COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 1 box of photographs

COLLECTION DATES: 1914, 1916–1917

PROVENANCE: Nor’Wester Partners, Canada, 1993

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Lieutenant Claude N. Settles Photo Album (P0013)

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1993.0511

NOTES:
HISTORICAL / BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

During the Mexican Punitive Expedition Lieutenant Joseph Earl McCurdy served in Company A, of the 1st Indiana National Guard Infantry Regiment. According to census and draft registration records McCurdy (September 26, 1888–July 17, 1974) was born in Wanatah, LaPorte County, Indiana. His parents were a Mr. and Mrs. J.N. McCurdy.

McCurdy was married to a musician, Myrtle T. Center. She was born September 21, 1889 in Niles, Michigan. It is assumed that the couple lived in LaPorte, Indiana before McCurdy left for Texas. After McCurdy returned to LaPorte, Indiana, he worked as a traveling salesman for a paper company. Myrtle’s mother, Mary Center lived with the couple as did her brother Harold Center.

Mexican Punitive Expedition:

In 1916 trouble escalated on the American/Mexican border when rival political factions struggled for control of Mexico. National Guard units of Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona were federalized to protect American border towns. Other state guards, including Indiana, were also called to active duty. They assembled at Fort Harrison for induction into federal service and began departing in July 1916. Indiana Governor Ralston appointed Lieutenant Colonel Edward M. Lewis, as brigade commander. Colonel Leslie R. Naftzger, commanded the First Regiment, Thomas R. Coulter commanded the Second Regiment, and Aubrey D. Kuhlman commanded of the Third Regiment.

After traveling by train to camps in the Brownsville, Texas area the militiamen wrote home with tales of the snake and scorpion infested area and their work to make it livable. The units trained extensively during their time in Texas, culminating with 12 days of field maneuvers in November 1916 between Camp Llano Grande and Port Isabel. On November 24 the dispute was settled and the Hoosiers began returning to Fort Harrison in December 1916.

Sources:

Materials in the collection
United States Census Records

Indiana’s citizen soldiers : the militia and National Guard in Indiana history /
SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The photographs in the album follow Indiana National guardsman, Lieutenant Joseph E. McCurdy and the men of Company A, 1st Indiana National Guard Infantry during the Mexican Punitive Expedition. Most images are of the soldiers training in Texas and their last days there in February and March 1917. They show McCurdy and his fellow soldiers, some civilians visiting the soldiers in Texas, and local Mexican children and workers. Most locations and individuals are identified.

The photographs are pasted onto black paper album pages and are not arranged in strict chronological order. Scattered among the Texas images are the earliest military images showing recruits in Indiana in 1916. He also includes personal friends and family photographs near the end of the album, a photo of New Orleans, and the Alamo.

Each image in the album is described by the processors in this collection guide. The captions taken from the images are in quotation marks. The processor’s descriptions and comments are in square brackets. Because of its fragile condition the photo album was dis-bound and placed in five folders. The pages are numbered in pencil on the black paper.

McCurdy’s image appears several times in the collection. He identifies himself, his wife, his parents, and his mother-in-law in the photo where they are seeing him off to Mexico on June 26, 1916. It is a poignant image of a smiling soldier looking a bit nervous and a worried family. McCurdy identifies himself on the following pages: 1B, 7B, 17B, 20A, 22B, and 34B. Recognizing his image the processors were able to identify him in several other images and these are noted in the descriptions. His wife Myrtle also appears several times as does her mother Mary Center.
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Page 1A:

“January, at Progresso, Tex.” [a burro]

[two soldiers seated on burros]

Page 1B:

[wooden barracks with canvas roof]

[soldier with bags standing in doorway to barrack]

Page 2A:

Going Home, Llano Grande, Tex.”
[soldier with bags in doorway to barrack]

[three boys smiling for camera]

Page 2B:

“Mercedes Pump, Texas. Feb. 1917”
[view of buildings and fence along river]

Mercedes Pump, Tex. Feb. 1917”
[little girl in white dress and straw hat]
Page 3A:

“C. Co. Man, Llano Grande, Tex Aug. 1917”
[shirtless man holding shovel]

“Looking east from Triangle Tower.
Progresso, Texas, Feb. 1917.” [aerial view]

Page 3B:

“Kitchen - San Juan, Texas Outpost
Jan 29, 1917 – 95° in shade”
[5 soldiers in front of mess tent]

“Muchachos, Progresso, Texas Feb, 1917”
[2 boys, smiling]

Page 4A:

“Jan, 1917” [McCurdy wearing great coat in snow]

“Rio Grande River – South of Progresso, Texas,
February, 1917”
[McCurdy next to river with rifle balanced on his leg]

Page 4B:

“Giant Cactus, Progresso, Tex.
Feb. 1917 Capt. Richards, M.D.”
[officer dwarfed by giant cactus]

“Capt. Richards, Progresso, Tex. Feb. 1917”
[officer standing in front of yucca plant]

Page 5A:

“Geraldine, Mercedes Pump, Tex. Feb. 1917”
[little girl pulling on large hat]

“Giant Cactus, Progresso, Tex. Feb. 1917”
Page 5B: Photographs: Box 1, Folder 1

“Pontoon Outfit near river.
Progresso, Texas. Feb, 1917”

“Pontoon Boat on lake,
Progresso, Texas, February 1917”
[McCurdy with rifle standing in pontoon boat]

Page 6A: Photographs: Box 1, Folder 1

“F. Co. on way to river
Jan. 1917 – Llano Grande” [trucks carrying soldiers]

“Mexican Village, Progresso, Texas Feb. 1917”
[street scene of buildings]

Page 6B: Photographs: Box 1, Folder 1

“Progresso Texas. February 1917
[street with church]

“Progresso, Texas. Two of a kind”
[smiling McCurdy sitting on burro]

Page 7A: Photographs: Box 1, Folder 1

“From top of tower looking down.
Progresso, Texas February 1917”

“Rio Grande River.
Direct South of Progresso, Texas Feb. 1917”

Page 7B: Photographs: Box 1, Folder 1

Progresso, Tex. Feb 1917”
[three soldiers and one woman sitting on porch]

Progresso, Texas – Up Triangulation Tower.”
[two soldiers on tower McCurdy with case]
Page 8A:
“Triangle Tower, Progresso, Tex. Feb. 1917”
[tower next to building]

“Near – Progresso, Texas.
In the Jungles – Feb. 1917” [soldier with rifle]

Page 8B:
“From top of Smoke Stack, Mercedes Pump, Tex.
Feb. 1917” [looking down at circular road]

[McCurdy sitting on horse]

Page 9A:
“6:15 A.M.” [soldier getting dressed putting on pants]

[boy in soldier uniform sitting on horse]

Page 9B:
Brownville, Tex.”
[officers sitting on grass in front of palm tree]

“1917” [Mexican worker with shovel]

Page 10A:
“1917”
[two soldiers with artillery piece, breach open]

“Capt. Middleton – Some bass
Jan. 1917–Llano Grande–Tex.” [officer with fish]

Page 10B:
[three young boys with rifle and pistols]

“Cook Moist, Llano Grande, Tex. Feb. 1917”
[soldier holding and standing near pile of dead birds]
Page 11A:  
“Chief Musician Saloman, Llano Grande, Tex. Feb. 1917”  
[soldier holding cup]

[band playing in formation]

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 2

Page 11B:  
“San Juan, Tex. Outpost: Jan, 29-1917, 95° in shade”  
[field with fence and tents in background]

“Llano Grande, Tex. Feb. 1917”  
[soldier in front of building flanked by two palm trees]

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 2

Page 12A:  
“Llano Grande, Tex. Feb. 1917”  
[McCurdy next to yucca plant]

[message unreadable]  
[three officers at attention, McCurdy on right]

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 2

Page 12B:  
“At the guard house, Jan. 1917-Llano Grande, Tex.”  
[McCurdy standing at entrance to tent]

