



MCHS News

March 2016

Opening Doors to Madison County History

Vol. 4 No. 2

715 N Main Street
Edwardsville, IL
62025

Hours:
Wed-Fri 9 am - 4 pm
Sunday 1 pm - 4 pm
Group Tours Available

Free Admission

Museum Phone:
618-656-7562

Library Phone:
618-656-7569

Web Address:
madcohistory.org

E-mail:
info@madcohistory.org

About Us:
The MCHS museum complex, consisting of a modern archival library, a museum in the 1836 Weir House and the Helms Collection Center, is owned by the nonprofit Madison County Historical Society and operated jointly with Madison County.

The Madison County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

THREE YEARS IN THE PROBATE FILES

In May 2013 the Madison County Archival Library staff and volunteers embarked on a joint project with the Madison County Circuit Clerk's office. Now, nearly three years later, the project is nearing completion.

The project involved processing over 44,000 probate files. The objective of the project was to retain all of the original wills while finding a new location for the remainder of the file. It was obvious that volunteers would be needed to accomplish this in a timely manner. With the first delivery of over 200 files and a few of the archival library's "regular" volunteers on hand, the project began.

Since the volunteers and staff have a keen interest in history and genealogy, the probate files soon became one of the more interesting collections processed at the archival library. With a few exceptions, the earliest probate files processed were from the early 1900s and the people, businesses, and even foreign countries involved in the settling of these estates created lively discussions among the volunteers.

There were stories of missing people who suddenly had relatives ready to claim any

assets available, a family cemetery that was willed to the City of Alton, and guardianship files dating from the earliest days of Madison County (predating Illinois statehood). The elaborate business letterheads and the difference in prices for items from one hundred years ago started many discussions. Wills were found written on scraps of cardboard in pencil, on notecard-sized sheets of paper, and, at the other extreme, several typed pages of detailed instructions. Favorite stories from the probate files are the subject of this newsletter.



Madison County Circuit Clerk's Office employees Ben Hunter (left) and Lamark Kirkwood delivered boxes to the staff and volunteers each Thursday morning. (Courtesy of Cindy Reinhardt)

SPRING CALENDAR

Program:

SUNDAY, MARCH 20 - 2 P.M.

TREASURES IN THE PROBATE FILES

Presenter: Mary Westerhold
Madison County Archival Library

Probate files contain both the expected and the unexpected. They include many last wills and testaments, but there are also receipts from businesses that have been closed for a century, photographs, searches for unknown heirs, guardianships and more. Mary Westerhold, who supervised the Probate Project, will present a program describing what can be found in probate files. You might be surprised!

Continuing ...

Temporary Mini-Exhibits:

Madison County Historical Museum
INFLUENCE OF THE CITY BEAUTIFUL
MOVEMENT ON MADISON COUNTY

~

WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

Dolls from the past are sometimes considered "creepy" by today's standards.

~

DISCOVERING THE HISTORY BEHIND
THE MADISON COUNTY COURTHOUSE

~

CIVIL DEFENSE

Featuring a fallout shelter emergency kit.

ABOUT US

MCHS BOARD

Gary Denué, Pres
Candace Ladd, V-Pres
Anna Darr, Secy
Arnold Meyer, Treas
Norma Asadorian
Mary J. Bade
Miriam Burns
Tallin Curran
Norma Glazebrook
Mae Grapperhaus
Murray Harbke
Tina Hubert
Candace Ladd
Jeff Pauk
Cindy Reinhardt
Sue Wolf

STAFF

Suzanne Dietrich
Director
Mary Westerhold
Archival Research Mgr.
LaVerne Bloemker
Archival Research Asst.
Carol Frisse
Archival Research Asst.
Jenn Walta
Curator
Casey Weeks
Asst. Curator

VOLUNTEERS

There are abundant and varied opportunities for volunteers at either the museum or the archival library. Please call if interested.

