

Collection #
P 0030

**MONTEZUMA, INDIANA
COLLECTION, CA. 1900, 1913, 1983**

Collection Information	1
Historical Sketches	2
Scope and Content Note	3
Series Contents	4-7

Processed by

Dorothy A. Nicholson
April 30, 2026

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

*

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 2 boxes of 5x7 glass plates
1 folder of photographs with documentation

COLLECTION DATES: Ca. 1900, 1983

PROVENANCE: Charles R. Brown, Montezuma, Indiana

RESTRICTIONS: Glass plates may be viewed only with the assistance of library staff and a light table. The plates have been scanned and are available online.

COPYRIGHT:

REPRODUCTION RIGHTS: Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained from the Indiana Historical Society.

ALTERNATE FORMATS: <https://images.indianahistory.org/digital/search/searchterm/p0030>

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 1983.0510

NOTES:

HISTORICAL SKETCHES

Formally established in 1823, the town of Montezuma, with its proximity to the Wabash River in Parke County Indiana developed as a commercial shipping point. In 1836, the Wabash and Erie Canal began construction in the northern part of state and reached Montezuma in 1848. After this the town flourished and became an important port on the canal.

Developing railroads in the state ended the canal system. By the 1850s railroads began replacing canals and they ceased operation in the 1870s. Two major rail lines intersected in Montezuma and transported passengers and freight from the east coast to destinations both north and south.

Montezuma is noted for its clay deposits and the local brickyards where bricks were produced and shipped by rail around the country. Montezuma was also home to the Montezuma Sanitarium & Hotel that opened in 1906 offering healing waters with a swimming pool and forty furnished rooms. Views of brickyards as well as the Sanitarium pool are seen in the glass plate images in this collection.

The donor Charles R. Brown was owner-operator of Brown Funeral Home in Montezuma. Throughout his life he was active in several local and state organizations. While he was an employee of the Legislative Reference Bureau in 1963, he provided information for an article in the Sunday magazine section of the *Indianapolis Star* that led to the development of the Indiana State Seal.

Mr. Brown donated this collection of glass plates and photographs to the Indiana Historical Society in 1983. He numbered the glass plates and provided a typed list with descriptions. He assumed the photographer was Arthur Powell of Montezuma but provided no documentation about him. A search of census records from 1900 to 1950 shows Arthur L. Powell (1877-1954) living in Montezuma. His profession is listed as a druggist and later as owner of his own business.

Sources:

<https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/>

<https://www.in.gov/towns/montezuma/>

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/74717246/charles-richard-brown>

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

Series 1: Glass Plates, ca. 1900

The glass plates appear to be in a random order with no organization. Originally there were twenty-six 5x7 glass plate negatives of scenes in and around Montezuma, Indiana. Plate 24 is currently missing but there is a copy photograph available. According to the donor, Charles R. Brown, he assumed the photographer was Arthur Powell of Montezuma. Mr. Brown did not provide any documentation to prove this.

The donor identified most of the images which show various street scenes, buildings, businesses, railroads, and people ca. 1900. His descriptions are in quotation marks and comments added by the processor are in square brackets.

Of note is plate number 9 which shows Main Street in Montezuma, on the left is the Drug Store which is probably where Arthur Powell (the assumed photographer) was employed as a druggist.

Series 2: Photographs and List of Glass Plates, 1983

This series contains a typed itemized list of the glass plates provided by the donor. The donor numbered the plates and provided information on most of the images. There are also copy photographs of the twenty-six glass plates that were reproduced by the Indiana Historical Society in 1983 when the collection was donated. The donor provided nine 3 ½ x 5-inch color photographs of some of the same locations seen in the original glass plates. The descriptions of the nine color photographs are included with the descriptions in the itemized list.

Color photographs of nine locations seen in the original glass plates, were taken and described by the donor on March 24, 1983.

SERIES CONTENTS

Series 1: Glass Plates, ca. 1900

CONTENTS

“Montezuma Swimming Pool – this was all that was remaining of the Montezuma Sanatorium”
[group of boys seated at the edge of the pool]

“May have been taken on the east side of Madison Street (1100 block) in Montezuma.”
[two young couples holding hands and standing beside a building]

“Unknown”
[five young women dressed in men’s clothing]

“Unknown”
[unidentified company baseball team, “R C” on their uniforms, nine players, a manager, and batboy]

“Burns and Hancock Fire Brick and Clay Company, West Montezuma”
[six men standing in front of brick oven]

“Photo was taken on the Wilkerson Street (north) side of the King Hotel in Montezuma. Man on right is Perry Reid, a blacksmith in Montezuma.”
[a very large catfish held between two men]
[caption] “Caught in the Wabash, Montezuma, Ind.”

