

Collection #  
P 0475

## INDIANA FLOOD PHOTOGRAPHS 1904–1959 (BULK 1913)

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Processed by

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Indiana Historical Society  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

## COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 document case, 1 postcard box, 1 OVA box, 1 OVB box, 1 lantern slide box (use copy prints in document case)
COLLECTION DATES:	1904–1959 (Bulk 1913)
PROVENANCE:	Multiple
RESTRICTIONS:	None
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REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.
ALTERNATE FORMATS:	
RELATED HOLDINGS:	
ACCESSION NUMBERS:	0000.0100, 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, 1989.0422, 1991.0397, 1996.0014, 1996.0139, 1996.0948X, 1998.0132, 1999.0280, 1999.0675, 1999.0680, 2000.1132, 2001.0404, 2001.1165, 2002.0552, 2002.0553, 2002.0762, 2003.0096, 2003.0144, 2005.0054, 2005.0307, 2006.0234, 2007.0036, 2009.0240, 2010.0193, 2011.0079, 2013.0160
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); Harley Mote Collection of Flood Photographs, 1913 (P 0536)

## 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, Geneva (Shelby County), Hillsdale (Vermillion County), Indianapolis, Jeffersonville, Logansport, Muncie, North Manchester, Peru, Rushville, and Tell City. 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 7, Undated and Unidentified Flood Locations:** This series contains unidentified flood scenes that are possibly of Indianapolis in 1913.

## **SERIES CONTENTS**

### **Series 1: 1904 Flood**

#### CONTENTS

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

**Indianapolis**—Three views from 28<sup>th</sup> 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 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.

**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.

#### CONTAINER

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 3

OVA Box 1, Folders 1-5

Postcards, Box 1

Postcards, Box 1

**Geneva (Shelby County)**—One photograph of Geneva bridge over Flat Rock River.

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 4

**Hillsdale (Vermillion County)**—Five real photo postcards showing trees in the Wabash River, railroad depot, and damaged railroad tracks and bridge.

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 5

**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 6

**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 7

**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 8

**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 *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.

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 9

**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.

Printed Collections: PAM  
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**Indianapolis**—Forty-eight real photo postcards showing flooded streets and one showing the interior of the Wolf Hall Relief Station. Streets include: Arbor Avenue, Barnhill Street, Bridge Street, Bunker Hill Street, Central Avenue at 30th Street, Coffee Street, Harding Street, Indiana Avenue, Kentucky Avenue, Kentucky Avenue at Miller, Maryland Street, W. Michigan Street, a crowd at Morris Street at Blaine, Morris Street, W. New York Street, North and Caldwell streets, Oliver Avenue, Pearl Street, Ray [Raymond?] Street, River Avenue, Silver Avenue, Walnut and Cornell streets, Washington Street, and 30th and Washington Boulevard. Some images show snow on rooftops, people rowing boats down streets, automobiles, and people gathered. Dates on some of the photographs are March 26–30th. There are some duplicates.

Postcards, Box 1, folder 1  
of 2 for 1913 Indianapolis

**Indianapolis**—Fifty-four real photo postcards showing damaged bridges, destroyed interurban and railroad tracks (including tracks washed down a slope on “Southerland Ave.” and “break in levee on White River”), flooded streetcars (on W. Michigan Street) and trains (including “I.U.RR. engines washed from tracks by flood” and Belt Railroad), Riverside Park, Riverside dam, flooded residential streets and businesses, and people in boats on streets. Bridges include: Fall Creek at Meridian, Kentucky Avenue bridge, Kingan Packing Co.'s bridge, N. Meridian Street bridge, W. Raymond Street bridge, Vandalia railroad bridge, and Washington Street bridge. 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. Businesses shown include [?] Brown Grocery and Meat Market, F. Hilgemeier and Bro. Pork Packers, Kingan Packing Company, and Uneeda Biscuit. Houses are shown in deep water, primarily in West Indianapolis. Dates on some of the photographs are March 26–30th. There are some duplicates.

Postcards, Box 1, folder 2  
of 2 for 1913 Indianapolis

**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].”

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 10

**Jeffersonville**—One postcard of Ohio River as viewed from bridge in Jeffersonville.

Postcards, Box 1

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

Postcards, Box 1



**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 11

**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 12

**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 13

**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

**Tell City**—One real photo postcard of flooded street by Schreiber's Drug Store.

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).

#### CONTAINER

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 14

### 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.

#### CONTAINER

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 15

**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).

OVB Box 1, Folders 1-3

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

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 16

**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.

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).

#### CONTAINER

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 17

**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).

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 17

## 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.

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

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

**Bedford**—“Monon Bridge over White River 2 ½ M South of Bedford.”

**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.).

### CONTAINER

OVA Box 1, Folder 6

OVA Box 1, Folder 7

OVA Box 1, Folder 8

OVA Box 1, Folder 9

OVA Box 1, Folders 10 and 11

OVA Box 1, Folder 12

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 18

## Series 7: Undated and Unidentified Flood Locations

### CONTENTS

Twelve real photo postcards of Gas Plant, Police Boat on Northwestern Avenue, 30th Street, collapsed train tracks, turned over trains, wrecked bridge, collapsed buildings, and flooded streets. These are possibly Indianapolis in 1913.

One photograph of wrecked train cars on their side in water. This is possibly Indianapolis in 1913.

### CONTAINER

Postcards, Box 1

Photographs,  
Box 1, Folder 19

## 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.