MEMBERSHIPS

Several membership levels are available to those interested in supporting the work of preserving Madison County history through an MCHS membership. Memberships run on the calendar year, Jan 1-Dec 31. Applications are available on our web site, at the MCHS Museum or at the Archival Library.

PUBLICATIONS

MCHS NEWS

6 issues annually
Cindy Reinhardt, Editor

WEB SITE

madcohistory.org

ARCHIVAL LIBRARY SPOTLIGHT

By Mary Westerhold, Archival Research Manager

The Volunteers

Along with the dedicated staff, volunteers are a big part of the archival library's daily operations. They help with special projects such as cataloging large collections, transcribing and indexing old handwritten registers, and clipping and cataloging news articles. Our volunteers come from different towns within the area and are a great help to researchers who are searching for information from different areas of Madison and surrounding counties.

When the probate project began, there were a few regular volunteers who agreed to work with the files. Requests for additional volunteers were submitted through local genealogical societies and newsletters. And they came, one by one, to join the project. As the project ends, there are seven volunteers involved and three staff members. Others participated through the years of the project but could not continue for various reasons. The efforts of everyone are greatly appreciated.

While going through a probate file document by document to find a will may sound extremely boring, the volunteers found it interesting. The various letterheads that were found in the early files were elaborate and colorful resulting in interesting comments and even remembrances of businesses that are long gone. The probate files also contain receipts that list prices from long ago with often staggering differences from today's prices.

And then there were the inventories of the estates. The simplest wills gave all property, real and personal, to one person. However, this was more the exception than the rule. Personal property was frequently sold to pay debts or given away piece by piece in the will. For example, when the personal property on a farm was sold, the inventory frequently included animals, and they were

often named. The inventory of the estate of Henry F. Schwehr included nine horses named Beaut, Grace, Jes, Babe, Bill, Nell, Lady, Simpson, and Gep. Several cows and calves were also listed, but they only had numbers, no names.

The volunteers and staff who had ancestors in Madison County were always excited when someone came across a probate file of a family member. The file was perused and



discussed. Even those with no local ancestors found names they recognized whether it was a famous name in Madison County or a friend or neighbor of the family. Probate files and wills for members of the Wick family from Highland and the Olin, Haskell, and Smith families of Alton and Godfrey were found to name just a few.

As with any other group, the bonds between the volunteers continued to grow. Birthdays and holidays were celebrated, along with every day ups and downs. New volunteers were always eagerly welcomed and quickly assimilated.

While the archival library staff also participated in the project by processing the files, answering questions on unusual wills and making copies, it was the volunteers that kept it going week to week. Congratulations on a job well done! (And on to the next project....)



RECENT MCHS NEWS

YOUR FAMILY IN THE NEWS

We are always excited to hear from Madison County families who are able to contribute to the MCHS News. Coming topics will include histories of MCHS, Collinsville and St. Jacob, the Diamond Mineral Springs Hotel, and the role of women on the home front in WW I. Do you have an ancestor who was active in the historical society when it was founded 95 years ago? Do you know someone who worked at the Diamond Mineral Springs or visited there often? Did your grandmother or a great aunt volunteer for the war effort during World War I? If the answer to any of these questions is yes, or if you have photographs that could help illustrate these stories, please call editor Cindy Reinhardt at 618-656-1294.

MCHS HISTORY

MCHS was founded at least three times between 1903 and 1921. In the May issue of the MCHS News the history and those rocky beginnings of the organization will be explored. Many readers will remember the days when the Madison County Historical Museum was located in a room on the third floor of the Court House. We've come a long way! A program on the same topic will be offered on May 22.

GUEST AUTHOR

Although Mary Westerhold usually writes a column for the MCHS News, this month her contribution was expanded to include all the articles on the probate files. As the Archival Library Research Manager, Mary supervised the Probate Project, serving as a liaison between the Archival Library and the Circuit Clerk's office. On March 20 she will be the speaker for a program on the fascinating discoveries in the probate files. The Society is grateful for her generous contributions to this project that will benefit genealogists and other researchers for generations to come. Images used with the articles are from the probate files unless otherwise noted.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The opportunity to teach visitors and area residents about Madison County history is a privilege enjoyed by many over the years at the Madison County Historical Museum. But at the present time there is a shortage of volunteers. If you enjoy talking about history and have a few hours to spare, please contact Director Suzanne Dietrich at 618-656-7562. Help is needed during all regular hours but especially around lunch time or on days with group tours.