“Crossover, C.I. & W. Railroad and C. & E. I. Railroad, at Hillsdale, Indiana.
[winter scene with people standing around on tracks]

“Willhite Sawmill, south of C.I. & W. Railroad, Montezuma.”
[interior view of five workers and sawmill equipment]

“900 block, Washington Street, Montezuma, north from Crawford Street.”
[caption] “Main Street, Montezuma, Ind.”
[Drug Store with people standing out front on left]

“Court House, Rockville, Parke County, Indiana.”
[caption] “Court House, Rockville, Ind.”

CONTAINER

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 1, Plate 1

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 1, Plate 2

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 1, Plate 3

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 1, Plate 4

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 1, Plate 5

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 1, Plate 6

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 1, Plate 7

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 1, Plate 8

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 1, Plate 9

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 1, Plate 10

<p>“Looking north from C.I. & W. Railroad grade. George Mathas Residence in right foreground. Appears to have been flood of 1913.”</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 1, Plate 11</p>
<p>“Looking north on Jefferson Street from Main Street Road. Apparently taken from top of Cob Mill which burned.” [elevated view of houses and streets]</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 1, Plate 12</p>
<p>“Main Street, looking west, after Cob Mill fire.” [street view, brick building on left, behind it appears to be a mountain of rubble, roofers working on houses to the right]</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 1, Plate 13</p>
<p>“West side of Washington Street, 900 block, Montezuma” [caption] “Dunlap Hotel, Montezuma, Ind.”</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 2, Plate 14</p>
<p>“E.U.B. [Evangelical United Brethren] Church, corner of Jefferson & Canal Streets, Montezuma.” [view of wood frame church]</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 2, Plate 15</p>
<p>“McGinty Street looking north from Main Street. Apparently flood of 1913” [view of houses and flooded street]</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 2, Plate 16</p>
<p>“George Mathas Feed Mill on south side of “A” Street, between Water and Washington Streets. C.I. &W. Railroad coal dock is in background. Railroad bridge across Wabash River on right.”</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 2, Plate 17</p>
<p>“Wabash River Bridge, looking northeast. Subjects unknown.” [three young women with a horse and carriage]</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 2, Plate 18</p>
<p>“Southern Fire Brick and Clay Co. at Snake Hollow, northwest of Montezuma.” [view of smokestacks, ovens, and railroad tracks]</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 2, Plate 19</p>
<p>“Montezuma Grade School on Strawberry Road, between Monroe and Jackson Streets.” [view of brick and limestone school]</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 2, Plate 20</p>
<p>“Looking north on Washington Street from “C” Street. Apparently flood of 1913.”</p>	<p>5x7 Glass Plates: Box 2, Plate 21</p>

“Graduating Class, Montezuma High School, 1908. Members of class: Ivan Causey, Sallie Athern, Mable Everett Veach, Edna Harvey Swaim, Ethel Newton Bowman and Myrtle Kay Mathas who is believed to be on the left in the front row.”

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 2, Plate 22

“Burns and Hancock Fire Brick and Clay Company, West Montezuma.”
[elevated view of brick ovens]

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 2, Plate 23

“Unknown”
[three young women in a rowboat on a river, same three as seen in Plate 18 on the Wabash River Bridge. Plate 24 is missing only copy photo available]

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 2, Plate 24
[copy photo in box]

“Unknown”
[brick school with teacher and students in front, sign above front door “Dist. No. 11 — 1899”]

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 2, Plate 25

“Unknown”
[young woman in a large hat seated in front of a screen mounted on the side of a house]

5x7 Glass Plates:
Box 2, Plate 26

Series 2: Photographs and List of Glass Plates, 1983

CONTENTS

Itemized list of glass plates and color photographs provided by the donor Charles R. Brown, Numbered 1–26

Twenty-six copy photographs of the glass plates reproduced by the Indiana Historical Society, 1983

CONTAINER

Photographs:
Folder 1

Photographs:
Folder 1

Color photographs of nine locations seen in the original glass plates, taken and described by the donor on March 24, 1983, numbered on verso.

Photographs:
Folder 1

9-A: "900 block, Washington Street, Montezuma, north from Crawford Street."
[drug store is still on the corner, identified as Main Street on the glass plate]

11-A: "Looking north from C.I. & W. Railroad grade..."

12-A: "Looking north on Jefferson Street from Main Street Road... Taken from elevator."

13-A: "Main Street, looking west..."

14-A: "West side of Washington Street, 900 block, Montezuma"

15-A: "E.U.B. Church, corner of Jefferson & Canal Streets, Montezuma. Now a Nazarene church"

16-A: "McGinty Street looking north from Main Street."

17-A: "George Mathas Feed Mill on south side of "A" Street, between Water and Washington Streets..."

21-A: "Looking north on Washington Street from "C" Street..."