

ARCHIVES CURRENT

Newsletter of the Friends of the Indiana State Archives, Inc.

MORTON TELEGRAPH BOOKS DIGITIZATION PROJECT

BY STEPHEN TOWNE

The Indiana State Archives and the Digital Library Team of the IUPUI University Library working in partnership have won a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant to scan and put up on the internet the Archives' Governor Oliver P. Morton telegraph books. LSTA is a federally-funded grant program to provide funds for innovative library projects. The Indiana State Library served as the state program coordinator in the reviewing and awarding of the grants. Over \$200,000 in digitization funds were awarded in 12 grants to libraries around Indiana.



Morton Telegraph Book, No. 1,
April 15, 1861 through Sept. 4, 1861.
Indiana State Archives.

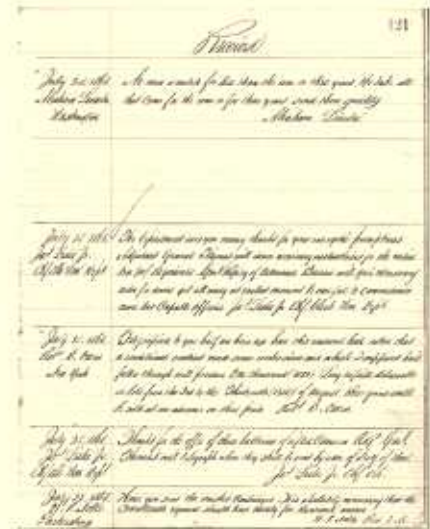
The Morton telegraph book digitization project calls for \$11,000 to scan the 4,500 pages of over 14,000 telegraph messages recorded in 17 volumes. The

outcome of the project will be a website with high-resolution digital images of the pages of the telegraph books, allowing students, scholars, and Civil War "buffs" everywhere to read these messages. Researchers will be able to use the telegraph book database index developed by the Archives to assist them in locating messages of interest. Scanning and other work on the project began in the summer of 2005. The project is expected to be completed in the summer of 2006.

Indiana Governor Oliver P. Morton was arguably the most important and influential Northern political leader outside of Washington, DC during the Civil War. Morton played a leading role in mobilizing the Northern war effort, and was influential in the development of important war policies regarding recruiting, the draft, supplying the troops, war strategy, and other matters. He was in constant communication with President Abraham Lincoln, members of the federal cabinet, and army commanders in the field. The telegraph messages recorded in these books reflect the myriad issues and challenges that faced both Indiana's governor and federal leaders to put down the Southern rebellion. These telegraph messages are perhaps the best compact body of documentation of a Northern war governor during the Civil War. (The telegraph books are not the only Morton

documentation. The Indiana State Archives has many other Morton records. Contact the Archives staff for more information.)

For decades the Morton telegraph books languished in poor organization and disuse. Most scholars were



Page from a Morton Telegraph book
featuring an entry of a Telegraph
received from Abraham Lincoln.

ignorant of the existence of the volumes. Many of those that knew of their existence rarely bothered to read the telegraph books, given the difficulty in accessing them. However, in the last few years Archives staff worked to make it easier for researchers to gain access to these invaluable records, first by microfilming the books and then by developing a database index to the messages. These efforts have encouraged scholars to borrow the

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FRIENDS OF THE
**INDIANA
STATE
ARCHIVES**

2005 IS RECORD SETTING YEAR FOR VOLUNTEERS

Friends of the Archives volunteers set two records in 2005. Forty-eight individuals, ten more than in 2004, donated 5453.5 hours to projects at the Indiana State Archives. This is the equivalent of 2.8 full time employees or 727 (7.5 hour) days. The previous high was 4303.5 hours in 2004.

Two volunteers, **Sandy Ricketts** and **Barbara Wood** donated over 500 hours of time in 2005. Thirteen individuals donated over 100 hours. They were: **Dale Armstrong, Mary Etta Boren, Ron Darrah, Willam Dufner, Elizabeth Hague, Walter Jolly, Ann Loyal, Jim Marshall, Diamond Mather, Glenn Mather, Boyd Obermeyer, Anne Rodick** and **Tom York**.



Volunteer Coordinator Barb Wood with volunteer Sandy Ricketts at the Open House, December 5, 2005.