2016 NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Dec 2015 - Feb 2016 ~ Thank you for supporting MCHS!

Elijah Lovejoy \$500

Roger & Evelyn Wiebusch

James Madison \$100

Bernice Brown
City of Edwardsville
Edwardsville Children's Museum
Mary Ruth Kettenbach
Robert Madoux
Stephen Mudge
Bob & Sandi Schwartz

Family \$50

Mary Bade/Robert Clouse
Sid & Jane Denny
Charles Dietrich
Ted & Jeanne Elik
Robert & Anne Gregor
Murray Harbke
Gary Harmon
John & Maxine Johnson

Kurt Johnson
Tom LaFaver
Madison County Farm Bureau
David Novak
Joan O'Saben
Jeff Pauk
Nick & Cheri Petrillo
Katherine Rapp
Kathryn Scheibal
John & Marion Sperling
Bob & Sue Wolf

Individual \$35

Kurt Ackerman
Carolyn Catalano
Shirley Daiber
Viva Fisher
Patty Freymuth
Mae Grapperhaus
Charlotte Heeren
Mary Heeren

Vickie Hellmann
Robert Gusewelle
William Kaseberg
Rosalynn Kessler
Vicky Kruckeberg
Candace Ladd
Judith Leo
Virginia McCall
Daniel McGuire
Diann Noll
Joni Peters
Robert Pollard
Joann Southard Reitz
Vickie Sheridan
Meg Solon
Marilyn Sulc
Joyce Taff
Barbara Taliana
Billie Mae Wilson
Mary Zerlan
Dorothy Zwettler

Storing the Files

Storage was one of the first problems that needed to be resolved for the probate records. The files had been stored in metal drawers but these were too heavy and cumbersome. In addition, many of the drawers had been damaged and showed signs of rust, which were harmful to the original documents.

Several document boxes had recently been donated to the archival library, and one drawer of files fit perfectly in a box. The boxes were numbered the same as the drawers so the filing system of the Circuit Clerk's office remained intact.

While this was a short term answer, a long term storage solution was needed. After discussions with the Circuit Clerk's office and MCHS, it was agreed that if approval could be obtained from the State of Illinois, the files could be permanently stored in the archival library collection.

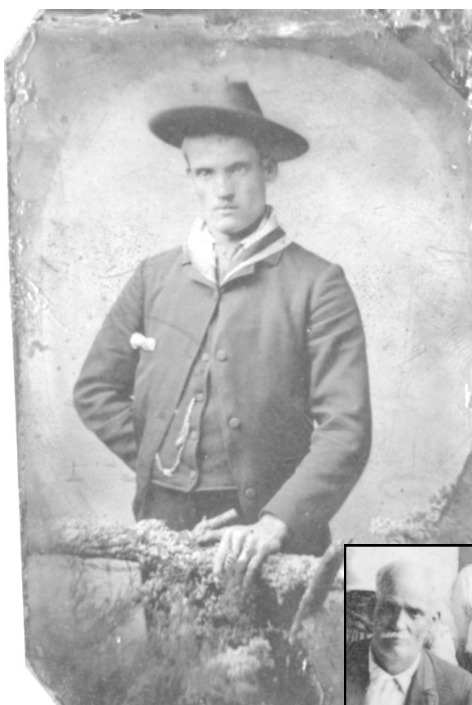
Within a few months, the Madison County Circuit Clerk's office received permission from the Supreme Court of Illinois to donate the probate files after the removal of the original wills. MCHS purchased archival document storage boxes and shelving units were provided by Madison County. Members of the Historical Society erected the shelving units in the archival library's collection center making the files available to researchers.

