie
Betty
Cala[---]
Dorothy Sorder
Tinker
Bernard
Merle
Doyle
Mag O’Connor

Wed. Aug. 24

Betty
Merle
Charles Hadwell
Helen McCann
Mary Doyle
Bernard
Joe
Joe Madden
Uncle Wills

Thurs. Aug. 25

Joe Madden
Joe Patterson
Uncle Joe

Fri. Aug 26th

Joe Borders
Cunningham [family]
Marcella

Sat. Aug. 27

Johnnie Arvin
Joe Madden
Joe Borders

Sun. Aug. 28

Bernard
Calop
Tinker
Denise and Louie
Rosalyn
Joe Madden
Joe Doyle
Joe + Nillie Clements
Mr. Enkoff
Nick Ryan
George H.
Johnnie + Eileen
Denise + Joe
Rosemary
Joe Borders, Ann, + Wilma
Joe B., Rosalyn, Helen, Ann, Wilma, and Louie
Joe Matthews + Dennie
Rosemary, Ann, Louie, Wilma, + Dennie

Mary F
Joe W.

Mon. Aug. 29

Cunningham [family]
Mrs. Cunningham
[---]afe Burch + Uncle Wills
Uncle Wills + Johnie Gootee
Dad, Uncle Nick, + Chet Clements
Burkart's [family]

Tues. Aug. 30

Johnnie + Louis + Billie
Mr. Elliot + Chicken
Ann
Charles Kidwell
Earl Doyle + Chicken
Arvins [family]
Mary Frances
Bernard
Clements [family]
Uncle Wills

Wed. Aug. 31

* On this date, Mary notes: "About 2:30 we had an eclipse of the sun."

Mom, Dad, and Marcella
Joe
Charles, + Hi[?]
Father Holland
Bernard
Johnnie Arvin + Chicken
Ann, Rosemary, Kaser, + Bernie Dunn
Dad, Joe, Jerome
Nellie C. + Paul Drewe

Thurs. Sep. 1

Charles
Floyd Clark
Marcella, Frank
Merle Enkoff

Fri. Sep. 2

Joe + Jerome
Marcella, Frank
Aunt Annie
Ge[i?]mon Seal

Father Burkart
Mrs. Gootee
Charles K.
Ann
Rosemary
Merle & Doyle
Hi

Sat. Sep. 3

Mary Frances
Marcella/Jerome

Sun. Sep. 4

Mr. + Mrs. Earnest Arvin, Margine, Cornelas, Roberta, Clarence Doyle + “a little Miles boy”
Joe
Ethel Arvin
Anne
Joe
Eileen
Ann
Bernard + Gernon
Johnnie [?]
Seals [family]
Lee Madden
Arvins [family]
Russell Haehle
M. Enkoff, Aunt Agg + Uncle George, Uncle Nick + Aunt Clara, Grandma + Grandpa, Jane, Robert, + Barbara Ann
Dad, Lee, + Rus.
Ann, Johnnie + Eileen
Rus.
Ann

[Note: At the end of this journal, Mary wrote, “Cont. in Book 2.” However, the next diary, chronologically, in the IHS collection begins with this statement from Mary, “continued from Book 4.” Apparently, there were originally three diaries between the diaries labeled Diary 1 and Diary 2 here.]

Diary 2: December 4, [1932] through February 10, [1933]

Sun. Dec. 4 [1932]

Seal

Mon. Dec. 5

Gormon Seal

Tues. Dec. 6

Paul Doyle
Mr. Enkoff

Wed. Dec. 7

Goatees [family]
Calep, Tinker, + Bernard

Thu[rs]. Dec 8

Floyd
Sisters Francis Louise + Edna Marie
Porters [business]
Helen
Krodels [business]
Reynolds + Brooks [business]
Howard
Mary Gootee
Rosemary + Ann
Happy
M. Staum
Rob Arvin
Carl
Jesse Wood, Mr. Van Hay + Mr. Baker

Fri. Dec. 9

Mrs. Enkoff
Joe
Onus + Bernard Doyle
Bill Dinkey
Johnnie Arvin

Sat. Dec. 10

Chicken, Earl, Bernard, Joe W. + Vick Crany
Onus
Mr. Spaulding
Marcella + Dad
Jerome

Sun. Dec. 11

Ruth
Mrs. Goatee + Mr. Enkoff
Mary Frances

Mon. Dec 12

Joe + Jerome
Mr. Spaulding
Ruth
Helen
Onus + Muriel
Joe

Tues. Dec. 13

Joe
Mary Frances

Wed. Dec. 14

Onus Doyle

Thurs. Dec. 15

Mary Frances
“the 3 Seals boys”

Fri. Dec. 16 (Joe’s Birthday)

Mr. Enkoff
Mr. Burris
Father Burkart

Sat. Dec. 17

Mr. Enkoff
Chicken
Marcella, Frank, and I
Jerome

Sun. Dec. 18, 1932

*Mary notes that this is her first time voting for church trustees.

