In February 1918, while the stalemate on Europe’s Western Front wore on during World War I and British forces in the Middle East pushed back the Ottoman Empire, thousands of American soldiers were training to join the fight with the Allies. One such soldier training at Camp Shelby near Hattiesburg, Mississippi, with the 137th Field Artillery was South Bend, Indiana, native Dean Wilhelm. A musician and a member of the 137th band, Wilhelm never saw much action overseas, but he and the other soldiers of the 137th still went through grueling training and had some adventures of their own. After the war, Wilhelm, a journalist by trade, wrote down his story, titling it “Through the War with the South Bend Boys of the 137th: From Leeper Park to France and Back Again.” Wilhelm’s story begins with his recruitment in South Bend and the buzz of excitement that enveloped the city and its young men. He then describes his extensive training at Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indianapolis, Indiana, his one year at Camp Shelby, and finally his regiment’s voyage to England and France just before the signing of the armistice that ended the war.1

Today this story is part of the Dean Wilhelm Collection, housed in the William H. Smith Memorial Library at the Indiana Historical Society. Along with Wilhelm’s manuscript are four photographs of some of the men who journeyed with him to France and back. One photograph is of Camp Shelby, showing the tents as they are either being set up or taken down. Another is of the Headquarters Company of the 137th at Fort Harrison. Whether this photo is from the beginning or the end of the story is unknown. The third photograph is of the 137th regimental band for which Dean played saxophone, and the fourth is of the entire Headquarters Company at Camp Shelby. The last two photos are doubly interesting because they list the names of the soldiers who appear in them.

On the reverse side of the photo of the 137th band, the inscription lists not only each man’s name but also his hometown and the instrument he played. This photograph was taken February 4, 1918, while the 137th was still in Mississippi at the end of a particularly hard winter.2 The photograph of the Headquarters Company also lists the names on the back but
provides little other information except occasionally a man’s rank or nickname. Transcribed below are all the names listed on the backs of these two photos. Through additional research, further information on some of the men in the Headquarters Company photo is included. Home counties are identified from either the hometowns noted on the band photograph (noted “B”) or World War I draft cards (D), in the 1910 census (’10) or 1920 census (’20), or from another source (otherwise noted).

All information, except that from the band photograph, was taken from Ancestry.com. Roughly half the company was confidently identified with Ancestry records. Of these men, about one-third were from Saint Joseph County, Indiana. Text transcribed exactly from the back of the photograph is formatted in bold. Additional information added by the authors appears in brackets. Sometimes the names were challenging to read. In these cases, no home county is provided. Conversely, home counties listed are by no means without doubt, but as most of the enlisted men in the company came from northern Indiana, these are not unreasonable conclusions. Finally, some of the places of residence were further verified by looking at the addresses of the people who the soldiers listed as emergency contacts.³

Notes
1. For more on the story of the Headquarters Company in World War I, see Patrick Hanlon, “‘Over There’ and Back Again: The World War I Experiences of Dean Wilhelm, a Soldier from South Bend, Indiana,” The Hoosier Genealogist: Connections 58, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2018), 28–35.
137th U.S. Field Artillery Band, Camp Shelby, Mississippi, February 4, 1918

Data below is from back side of photograph.

**Top row, left to right**

- Earl E. Burkle
- Arley L. Meeker
- Arno D. Cullison
- Forest G. Hoy
- [Ray/Roy] C. Sutton
- Edward R. Rogers
- Walter A. Swifort,
- Fred W. Meeker
- Chas. E. McConnell
- Joseph E. Beckerich
- Herbert Gibson
- Chester A. Klopfenstein
- Frank W. Darrow
- Lawrence A. [Pepe/Pope]
- Dean J. Wilhelm
- Forest C. Bricker

**Bottom row, left to right**

- Thomas E. Holbrook
- John Kellenberger
- Earl L. Houghton
- Thomas E. Holbrook
- John Kellenberger
- Earl L. Houghton

Earl E. Burkle
- Ass’t Bandmaster
- Elkhart, Ind.

Arley L. Meeker
- Cornet
- Niles, Mich.

Arno D. Cullison
- [Cornet]
- Plymouth, Ind.

Forest G. Hoy
- [Cornet]
- South Bend, Ind.

[Ray/Roy] C. Sutton
- [Cornet]
- South Bend, Ind.

Edward R. Rogers
- Alto
- South Bend, Ind.

Walter A. Swifort,
- [Alto]
- Warsaw, Ind.

Fred W. Meeker
- [Alto]
- Monticello, Ind.

Chas. E. McConnell
- Bandmaster
- Warsaw, Ind.

Joseph E. Beckerich
- Bass Drum
- South Bend, Ind.

Herbert Gibson
- Alto
- Monticello, Ind.

Chester A. Klopfenstein
- Clarinet
- South Bend, Ind.

Frank W. Darrow
- [Clarinet]
- Wolcott, Ind.

Lawrence A. [Pepe/Pope]
- Oboe
- Fort Wayne, Ind.

Dean J. Wilhelm
- Soprano Saxophone
- South Bend, Ind.

Forest C. Bricker
- Alto [Saxophone]
- Fort Wayne, Ind.

Thomas E. Holbrook
- Drum Major
- Warsaw, Ind.

John Kellenberger
- Bass
- Monticello, Ind.

