

Collection #
M 0404
OM 0375

SWAN AND PAUGH FAMILY PAPERS, 1872-1989

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: Four and one-half manuscript boxes, 1 oversize manuscript folder, 3 photograph folders, 2 tintypes, 2 printed items, 1 artifact

COLLECTION DATES: 1872-1989

PROVENANCE: Gift of Ione Swan Paugh, 1975; Rebecca Pelton, 2025

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: East End Milk Co. and Acton High School Photographs, ca. 1920-1930 (P0743)

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 1975.0008; 2025.0071

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William F. Swan (1837-1929), son of Robert and Elizabeth [Sanders] Swan, settled in Union Township, Benton County, Indiana, about 1860, and was a farmer there until 1907, when he moved to Crawfordsville. During the Civil War he enlisted in the Tenth Indiana Volunteer Infantry, and saw service at several battles including Perryville, Chickamauga, and Kenesaw Mountain, and at the siege of Atlanta. He married Elizabeth Sanders in 1870, and had four children. He laid out the village of Swanington, southeast of Fowler, Indiana, at the junction of two railroads, and was apparently a successful stock farmer. After 1907 he went into the real estate business.

His brother, James Swan (1833-1907), also served in the Tenth Indiana, and claimed credit for shooting Confederate General Felix K. Zollicoffer at the battle of Antietam. He did not marry, and made his home with his brother William.

Robert A. Swan (1883-1971), son of William F., attended Benton County schools and then Eureka College in Illinois. He was offered a scholarship at Northwestern University to play baseball but made his living as an abstracter in Fowler, Indiana, working closely with his father in real estate.

Robert married Kathryn Mather in 1904. Their daughter Ione Swan (1910-1996) married Russel Paugh (1904-1977), a baseball player, coach, and teacher, in 1932. Paugh was the son of Harry and Augusta "Gussie" [Yarber] Paugh.

Sources:

Materials in the collection.

"Robert A. Swan," *Journal and Courier* (Lafayette, Ind.), 5 July 1971.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Much of the collection deals with William F. Swan. It contains his diaries nearly complete from 1871 to 1884, and a considerable body of his correspondence with his son Robert from 1895 to 1924. The diary entries are brief, dealing mainly with the weather and with farm activities. The correspondence contains considerable material about farming, real estate dealings in Fowler, and advice to his son.

The diaries of James Swan are similar to his brother's and cover the same period.

The two small diaries of Ellen Mahaffey, half-sister of Mrs. William Swan, deal mainly with weather and family activities.

All in all, this part of the collection gives something of a picture of the activities of an Indiana farm family over two generations.

The material on Robert A. Swan shows him running his abstract business, taking care of various errands, corresponding with distant relatives, and showing an interest in duck-shooting.

Also included is a small collection of letters from a soldier in France and Germany during World War I. The letters, written by Frank Yarber (elsewhere Yarbaugh or Yarbrough) to his sister Gussie, discuss conditions in Europe and contain reflections around why and how soldiers should be honored by civilians.

Lastly, the collection contains miscellaneous material largely giving an example of 1920s taste in dance programs and greeting cards. Other items are: newspapers and clippings with family obituaries and articles by William F. Swan, a Fowler Presbyterian Cookbook, hair comb, and family photographs.

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