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Indiana News - September 2018

Welcome to the September 2018 edition of Indiana News! This e-mail is sent once a month and focuses on news and resources relating to genealogy research in Indiana. You are receiving this e-mail either because you signed up on our website to receive it or because you are a member of the Indiana Genealogical Society.

MISSED AN ISSUE? Past issues of this e-mail going back to 2010 are available for [download](#) as PDF files.

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- October 2018 newsletter available for IGS members.
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- IGS adds 13 new databases for members and reaches "10 for 92" status.
- The legal term "venditioni exponas" is explained.
- RESEARCH TIP: Indiana's poll tax.

SAVE THE DATE: IGS 2019 conference with DNA expert

Mark your calendars! DNA expert Blaine Bettinger will be the featured speaker at the Indiana Genealogical Society's annual conference on **Saturday, April 13, 2019** at the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne. Bettinger is author of *The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy*, and "The Genetic Genealogist" blog.



October 2018 newsletter available for IGS members

The October 2018 issue of *IGS Newsletter*, our bi-monthly newsletter for members of the Indiana Genealogical Society, is now available for download in the [IGS Records](#) section of our Members-Only area.

County Roundup

Here are some genealogy-related news items from around the state.

NOTE: Items on other websites often change or are removed without notice - we apologize if you encounter

a link that no longer works.

BLACKFORD COUNTY:

Brookside Cemetery near Montpelier was recently [vandalized](#), with several tombstones knocked over. The damage was estimated to be \$24,000.



CARROLL COUNTY:

Ball Hill Cemetery in Cutler was recently [vandalized](#) (see photo), with over 40 tombstones spray painted and/or knocked over.

FLOYD COUNTY:

The tombstones in Freedomland Cemetery in New Albany are being [restored](#) as part of an Eagle Scout's project. The cemetery dates back to 1854 and was an active cemetery for African-American burials until 1915.

LAKE COUNTY:

The remains of a World War II soldier from [Dyer](#) have finally been [identified](#) and returned to his family. Leonard Tyma was in the Marines in 1943 when he died in the Pacific, but his remains were interred with several other unidentified soldiers.

MARION COUNTY:

The remains of a Korean War soldier from Indianapolis have finally been [identified](#) and returned to his family. Morris Meshulam was a corporal in the Army in 1950 when he was listed as missing in action.

ORANGE COUNTY:

An Indianapolis newspaper [article](#) examines the history of African-American communities that formed near the French Lick and West Baden resorts, including the restoration of the Second Baptist Church in West Baden.

PUTNAM COUNTY:

The Putnam County Museum in Greencastle has a [blog post](#) examining the history of the township schools in Cloverdale Township, which closed in the 1920's.

VANDERBURGH COUNTY:

An Evansville newspaper [article](#) examines the family history of Mary Surbeck (1881-1898), who is buried in a single grave in the shadow of a Vectren coal plant.

IGS adds 13 new databases for members; 10 for 92 status reached

We now have **2,210** total databases for members. We have also reached "10 for 92" status - we have at least 10 databases for each of the 92 counties in Indiana.

Here are all the premium databases (accessible only to IGS members) that we've added recently:

County Records:

- Benton County - index to 1880 mortality schedule.
- Dubois County - index to 1870 mortality schedule.
- Jay County - index to 1870 mortality schedule.
- Knox County - index to 1870 mortality schedule.
- LaGrange County - Howe residents (1956).
- Madison County - Van Buren Township common school graduates (1918). NOTE: A common school went up to the 8th grade.
- Morgan County - Eminence High School graduates (1959; 1961).
- Posey County - New Harmony phone directory (1951).
- Putnam County - Belle Union High School graduates (1955).
- Ripley County - index to 1870 mortality schedule.
- Wabash County - Urbana phone directory (1929).
- Warrick County - index to 1870 mortality schedule.

Legal terms explained: Venditioni exponas

Venditioni exponas is a Latin phrase (sometimes abbreviated as "vend ex") that translates as "exposed to sale." It is a court order that is given to a sheriff ordering them to sell certain goods or

pieces of real estate that have been seized by the government. The seizure may have been because of non-payment of taxes or because the goods/real estate were illegally obtained.



RESEARCH TIP: Indiana's poll tax

NAMES.	Polls. Acres.
B	1 - 2
✓ Ballard Joel	1 { 137 52 80
✓ Ballard Asa	1 80
✓ Ballard Joseph	80

Before income tax and sales tax were imposed, most local governments derived the majority of their revenue from property taxes and poll taxes.

Property taxes were a percentage you had to pay that was based on the value of the land you owned as well as personal items of value (such as livestock, wagons and tools).

Poll taxes, on the other hand, were a flat tax, in that every free male who was an adult had to pay the same amount, regardless of whether they owned any property or not. The word "poll" did not refer to voting but rather the Latin for "head," meaning it was a tax on every head.

Because every free male who was an adult had to pay the poll tax, it meant more of your ancestors would appear on tax lists, making them easier to track in between census years.

The age that free males became an adult in the eyes of tax officials varied from state to state and from year to year, but in general, during colonial times, it was age 16 or 18; in the 1800's and later, it was age 21. Once free males reached a certain age, they were exempted from having to pay a poll tax - that maximum age varied from state to state and from year to year, but in general, it was age 50 or 60. So if your ancestor "disappears" from one year's tax list to the next, it may not be because of death or having moved out of the area, but because they owned no property and had gotten too old for the poll tax.

Your ancestor may have had to pay more than one poll tax - the state, county and municipal governments they lived in could each charge their own poll tax.

In Indiana, the first poll tax law was passed when it was still a territory. In 1811 the territorial legislature passed a law calling for all single men age 21 and over to pay a poll tax of 50 cents. In 1824 the age to be exempted from paying poll tax was set as age 60; in 1851 it was lowered to age 50. The poll tax that was charged by the state fluctuated between 50 and 75 cents during the 1800's; beginning in 1933, the money that was collected was earmarked for the state's school funds. Indiana finally abolished the poll tax altogether in 1965.

Depending on the time frame, tax lists were the responsibility of various government entities in Indiana, including the county auditor, county treasurer and county assessor. Some local libraries, museums and archives have tax lists in their collections.

FOR INDIANA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS: The [County Records](#) section of our Members-Only area has tax lists for 26 counties.