Earl L. Houghton
- Trombone
- Plymouth, Ind.
Thomas E. Robinson  [Trombone]  Rensselaer, Ind.
Cluro E. [Fryar/ Frayer]  [Trombone]  South Bend, Ind.
Lawrence F. Anderson  Snare Drum & Xylophone  South Bend, Ind.
Doss A. Gibson  Snare Drum  Monticello, Ind.
Kenneth E. Stowe  Baritone  Niles, Mich.
Russell R. Barclay  Bass  Lakeville, Ind.
Riley C. Nowles  Tenor Saxophone  Mishawaka, Ind.
Fred L. Young  Clarinet  Walkerton, Ind. not in picture

137th U.S. Field Artillery Headquarters Company, Camp Shelby, Mississippi

Text transcribed from back side of photo is in bold. Supplemental information added by the authors appears within brackets. Editors also added commas between names and ranks for clarity.

Top row, left to right

A. D. Pefferly  
John Bowman [Jasper, ’10]  
Riley Johnson [Porter, D]  
Clifford Spate  
Ola Casey [Newton, D]  
John Kellenburger, Sergeant Band [White, B]  
Earl Burkle, Asst Bandmaster [Elkhart, B/D]  
Arley L Meeker [Niles, MI, B]  
Arno D Cullison [Marshall,’20]  

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>City/State, Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forest Hoy</td>
<td>[St. Joseph, D]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>[Ray/[Roy] C Sutton</td>
<td>[St. Joseph, D]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frank Darrow</td>
<td>[White, D]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chester Klopfenstein</td>
<td>[St. Joseph, B]</td>
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<td>Fred L. Young</td>
<td>[St. Joseph, B]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lawrence Pope</td>
<td>[Allen, D]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kenneth Stowe</td>
<td>[Niles, MI, B]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gail Crain</td>
<td>[Kosciusko, D]</td>
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<td>Thomas Hollbrook</td>
<td>[Kosciusko, D]</td>
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<td>Chas. McConnell</td>
<td>[Kosciusko, D]</td>
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<td>Doss Gibson</td>
<td>[White, D]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Beckerich</td>
<td>[St. Joseph, 1900 census]</td>
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<td>Lawrence Anderson</td>
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<td>Earl Houghton</td>
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<td>Edward Robinson</td>
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<td>Cluro [Frayer/Fryer?]</td>
<td>[St. Joseph, D]</td>
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<td>Herbert Gibson</td>
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<td>Fred Meeker</td>
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<td>Walter Swifort</td>
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<td>Edward Rogers</td>
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<td>Russell Barclay</td>
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<td>Robert Kelly</td>
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<td>Dean Wilhelm</td>
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<td>Forest Bricker</td>
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<td>Riley Nowles</td>
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<td>Paul Betcher</td>
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<td>Lieut. McNiece</td>
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<td>[Lieutenant] McNulty</td>
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<td>[Lieutenant] Fosler</td>
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<td>[Lieutenant] Matthews</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Lieutenant] Benbow</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Earl] Clarke</td>
<td>[St. Joseph, D]</td>
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</tbody>
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Second row, left to right

Cecil Kindig
Otto Hardy [Marshall, D]
Richard Buschatz [St. Joseph, ’20]
George Hiatt
Daniel Lighter [St. Joseph, B]
Roy Carlson [Kosciusko, ’10]
Lee Ginter [Marshall, D]
Raymond Skiles
Milo Kuntz
William Jenkins [Jasper, ’10]
Norman Booth
Frank Hickberg, Mechanic
William Hutchinson [Lake, ’20]
Lester [Jarion?], Corporal
William Hatton
Guy Crowder
Elmer Carlson
Mike Howieth
Peter Daniels [St. Joseph, D]
George Jones [Porter, D]
Otto Bihlmire, Corporal [St. Joseph, 1921 directory]
Walter Strong, Corporal
Andrew Wilson
Ernest Beckler
Maurice Barah
Elmer Hardy [St. Joseph, D]
Joseph Allan
Elmer Rhodes Dusty
Cecil [Charles C.] Kaiser
Everett Kimball
George Bowers, Corporal [Pulaski, D]
Leo Blanchett [Benton, ’20]
George Miller [St. Joseph, D]
John Hansel
Richard White [St. Joseph, ’10]
Stanley Neizgudski
James Farrage [St. Joseph, 1916 directory]
Robert Minkler, Corporal
William Butterworth, Corporal
Robert Morehouse, Corporal [Marshall, ’10]
Arthur Falconberry
Claude Boyne, Corporal
George Goebel [St. Joseph, ’10]
Elmer Ewig, Corporal
Gerald Shreve [Marshall, 1912 yearbook]
Charles Duetris?, Corporal
Glen Burns [Jasper, ’10]
William Zaborowski [Porter, D]

Bottom row, left to right
Henry Sibrel
Roy Stahl [DeKalb, D]
Earl Clarke
Clarence Harmes, Supply Sergeant
Harry Freeman, Corporal
Robert Wiley, Corporal
George Klimes, Sergeant
Floyd Traub, Mechanic [St. Joseph, D]
Harvey Varner, Mechanic [Porter, ’10]
“Spider” Campbell Cook
Clyde Zerbe, Chief Cook [St. Joseph, ’10]
“How” Maxwell, Cook
Dewey Williams, Veterinary [sic] Sergeant
John Deardorf, Mess Sergeant
Paul Benson, Sergeant
Warren Freyermuth, Sergeant
Earl Hodson, Sergeant
Allan Bowser, Bugler [Jasper, ’20]
Lloyd Bryan, Bugler
George Howard, Bugler
James Spate, Sergeant
Peter Myers
Harry Wetzel [DeKalb, ’10]
Earl Swift
Oscar Hutchinson [Lake, ’20]
William Moore
Carl Prell, Corporal
Roy Botts
Peter Miller, Corporal
Gordon Wheatley [Tipton, D]
Glen Wright, Corporal
Diehl Martin, Corporal [St. Joseph, ’20]
E[lmer?] Peterson