Jack Lents
Father Burkhart
Earl Doyle
“Helen + I” “I don’t know how they could expect girls to get music, keep door, + run a dance.”
[Ray or Roy?] + Germon
Dwyers [family]
Bernard + Johnnie Arvin
Dad + Calop
Uncle Wills
Marcella
Frank

Mon. Dec. 19

Bernard

Tues. Dec. 20

Bernard
Bill Buckley + Joe Ward
Buckley
Matt Dooley
Harold Tompson
Howard Kaiser + John Goatee
Calop + Bernard
“the little Dages boys”
Helen

Wed. Dec. 21

Aunt Annie Madden

Thurs. Dec. 22

Marcell
Merle Enkoff
Mr. Enkoff
Margaret + Arvin + Needum
Opal & Oma

Fri. Dec. 23

Jerome [gave something to] Donald Mullen
Marcella [gave something to] Cecelia Hun
Frank [gave something to] Sylvester
Mr. Enkoff
Dad + Joe
Uncle Will

Sat. Dec. 24

Helen + Rosie
Bernard, Earl, + Chicken
Marcella, Frank, and I
Johnnie, Eileen, Chicken + Earl
Joe W. Rosalyn + Earl
Marion Arvin, Ralph Burch, John Goatee, + Tinker
Roy
Aunt Annie
Cannons' [family?]
Lents' [family]

Sun. Dec. 25 (Christmas)

Uncle Jim O'Connors

Uncle Lu

“John + Hope were there, but we didn't get to see the baby.”

Aunt Agg

Robert + Barbara Ann [children]

Uncle Joe

Elmo + Mack

Joe W. [or M?]

Johnnie, Eileen, Rosalyn, Earl, Chicken, Ann, Joe W. Vick, and Bernard

*Mary notes: “Those three couples were so sickening they wouldn't pay any attention to the rest of us. If they can't do anything else except spoon I don't see why under the sun they don't stay home + do it.”

Mon. Dec. 26

*Noted as “dad's birthday”

Helen

Aunt Rose

“Bernard Doyles little boy died this morning”

Uncle Willie + Oscar Miles

Mr. Seals, Germon, and Clifford

Mr. + Mrs. Gootee, Mr. Enkoff, Calop, Roy + Clifford Seal

Mr. Enkoff

Roy + Clifford

Mr. + Mrs. Gootee + Mr. Enkoff

dad, Calop, Roy + Clif

Tues. Dec. 27

Ann

Helen

Joe W + Bernard

Germon Seals

Charles Kidwell

“Jack Luits + Plinny Abner had a fight over Alberta Ryan”

“I square-danced with Shorty Strange twice, Jake Butcher, Joe W. Happy Miles, + Virgil Burris.”

“I round-danced with Virgil, Shorty + Helen.”

“Germon asked me to dance. . . .”

Joe W.

Jerome

Martin

Wed. Dec. 28.

Joe Madden + Sue

Mr. Enkoff

Thurs. Dec. 29

“dad, Joe + Roy S. went to Calops.”

Fri. Dec. 30

“Marcella + I”
Johnnie + Chicken
Jimmy McGuire
Leo McCauley
Mr. Allen
“Floyd. . . (Ickky as they call him)”
Onus Doyle
Paul Doyle
George Hensley
Ickky

* “54 men were killed in a mine in Illinois on Christmas Eve by an explosion. I certainly hope they never have any kind of an accident in this mine.”

Sat. Dec 31

McDermott
Gootees [family]

Sun. Jan. 1, 1933

Helen
“Rosalyn + Virgil gave me some candy + Ann gave me some pop-corn.”
Roy + Chicken
Earl
Seals [family]
Ann, Rosemary, Mary D., Louie + Joe C. + Joe W.
Mr. Miles
Virgil
Bernard and Earl, Inez & Irene
Lester + Chester Ray
Leonard Ray
Rosemary
Cecil
Leonard
Bernard
Virgil
Esther C.
Mary D.+ Joe C., Helen Bloodsaw, + Louie Mc, Rosemary + Cecil, Ann + Chicken,
Rosalyn, + Earl, Johnnie + Eileen, Jack Luts + Albert Ryan, Eileen + Bernard,
Joe W, + Carl B., Nink + Inez
Miles [family]
Joe Farrel, Clifford Seal, Donald Burch, Joe M. + Virgil

Vick, Joe W. + Esther
Joe C.
Uncle Mills

Mon. Jan. 2, 1932

Joe
Ellen Kane
Carl L
Mrs. Kelso
Virgil

* “After supper dad went to Fathers to play cards.”