[officer shaving]

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 2

Page 13A:  
[group marching and playing bugles]

[soldiers and civilians with wagon and horses]

Photographs:  
Box 1, Folder 2
Page 13B:

Llano Texas, Jan. 1917” [man standing in doorway of tent]

“At Mercedes Pump, Dec. 1917
[soldiers and civilians in front of building]

“Llano Grande, Tex. Feb. 1917”
[two soldiers in campaign hats, McCurdy on right]

Photographs: Box 1, Folder 2

Page 14A:

“Progresso, Tex Feb. 1917”
[field with church and buildings in background]

“Mercedes Pump, Tex. January 1917”
[soldiers forming pyramid]
[top row] Kasbaum-Marks-Mccurdy-Taylor-Kachura
[bottom row] Schultz-Gershon-Hermon-Zeisig-
Whalh[?]

[officers in front of palm trees]

Photographs: Box 1, Folder 2

Page 14B:

“Lt. Col. Freyermuth, 3rd Ind. Inf. 1916,
Llano Grande, Tex. Co. L mascots”
[officer kneeling and feeding two pigs]

Llano Grande, Tex. Feb. 1917” [three officers]

“Mexican Boys. Llano Grande, Tex. Feb. 1917”
[three boys with rifles, pistols and ammo belts]

Photographs: Box 1. Folder 2
Page 15A: Photographs
Box 1 Folder 2

[street with tents on either side]

[four officers in front of building]

Llano Grande, Tex. Feb. 1917”
[two soldiers holding papers]

Page 15B: Photographs
Box 1 Folder 2

Llano Grande, Tex. Feb. 1917”

Llano Grande, Tex. Feb. 1917.”
[officer in front of building]

“Zeisig – Campbell – Gershon – McAlpine”
[four soldiers in tent with equipment]

Page 16A: Photographs
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“Blumenthal, Kachura, Gray, & Schultz.
Working hard??? Llano Grande, Tex. Sept. 1916”
[4 soldiers in tent laying on cots]

“1917” [building on riverbank with sign “Cold Milk, -
Ice Cream-Lemonade”]

“Goss–Parker–Moist, Nov. 1916,
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Page 16B:


“Loading—Going home—Feb. 1917. Llano Grande, Tex.” [line of caissons loaded onto train.]

Page 17A:


Page 17B:

“McCurdy, Chaney” [smiling officers on train]

“Capt. Turner Knox”

“Zieke – McCurdy” [civilian and McCurdy on train]

Page 18A:

“B. Co. last assemble, at Llano Grande, Tex. Mar. 2, 1917.” [soldiers in formation, full packs waiting to leave]

“Farewell number” Llano Grande, Tex. Mar. 2, 1917.” [band playing tune in camp]

Page 18B:

“Xmas 1916” [B Company seated in mess tent]

Page 19A:

“Xmas 1916” [B Company mess tent decorated]

Page 19B:

“13,000 troops reviewed by Gen. Funston, Llano Grande” [wide shot of troops in formation]

Page 20A:

“Recruiting Officers”
Herb Blumenthaw, J.E. McCurdy, Arthur Kurze”
[three soldiers at railroad station]

Page 20B:

“Recruits for Co. B, 6-26-16”
[10 young men at train station]

Page 21A:

[soldiers marching in formation]

Page 21B:

“October 1916. The Park Mercedes Texas”

Page 22A:

“October 1916. Street Scene, Mercedes, Tex.”