STORIES FROM THE PROBATE FILES

J. B. Scott

In Oct. 1914, J. B. Scott disappeared from his home in Granite City after selling his business. His friends feared that he had been murdered, with robbery the motive, but his body was never found. In Feb. 1924, a petition was filed by a creditor to settle the estate which supposedly consisted of approximately \$5,000 in real estate and \$1,000 in personal property. He was rumored to have a sister in Cincinnati, Ohio, but no one knew her name. A search for possible heirs ensued.

As word of the estate was published in both local and Cincinnati newspapers, hopeful relatives came forward from Illinois, Missouri, and Ohio. Letters arrived describing the possible relationship to the deceased, and



G. W. Scott, pictured above, sent this photo of himself as a young man as well as one of him at an older age (inset) to Madison County hoping the family resemblance to J. B. Scott would result in an inheritance.

photos were even enclosed to prove the family resemblance.

The most reliable relationship claim was from a woman and her son in Cincinnati who said they were Scott's wife and son whom he had deserted many years ago. The original letters from the "relatives" along with newspaper clippings within the file recorded the claims as each one appeared.

Complications of the estate soon set in when it was determined that the personal property in a local bank (rumored to be valued at \$1000) was just worthless pieces of paper. The real estate owned by Scott had also been sold for taxes. The estate was declared insolvent and no one received any payment.

THE MINOR HEIRS OF SAMUEL JUDY



Samuel Judy is usually considered the first permanent settler (1801) and the builder of the first brick house in Madison County (1808). When he passed away in 1838, he left a widow (his second wife Sarah/Sally Judy) and thirteen children. Of his thirteen children, five (Elias, Ambrose, Anna (Eliza Ann), Naomi, and Martha) were minors. Because they had money coming to them through the estate, Thomas Judy, their older half-brother, was appointed their guardian in 1841.

This seems to be a typical guardianship file but was intriguing because each receipt is handwritten on a small piece of paper, folded once lengthwise and numbered. As the receipts were opened, the story of the two youngest children, Neomy and Martha, began to literally unfold.



Judy family tombstone photos courtesy of Diana Ritchie

Continued on page 5

GUARDIANSHIPS

The terms guardian and orphan take on a different meaning when working with probate. According to "The Source: A Guidebook of American Genealogy" edited by Loretto Dennis Szucs and Sandra Hargreaves Luebking, "A guardian is a responsible individual of legal age appointed or acknowledged by the court to manage the property ownership of those incompetent by reason of youth or mental or physical handicap to handle their own affairs."

In addition, the same book defines an orphan as "... a minor whose father is dead or whose deceased mother left separately owned property to her child but excluded the father. In both cases, a guardian is appointed to assume the legal responsibilities of property ownership. In other words, the "orphan" may have a living parent in either case...It is also common for a mother or father to be appointed guardian of his or her own children, without implying adoption, formal or otherwise."

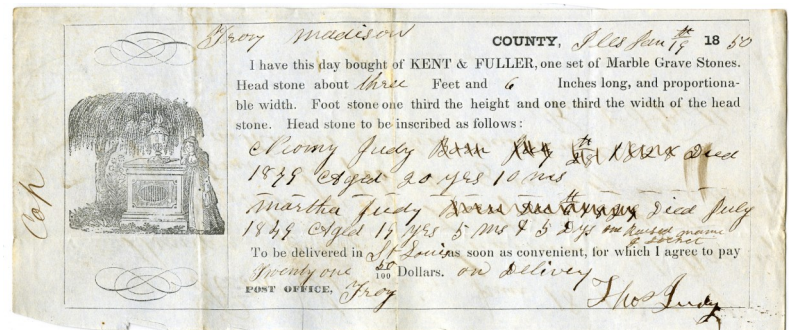
Some of the guardianship files are very basic and contain only a few sheets of paper. The surviving parent is named guardian and the child continues to live with them and when maturity is reached, the property owed to them is delivered and the guardianship file is closed.

