

Collection #  
M 0826

## JOSEPH H. WAIT (WAITE) DIARIES, 1862–1915

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### COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	4 manuscript boxes, 1 folder of photographs
COLLECTION DATES:	1862–1915
PROVENANCE:	James P. Frey, Noblesville, IN, November 2002; February 2005

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2003.0078; 2005.0142

NOTES:

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Joseph H. Wait (sometimes Waite) was born 6 March 1839 in Union (now Allen) Township, Miami County, Indiana.

He enlisted in the 26th Indiana Infantry 30 August 1861 as a sergeant. After organizing in Indianapolis on 31 August 1861, the regiment was sent to St. Louis and then into the interior of Missouri. Under John C. Fremont they participated in the campaign on Springfield, and were then assigned to guard the Pacific Railroad line at Sedalia until July 1862, when they began a long and frustrating pursuit of John Marmaduke's confederates. The regiment engaged the enemy at Newtonia, Missouri in September 1862, at the Battle of Prairie Grove (where they suffered substantial losses), and at Van Buren, Arkansas on 28 December.

The 26th Indiana remained on guard duty in Missouri until May 1863, when they were ordered to join Ulysses S. Grant's army at Vicksburg during the final days of the siege, and then to Port Hudson and Carrollton, Louisiana. By October 1863 they were again on the move, being assigned to post duty at Brownsville, Texas on the Mexican frontier. Upon their reenlistment in February 1864, the regiment returned to Louisiana where they remained until joining in the Mobile Campaign in March and April 1865. Wait was mustered out on 15 January 1866.

Wait married Marietta H. Wright on 2 May 1864 while he was home on furlough. Over the next seventeen years they had eleven children. The youngest was only eight weeks old when Marietta died on 28 November 1881 at their home in Gilead, Indiana. Wait then married Susan Rhodes. He was appointed Postmaster of Gilead on 21 July 1897 and held the post until 1914. He died 21 March 1916.

Sources:

Materials in collection.

American Civil War Research Database. Duxbury, MA: Historical Data Systems, Inc., 2005 [cited 12 January 2005]. Available from World Wide Web: (<http://civilwardata.com/>)

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The bulk of the collection is made up of twenty diaries from 1862–1915. Seven of these were written during the years Wait was a soldier with the 26<sup>th</sup> Indiana Infantry. These contain descriptions of what Wait did each day, poetry, philosophy, and his thoughts about what else was going on in the country. Many of the entries are interspersed with margin notes, lists, and muster roles. The diaries written after the war jump from year to year and the later ones include clippings from newspapers and other printed items, usually with an inspirational story on it.

The other items in the collection include: Wait's appointment to Postmaster General for Gilead, money orders from the Treasury Department, a roster of members of the 26<sup>th</sup> Indiana Veterans Association, and an account of Wait's war service. There is also genealogical information about Wait and his family photocopied from a book, and a letter from Laura to her father (Wait's second-youngest daughter was named Laura, and it is assumed that this is from her to him).

The diaries have been arranged by year and the other folders have been kept in the order Joseph Wait put them in.

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Diary, 3–25 May 1865	Box 1, Folder 6
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Diary, absentee ballot, and maps, 1 Jan. 1866– 31 May 1868	Box 2, Folder 1
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Statement of Differences for money order and postal accounts, Treasury Department, June & Oct. 1914	Box 4, Folder 5
Comrades of the Twenty-Sixth Indiana Veteran Association, Roster, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 6
Genealogical information about Waite family (photocopies), n.d.	Box 4, Folder 7
Letter from Laura to Father, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 8
Account of Joseph H. Wait's war service, n.d.	Box 4, Folder 9
Joseph H. Waite and Waite family cemetery markers, n.d.	Visual Collections: Color Photographs, Folder 1

## 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 0826).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.