Page 22B:

“Off to Mexican Border. 6/26/16.”
“J.N. McCurdy, J.E. McCurdy, Mrs. J.E. McCurdy, Mary Center, Mrs. J.N. McCurdy”
[Lt. McCurdy in uniform, his parents, wife, and mother-in-law seeing him off at train station]
Page 23A:
"Horned Toad, One of our pets, Llano Grande, Texas 1916"

Page 23B:
"Supply wagon, Llano Grande, Tex. 1916"
[Covered wagon pulled by four mules]

Page 24A:
"Generals Funston, Parker and Lewis. Camp Llano Grande Texas, Oct. 1916"
[officers in open touring car]

Page 24B:
"On the maneuver, Nov. 1916, Battlefield of Palo Alto, Texas."
[formation of cavalry and wagons in background and scrub in foreground]

Page 25A:
"On the maneuver Nov. 1916, near Lomax, Tex."
[long line of soldiers crossing railroad bridge]

Page 25B:
"Lt. Col. Toffey. 1st Ind. Inf., Llano Grande, Texas 1916"
[officer with pipe at entrance to tent]

Page 26A:
"First Indiana Infantry 1916 Officers Critique in the field. Llano Grande Texas."
[officers meeting in field]

Page 26B:
"First Indiana Infantry Corral. Llano Grande Texas 1916"
[horses gathered inside corral]
Page 27A:

[cavalry in background and scrub brush in foreground]

Page 27B:

“Preparing for inspection. Llano Grande, Texas. Sept. 1916”
[soldiers preparing pup tents for inspection with stacked rifles in foreground]

Page 28A:

[cavalry in background, scrub brush in foreground]

Page 28B:

“Getting ready for inspection, Llano Grande, Texas, 1916”
[soldiers at wash tables and tubs doing laundry]

Page 29A:

“First Indiana Infantry Exchange. Llano Grande, Texas 1916. The Store”
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Page 29B:

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Page 30A:

“After the storm, Llano Grande, Texas 1916”
[soldiers around wreckage of collapsed building]
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“Chief Musician Saloman. 1st Ind. Inf. 1916.
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Page 31A: Photographs
Box 1 Folder 4

“The Bull Pen 1st Ind. Inf. Llano Grande, Tex. 1916”
[soldiers standing in front of open air prison stockade]

Page 31B: Photographs
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“Co. B., 1st Ind. Inf., return from the river,
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[soldiers and trucks in company street]

Page 32A: Photographs
Box 1 Folder 4

“Our pets. Llano Grande, Tex. 1916”
[soldiers looking at snake coiled around rope line tied
between two trees]

Page 32B: Photographs
Box 1 Folder 4

“The Alamo” San Antonio, Tex. 1916”
[front of the mission, people in foreground]

Page 33A: Photographs
Box 1 Folder 4

“Kurt Ullrich, Owen Curtis.
Camp Ralston, Fort Ben Harrison 6/27/1916”
[soldiers standing in front of tent]

“Camp Ralston at Fort Ben Harrison.
Robt. Unger, E.O. Droge. 6/27/1916”
[Two soldiers standing in front of tent]

Page 33B: Photographs
Box 1 Folder 4

“Capt. Raymond P. Chambers Regimental Adjutant
1st. Ind. Inf. Llano Grande, Texas 1916”
[officer on horse]

“Opal Kilmer”
[soldier in dark shirt and white pants with riding crop]
Page 34A:

“Killed in Camp Llano Grande, Texas 1916
A “Rattler” Over 7 ft. long – 14 Rattles.”
[soldier holding up snake]

Camp Ralston, Fort Harrison” [soldier in front of tent]

Page 34B:

[soldier on horse]

“J.E. McCurdy Dec. 1916 La Porte”
[McCurdy in overcoat in snow in front of building]

Page 35A:

“Armadillos, Llano Grande, Tex. 1916-17”
[soldier kneeling holding two armadillos]

Page 35B:

“Some Hay. Llano Grande, Tex. 1916-17”
[farmhands stacking bales of hay]

Page 36A:

“Llano Grande Tex. 1916-17” [two mules and wagon]

Page 36B:

“A-MUZ-U, Llano Grande Theatre 1916-17”
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Page 37A:

“Llano Grande, Tex. 1916-17”
[soldiers in front of two commercial establishments:
“The Big 4” & “The Western Queen”]

Page 37B:

“Supply Truck Llano Grande Tex 1916-17”
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“Machine Gun Truck Llano Grande, Tex. 1916-17”  
[three soldiers posing on truck]

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“Rifle Range. Llano Grande Tex. 1916-17”  
[soldiers on rifle range]

Page 39A: Photographs  
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“Mexicanos” Llano Grande Tex. 1916-17”  
[large group of men waiting in front of platform]

Page 39B: Photographs  
Box 1 Folder 4  
“Have a ride” Llano Grande, Tex. 1916”  
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Page 40A: Photographs  
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“Mexican Girls, Texas 1916-17”  
[two young women in front of building]

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“Above ground Graveyard, New Orleans, La. 1916.”