What is most interesting about the guardianship files is that some of them predate Illinois statehood. For example, the guardian's bond given by Field Bradshaw and Jonas Bradshaw state that they are "of Madison County and Illinois Territory" and is dated August 6, 1816.

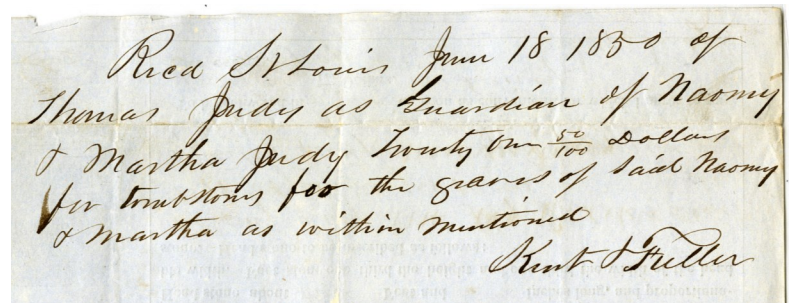
Many of the guardianship files raised questions among both the volunteers and staff and required additional research. The guardianship file for Edward Lovejoy, minor child of Elijah Lovejoy, was not filed until May of 1847, nearly ten years after the death of Elijah Lovejoy. There are only two original documents in this file and they are the petition of Royal Weller to be appointed as guardian for Edward Lovejoy and the bond of Royal Weller as guardian. Also included in the file are photocopies from the probate file of Elijah Lovejoy, but no clear settlement is made and according to one document, the probate file was not closed until Nov. 1937-100 years after the death of Elijah Lovejoy!

SAMUEL JUDY HEIRS (CONT FROM PAGE 4)

Reading the handwriting on the documents was the first challenge. While all five children are initially named, most of the documents referred to "Omy" (which was finally deciphered as a nickname for Naomi/Naomy/Neomy) and Martha. The documents relate to the appointment of a guardian, the payment of taxes on land, and then, in a document relating to Martha dated Feb. 1852, there was a receipt for \$8.50 paid in full for a coffin. A few documents later, there was a similar receipt for a coffin for Naomy. Further into the file an order was found for the tombstone of "Neomy" Judy and Martha Judy, with the handwritten receipt for payment in full on the back. Also in the file was the receipt for the tombstone for "Samuel Judy Sen." Both tombstones are still standing in the Judy-Nix (aka Nix-Judy, aka Pioneer) Cemetery in Glen Carbon.



The documents above and below were found in the Judy probate file and helped tell the story of the Judy family. Above is the bill for Naomy and Martha's tombstone and below are receipts for payment of their tombstone. The tombstone photographs on page four show the headstones of Naomy and Martha and of their father Samuel.



DATES OF PROBATE FILES

One of the first questions many researchers ask is, "What dates are included in the probate files at the archival library?" There are actually two answers to that question.

As mentioned in the above article, guardianship records began in 1812 with the first official records in the county. But not every minor child of a deceased person had a guardianship file, only those who were inheriting property - either real or personal.

With a few exceptions, the probate files that don't deal with guardianships began in 1900. None of the files pro-

cessed by the Madison County Archival Library, whether guardianship or estate, were filed after 1959.

For questions about the probate files within the above dates, contact the Archival Library at (618) 656-7569 or email mtwesterhold@co.madison.il.us.

For information on other probate files, contact either the Madison County Circuit Clerk's office or, for the probate files prior to 1900, the IRAD (Illinois Regional Archives Depository) facility in Carbondale, IL, at 618-453-3040.

UNKNOWN CEMETERY FOUND

When a will is found in a probate file, it is removed and placed in an envelope to be returned to the Circuit Clerk's office. Before it is returned, it is photocopied and the copy added to the original file so the stored file is complete.

As stated earlier, wills ranged in size from a small scrap of paper to multiple typed pages. It was when one of the staff was copying the multipage will of Emogene Parker from 1931 that the mention of an unknown cemetery in Alton was found. In her will, Emogene gives to the City of Alton as Trustee "what is known as the Finley Hawley Cemetery" and then she describes the location of the cemetery.