Eight members have been added to the 100 Hour Club since our last report. New members include **Dale Armstrong, Mary Etta Boren, Bill Corbett, Judy Ditzler, Jim Marshall, Pamela Price, Lewis Smith** and **Tom York**. The first 100 Hour Club recognition plaque is full and we have started adding names to the second one. In addition to the plaques on the volunteer recognition wall, we have a bulletin board with pictures of the volunteers.

Ten new volunteers began work at the Archives since the last newsletter. **Bill Boothe, June Pogue, Karen Pruett** and **Kathy Venable** are entering data into the Indiana Civil War Soldiers database. **Terri Chandler, Kim Talboo** and **Trudy Weaver** are processing early patient records from Madison State Hospital. **Mike Schwanke** is doing data entry from the Terre Haute – Crawfordsville Land Office records. **Marjorie Weiler-Powell** is working on the database for the Julia Work Training School, Plymouth, Indiana. **Don Price** is entering information from the Indiana State Fair photo collection into a database.



Volunteer Diane Hanson and guest, at the Open House in December

Articles written by two of our volunteers have appeared in *The Hoosier Genealogist* published by the Indiana Historical Society. The articles are: “Locating Orphanages in Indiana” by **Sandy Ricketts** and “Marion County Naturalization Project at the Indiana State Archives” by **Elizabeth Hague**.

During Archives Week 2005, volunteers were invited to the open house at the Archives on December 5 and to Statehood Day Celebration on December 9.

Barbara F. Wood
Volunteer Coordinator

Mark Your Calendars Now!

15th Annual Meeting of the Friends of
the Indiana State Archives

April 11, 2006

Indiana Medical History Museum

RARE CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPHS DONATED

The Indiana State Archives' Civil War holdings were enriched in November 2005 with an important donation by the Georgia Division of Archives and History. The George Jones Collection consists of fifteen original documents, three printed items, and thirteen photographs. The records relate mainly to Corporal George F. Jones' service in Company B, 12th Indiana Volunteer Infantry.

Jones, a resident of Ft. Wayne, enlisted July 1, 1862, at age 18. He was mus-

tered out at Washington, D.C., on June 8, 1865. Among the documents is a parole for Jones, dated September 2, 1862, after he had been captured in Kentucky by Confederate troops under General Kerby Smith. Other documents include special orders assigning Jones as a recruiter in Allen County, Indiana, and later as a dispatch bearer for the 15th

Army Corps in North Carolina and Virginia.

Accompanying the documents are rare photographs of Indiana Civil War officers, including Brevet Brigadier General Reuben Williams, Lieutenant Alfred L. Stoney, Captain Frank H. Aveline, Captain Edward H. Webster,

and Colonel William H. Link, all associated with the 12th Indiana Volunteer Infantry.



*Captain Edward H. Webster,
12th Indiana Volunteer Infantry*



*Brigadier General
Reuben Williams*



*Captain Frank H. Aveline, 12th
Indiana Volunteer Infantry.*

JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE INDIANA STATE ARCHIVES

The Friends of the Indiana State Archives, Inc., is a not-for-profit organization of citizens concerned with helping the Indiana State Archives fulfill its role as the permanent repository for official records of state and local government in Indiana. The Friends supports the management, preservation, and responsible use of Indiana's public records and serves as an advocate for the Indiana State Archives. Join other Hoosier citizens in an effort to save Indiana History. Enroll today.

Enclosed is my check made payable to the Friends of the Indiana State Archives, Inc. Membership benefits include a quarterly newsletter and invitations to workshops, special events and the annual meeting. Gifts to the Friends are tax deductible.

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Visit the Friends web site

<http://www.fisa-in.org>

Morton Telegraph Books, continued from page 1

microfilm through interlibrary loan and read the books in support of their research. Still, relatively few scholars have taken advantage of these unparalleled records. By scanning and making page images available on the world wide web, these records will become indispensable to researchers of all ages and levels around the world. It will be next to impossible for

Upcoming Events

- April 11
12:00 Noon
- Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Indiana State Archives, at the Indiana Medical History Museum, 3045 West Vermont Street, Indianapolis. Dr. Peter Marcus, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Indiana University School of Medicine, will discuss his research on the Eugenics Movement.
- July 11
- Quarterly Meeting of the Board of Directors, at the Indiana History Center, 450 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis.

scholars to ignore and overlook these communications in their research and writings on Civil War affairs. Accordingly, the role of Governor Morton in particular, but also of the Northern war governors generally in putting down the rebellion will be better understood by scholars and future generations.

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