Page 41A: Photographs  
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“Field Range Texas 1916-17”  
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Page 42B: Photographs
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Box 1 Folder 5

Page 43A: Photographs
“Fortifications – Progresso, Tex. 1916-17”
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Box 1 Folder 5

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“Mexicans – Llano Grande, Tex. 1916-17”
[7 men in line, box cars in background]
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Page 44B: Photographs
“3 inch gun – Llano Grande, Tex. 1916-17”
[artillery piece on large caisson]
Box 1 Folder 5

Page 45A: Photographs
“Commissary Warehouse No. 1
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Page 45B: Photographs
“Llano Grande, Tex. 1916-17”
[coyote on chain]
Box 1 Folder 5

Page 46A: Photographs
“A Co. Wildcat – Llano Grande Tex. 1917”
[cat chained to wooden box]
Box 1 Folder 5
Page 46B:

[man with trumpet in overcoat, and in band uniform in front of circus wagon, 3 views]

“June 1916”
[4 soldiers with stacked rifles, probably Ft. Harrison]

“June 1916”
[3 soldiers marching with rifles, probably Ft. Harrison]

“Orr, C. Palen, Jenson, A. Palen, June 1916”
[4 soldiers side-by-side, probably Ft. Harrison]

Page 47A:

“Irene Dankowski” [baby in carriage, 2 views]

[young girl in front of tree]

“Irene Dankowski” [sitting next to teddy bear]

“Aug. 31-16” [Mary Center with flowers]

“Bob Dankowski” [baby sitting in grass]

Page 47B:

“Fred & Donald McCurdy” [two boys]

“Esther and Eveleen Wells” [two girls]

Page 48A:

[man in band uniform with trumpet in front of circus wagon, same view on page 46B]

[5 head shots of J.E. McCurdy in different poses]

[piano with sheet music and table]

“Kurt Ullrich January 1917” [man on horse in snow]
“Moose Picnic, Fox Park June 11, 1916”
[musicians in front of band stand]

“June 11, 1916, Stanley Jackel, Baer “Bill” Morgan, Chas. Kalenbeck” [4 musicians]

“June 1916” [four soldiers sitting on a stone wall]

“June 1916”[four soldiers aiming rifles]

“Chaney-Ullrich-Orr, June 1916”
[men in front of store wearing straw hats]

[two women seated, appears to be McCurdy’s mother-in-law Mary Center, and his wife Myrtle McCurdy]

[three women in white dresses, appears to be Mary Center crocheting, Myrtle McCurdy with a garden hose, and another unidentified woman crocheting]

[woman in hat and dress, Mary Center]

[brick school building in snow at LaPorte]

“Miss Lynda Brust now Mrs. Wm. Augustine–1914”
[woman in front of store]

[man and woman in front of car, the man yawning and the woman saying “Oh, Carl”]

[toddler in large straw hat]

[boy and girl in front of corn plants]

[smiling woman in front of house, appears to be Myrtle McCurdy]

[McCurdy and woman holding hands in front of “Meisner Drugs”]

[man standing in front of “Meisner Drugs”]
Page 50:

[Myrtle McCurdy in hat and fur coat]

[Myrtle McCurdy smiling in blouse and necklace]

“Aug. 31, 1916” [Mary Center and Myrtle McCurdy sitting on grass beside flowers]

“1917”

[J.E. McCurdy in uniform holding camera and smiling]
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 0259).

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