Cemetery inventories and locations in Madison County are part of the archival library collection. The staff and many of the volunteers often seek out little known cemeteries to photograph the tombstones and record the inscriptions. Unknown cemeteries quickly become research projects and the Finley Hawley Cemetery was no exception.

The research began with Emogene Parker. Her maiden name was Hawley, and her father was Finley Hawley. She had lived on the same homestead her entire life, although the log cabin where she was born had been replaced by a different house. Once located on a thriving farm, the house was now part of the City of Alton located on Hawley Avenue. Emogene Hawley Parker had previously deeded land to the city of Alton which helped to create Hawley Avenue.

The location of the cemetery was still a mystery. The Alton Evening Telegraph contained references to burials in the 'Hawley Cemetery' as early as 1905 giving the location as North Alton or "near Melville." When a Historical Society board member, a surveyor, read the description in the will, he determined a rough location of the land.

A researcher from Alton was also contacted along with the Genealogy and Local History Library at Alton. Working with them, the location was finally determined to be west of Norside between Northdale and Joliet. With only two partial headstones remaining (see photo above), the actual status of the cemetery is still in question. Emogene Parker must have known this would be a problem, as she chose to be buried in Oakwood Cemetery where her husband, Newton Parker, is also buried.



One of the few remaining tombstone in the Finley Hawley Cemetery in Alton. (Courtesy of Harold Meisenheimer)

TURN OF THE CENTURY BUSINESSES

AUTOMOBILES

Overland
Willys

Mr. Philip L. Reilly
Philip L. Reilly

Overland-Alton Automobile Co.
401 East Broadway, Alton, Ill.

Paul E. Armstrong
Paul E. Armstrong

C. J. KEISER, Pres. H. J. KEISER, Vice-Pres. A. J. KEISER, Sec. and Treas.

OFFICE OF **KEISER BROS. MILLING CO.**

— PROPRIETORS OF —

THE NEW ANCHOR MILLS.

— MANUFACTURERS OF —

SUPERIOR BRANDS OF FLOUR, CORN MEAL, MILL FEED, ETC.

March 20/00.

Mt. Olive, Ill., Jan. 22^d 1901
Estate of H. H. Lueker, Deceased

Heinrich Wolf owed money to a St. Louis Brewery when he died and the Overland-Alton letterhead above was a 1901 bill for \$357.75 owed by the estate of H. H. Lueker, a former resident of Worden. Keiser Bros. was located in Mount Olive. Elaborate letterhead stationery was common at the turn of the last century and the probate files are filled with examples that tell today's researcher something about local communities as well as information about the person who died.

MACEDONIAN DICHON ANDONOFF

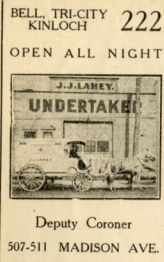
Dicho Andonoff was born in Macedonia about 1885 and immigrated to the U.S. in 1908. Like many other immigrants in the tri-city area of Granite City, Madison and Venice, Dicho found work in the local steel industry and by 1920 was living in a boarding house in Venice with many of his countrymen. During the last week of Apr 1920, Dicho entered the hospital in Granite City for an operation and died there on May 4.

At the time of his death, Dicho was not a naturalized citizen of the United States and had only one known relative in the U.S., a cousin, Peter Moskoﬀ, who also lived in Venice and worked in the steel industry. Within a month of Dicho Andonoff's death, Peter Moskoﬀ filed a petition with the probate court to appoint an administrator

to settle Andonoff's estate since Dicho had died without leaving a will. In the petition, Moskoﬀ states that the only living heirs are a mother, Rissa Andonoff, and a brother, Dimitri Andonoff, living in the village of Karchishta, Macedonia.