Tues. Jan. 3, 1933

Joe
Mom + Mrs. Gootee
Mrs. Kelso’s funeral
“Rosie, Emil, Ruth + I”
Father
Rosemary
Vick + Joe W
Ruth
Joe + Vick
Rosemary
Joe
Rosemary
“The Seals boys + Calop”
“Germon + I”
Jerome + Joe

[An entry appears for Wednesday, January 4, 1933, but it contains no names.]

Thurs. Jan. 5, 1933

Uncle Jim Dwyer
“Marcella + I”
Onus Doyle
Father
Roy + Germon Seals

Fri. Jan. 6, 1933

“Ellen + I”
Clifford
Maulens [family]
Mr. Enkoff

Joe + Jerome

“Mary, Frank + I”

* “Calvin Coolidge, the former president died suddenly yesterday afternoon. The papers were full of his works.”

Sat. Jan. 7, 1933

Jimmy McGuire

Mr. Enkoff

Aunt Mag O’Connor

Uncle Joie

Calop, Vick C. + Joe W.

Sun. Jan. 8, 1933

Father

Uncle Joie

Aunt May

Johnnie, Elen + Earl + Chicken

Eileen

Father

Marian Arvins

Joe

Father

Russell Miles

Joe + Jerome

Russell

Virgil Burris

Mom

Gorman, Clifford + Bernard

Dad + Clif

Bernard + Russell

Gorman

Bernard

Gorman

Arvins [family]

Mon. Jan. 9, 1933

Mr. Dages + Mr. Cannor

Mr. Dages

Dad + Mr. Cannor

Shorty Strange

Arvins [family]

Margaret

“McNutt, the new governor”

Tues. Jan. 10, 1933

Doyle
Mr. Enkoff
Mrs. Gootee
Shorty
[T]ru
Junior Elliott
Frank
“Calop + the Seals boys”
“Gorman, Jerome, mom + I”
“Gorman + I”

Wed. Jan. 11, 1933

Mrs. McCauly + Veronica
Ann, Mary D. + Rosalyn
Fathers
Pauls [business]
Bernard & Chicken
Shorty
Mary Fegan

Thurs. Jan. 12

Gorman + Roy
Calops [referring to his/their home]
Johnnie Arvin
Joe

Fri. Jan. 13, 1933

Mom + Mrs. Gootee
“Ann, Rosemary, Mary D., Irene, + I”
Sister Francis Louise
Father + Sister Edna Marie
Lee + Helena
Inez, Naomi, Mary D., + Frank
Joe
Mr. Enkoff
Mary
Shorty

Sat. Jan. 14

Jerome + Marcella
Shorty
“Dad, mom, Joe + I”
Father
Ann, Mary D., Earl, Joe W., Vick + Chicken

Rosalyn
Ann + Mary
Vick

Sun. Jan. 15

Father
Jerome
Charles + dad + Calop
John Cranys
Father
“Rosalyn, Ellen + I”
Bernie Brewer
Johnnie, Louies + Billy
Uncle Mill + Aunt Lillian
Rosemary
Chicken + Mary
Clifford, Gorman + Joe W.
Russell
Johnnie + Eileen
Ann, Chicken, Rosalyn + Earl, Rosemary, Vick C. + Mary D
Paul Doyles
Johnnie + Eileen
Joe + Russell

Mon. Jan. 16

Father
Miss Miller
Paul’s
Earl
Joe
Mr. + Mrs. Gootee
Frank Raney

Tues. Jan. 17

Shorty

Weds. Jan. 18

Joe
Dad

Thurs. Jan 19

Mrs. Strange, Shorty + Earl D.
Onus, Chicken + Mr. Enkoff
Shorty, Onus, Earl + Mrs. Strange
Mr. Enkoff
Calop, Dick + Johnnie Arvin

