

Collection #
M 0941,
OM 0458

**ORA NEWTON LEFLER
DIARIES, 1906–1954 (BULK 1930–1954)**

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Processed by

Kathryn Wilmot
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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:	5 document cases, 2 oversized manuscript folders
COLLECTION DATES:	1906–1954 (bulk 1930–1954)
PROVENANCE:	Elizabeth Ann Lefler, Indianapolis, IN, April 2001

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2001.0576

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ora Newton Lefler was born on 6 June 1871 to Isaac Lefler (b. 6 February 1832) and Martha Jane Wire (b. 17 May 1840). On 13 August 1898 in Lancaster, Huntington County, Indiana, Ora married Nettie Stout (b. 12 April 1876). The couple had two children, Ralph W. and Glen J. Lefler.

Ora and Nettie owned a 129 acre farm in Warren, Jefferson Township, Huntington County, Indiana. Ora's diaries indicate the couple attended a nearby Brethren church. In addition to farming, Ora was involved in soliciting subscribers to the Majenica Telephone Company and attended company meetings. He followed political events and legislation and favored the Republican Party.

Ora died 24 January 1954 after an operation. Nettie died soon thereafter on 4 February 1954.

Sources:

Information in the collection.

"Ancestry Library Edition." Available online at: <http://www.ancestrylibrary.com>

"Rootsweb." Available online at: <http://www.rootsweb.com/>

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists of 29 diaries in which Ora Newton Lefler made daily notations for the years 1906–1907 and 1930–1954. It is not known whether Lefler kept diaries during the period from 1908–1929. Places mentioned within the diaries include Huntington, Indianapolis, Lancaster, Majenica, Markle, Peru, and Warren. Frequently mentioned neighbors and surnames include Buzzard, Heaston, Neff, Sprinkle, Shideler, Ulrich, and Wire, among many others.

Lefler's diaries provide information on the daily life of a farmer, including horses and cattle bought, sold, and bred; farms, mortgages, and stocks bought and sold; supplies and machinery purchased, including automobiles; the price of goods; bookkeeping; helping neighbors; and chores such as cultivating, hauling, plowing, sowing, and threshing.

In addition to farming, Lefler noted attendance at church, trials, jury service, Farm Bureau meetings, Ladies' Aid, Decoration Day celebrations, speeches, commencement ceremonies, weddings, the World's Fair, plays and musical productions, movies, and numerous funerals for community members. Lefler also kept track of doctors he and Nettie visited, results of examinations, surgeries, and Nettie's fever, steam bath, and electric "treatments." In the late 1940s, Lefler reported on the success of the men drilling for oil through the Trenton Limestone on Lloyd Lahr's nearby farm.

At the local, national, and international levels, Lefler recorded illnesses, accidents, suicides, kidnappings, legislation, weather, politics, elections, and political conventions, and crimes like burglaries, murders, and robberies. Political, economic, and foreign policy issues specifically mentioned include unemployment and bank instability related to the Great Depression in the 1930s, the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, World War II, the administration of President Henry S. Truman, Communism, the Cold War, and the Korean War.

Loose items removed from the diaries consist of correspondence, political newspaper clippings, local election news and sample ballots, agriculture and livestock information, information relating specifically to Lefler's farm, Federal Farm Board news, letters from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Adjustment Administration, commencement programs for local high schools, receipts, obituaries, and advertisements.

A photograph of Lefler can be found on the "Dedication" page of the 1937 *Jeffersonian* in Box 3, Folder 1. Additionally, a brief article containing a photograph of Lefler's farm is located in Box 2, Folder 10.

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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 0941).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.