This estate attracted the attention of the Greek Consul in Chicago and a letter from John D. Dristas, Counselor to the


Consulate of Greece, arrived inquiring about it. The letter stated that "The Consul General has had great difficulties in estates of this kind...in seeing that the rightful heirs receive the just portions of the estate."

		Madison, Ill., May 5- 1920 To Funeral of Dicho Andonoff Madison TO J. J. LAHEY DR. Livery and Undertaking Complete Line of Coffins, Caskets and Burial Suits Always in Stock Carriages for All Occasions	
Basket		135	00
Box		12	00
Embalming		15	00
Suit		30	00
Candles		1	00
Gloves		3	00
Hearse		12	00
Limosines 3 at 9.00		27	00
Box Del. to Cem.		2	50
Underwear & socks		1	50
Getting body from Hosp.		2	00
Grave		13	50
		254	50

Pictured above is the bill for Andonoff's funeral expenses and at left the Greek letter received by the courts. Both were part of the Andonoff probate file.

Apparently, Dicho lived very frugally because at the time of his death he had accumulated \$3,850.59. However there were bills to pay including the hospital, doctor, nurse, florists, bakery, grocer, undertaker (see above), etc. The final balance of \$2,978.69 was then to be distributed to Dicho's mother and brother.

However to accomplish this distribution, a power of attorney had to be assigned by the mother and brother in Greece. This document is included in the file, handwritten in Greek (at left). Luckily, a translation is also included which explains that the document was read to the mother through a translator because the mother could not read and did not speak Greek, only Macedonian. Finally, the money was sent and received by the family of Dicho Andonoff.



ST. LOUIS, MO.
GRANITE CITY, ILL.
NEW YORK.
MILWAUKEE, WIS.

NATIONAL ENAMELING & STAMPING CO.

CABLE ADDRESS: NESCOWARE USE A.B.C. CODE (4TH EDITION.)

GRANITE CITY STEEL WORKS

Granite City, Ill., May 10, 1917

BALTIMORE, MD.
CHICAGO, ILL.
NEW ORLEANS, LA.
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

The above letterhead was part of the Mike Sever, Sr. probate file. The National Enameling and Stamping Company (NESCO), famous for its granite ware, submitted a letter on this stationery accompanied by a check for \$2,500 to the Sever estate as a settlement for the accident that caused Sever's death in 1917.



Madison County Historical Society

Opening Doors to Madison County History

715 N. Main Street
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Address Service Requested

PRSRT STD
Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
Permit #9
Edwardsville, IL
62025

EDWARDSVILLE, ILL., *Oct 1st* 1916

Mr John Steiner

IN ACCOUNT WITH

C. E. HOSKINS


Superintendent Woodlawn Cemetery

BELL TELEPHONE 264-R

1916

Oct	1	For Mrs B Schwanhoff	
"	1	Opening grave	6.00
"	1	Living grave	3.00
			\$ 9.00

More documents from Probate files: The above receipt shows the cost of a burial at Woodlawn Cemetery in 1916. Below is a payment for stock in the State Bank of St. Jacob Bank in 1942.

 **STATE BANK OF ST. JACOB**
70-1605

ST. JACOB, ILL. *Oct. 5* 1942 No. *2*

PAY TO THE ORDER OF *Keystone Bldg & Loan Assn* \$ *15.00*

10-2824 *and* *no* *100* DOLLARS

4-22 *John H Collins Est.*

payment for stock share *John H Collins*

MUSEUM SPOTLIGHT

By Jenn Walta, Curator

The Museum staff recently installed a new exhibit in the MCHM display case at the Madison County Administration Building. The exhibit provides information on the history of campaign buttons as well as a brief history of voting techniques.

An example of changing voting methods can be found with the wooden voting box on display. The box was used at the 1824 "Donation Courthouse" which was located on the same lot as the old Lincoln School in Edwardsville. The box was to be discarded when that court house closed in 1857. A janitor, Victor Senn, saved the box which was donated to the museum, by Senn's grandson.



The wooden ballot box (above) was a gift of Melvin Schwab in 1973