Mrs. Arvin + Dick's wife
Mrs. Strange, Shorty + Earl
Onus
Stranges [family]
Shorty
Calop
"Joe, Jerome + I"
[M?]illie Clements
Jerome
Joe
Cella's
Ann, Irene, Mary, Inez, Rosalyn + Rosemary
Shorty
Jerome
Dad + Mom

Fri. Jan. 20

Shorty
Chicken, Bernard + Onus
Bernard + Chicken
Chicken
Bernard
Dad
Shorty + Bernard
Mom
Onus

Sat. Jan. 21

Father
Uncle Nillies, Mom, dad, Joe, Jerome, Johnnie + Louis

Sun. Jan 22

Germon + Clifford
"Marcella + I"
Calop + Bernard
Eileen + Virgil
"The two Ray boys + another one from Washington"
"Russell Miles + I"
Dwyers [family]
Shorty Strange
"Dad went to Father's for supper. . . ."
Cecil, Chicken + Leonard
"I danced with Shorty + Bernard"

Ann, Chicken, Rosalyn, Earl, Helen, Mary D., Inez, Irene, Rosemary, Shorty, Bernard,
Joe C., Russel, Wilbur, Cecil + Leonard, Ray Vick, Clifford, Germon, Virgil,
Carl B., Johnnie + Eileen, Joe W.

Mon. Jan. 23

Gootee's [family]
Mrs. Gootee
Joe

Tues. Jan. 24

Shorty
Calops [family]

Wed. Jan. 25

Shorty
George Hensley
Father's [referring to a home]
Dad

Thurs. Jan. 26

Gootees [family]
Vick + Joe
Joe + Jerome

[An entry appears for January 27, 1933, but it contains no names.]

Sat. Jan. 28

Mr. Enkoff
Johnny McGuire
Vincents [referring to a home]
"the Seals boys + Bernard"
"Helen, Rosemary & I"

Sun. Jan. 29

Father
Mary Frances + Margaret
Mom, dad, Marcella + Frank
Uncle Vincent's [referring to a home]
Onus + Carl Buckley + Mr. Enkoff
Mr. Frank Doyle
"The Ray boys"
Ester, Mildred, Rosemary + Rosalyn
Seals [family]
Carmons [family or business?]

Mon. Jan. 30

Helen, Esther, Mildred + Mary Doyle
Onus
Mr. Enkoff
Joe
Mr. [H/K?]rodel
Aunt Annie Madden

Tues. Jan. 31

Shorty + Mildred
Bernard + Germon
“Danced with Virgil, Shorty, + a real tall guy”

Wed. Feb. 1

Mr. Miles + Russell
Shorty
Mary Francis
dad, George + Joe

Thurs. Feb. 2

Father
mom
Father

Fri. Feb 3

“Mildred, Ellen, Helen + I”
Germon Seals
Ellen
Father
mom
Jim Dwyer
“Onus Doyle + an agent”
Mrs. Gootee
Clifford, Germon, Calop, Jessie, Dick + Mary, Mary Frances, Margaret +
Mr. + Mrs. Arvin
“Mary F. + I”
Margaret + Germon
Joe + Jerome

Sat. Feb. 4

“Ed Turks baby died today”

Sun. Feb. 5

Paul Strange + Mary Bradley + Father
Calop
“The Seals boy”

Uncle Mills
Germon + Joe W.
Margaret A.
Bernard
Russell Miles
Clements [referring to a home]
Cecil, William + Mildred
Joe W.
Calops [referring to a home]
Ann, Chicken, Vick + Mary D
Shorty S., Rosalyn, + Earl
Shorty
Cella's
Mr. Enkoff
Russell
Joe W. + Bernard
Shorty

Mon. Feb. 6

Mary Frances
Marcella + Frank

Tues. Feb. 7

Katie McCann
Loretta W.
“Helen + I”
Mr. Krodel

Wed. Feb. 8

Hellen + dad
Kenny Jones
Cleophas Bradly
Mildred Mc., Helen Bledsow, Loretta Camilla Burris, Maggie Knepp, Rachel Miller,
Helen Smith + Helen McDermott
Dad
Helen
Mr. Enkoff

Thur. Feb. 9

dad
“Helen + I”
Krodels [store]
Rosemary Walker
Ella Knepp
Helen
“Mr. Krodel + his two boys”

Mr. Gootee + Doyle
Calop, Bernard + Onus
Fred Rany
Mary F.

Fri. Feb. 10

Mrs. Gootee
Mr. Krodel
Helen McDermott + Genive Carrico
Mr. Krodel
Rosie + Ruth
Ellen
Shorty

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