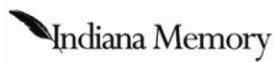


Indiana BEDROCK

Interview with Rose Mclveen

Daughter of Albert Mclveen, Stone Carver



Funding provided by the Institute of Museums and Library Sciences under the Library and Services Technology Act (LSTA) as administered by the Indiana State Library. *Limestone Industry Timeline for Monroe County, Indiana* was created by the Indiana Room, Monroe County Public Library, 303 E. Kirkwood Ave., Bloomington, Indiana for the Indiana Bedrock project, June 2010

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FAY: Please state your name.

MCILVEEN: My name is Rose McIlveen. Let me give you a little bit of a background. The Hoadley brothers, their father, and their mother came over from Barnsley in Yorkshire, England.

FAY: And when was this?

MCILVEEN: It was in the 1840s, about. I may have the exact date at home. And they first came over to Milwaukee. And his sons John and William were apprentice to millwright.

FAY: And who was millwright?

MCILVEEN: W. Hoadley, the father, was a millwright and his two sons, John and William, were apprentice to millwright in Milwaukee. Buckets in England were extremely expensive - handmade and extremely expensive. And the Hoadley Brothers saw a factory where the buckets were made by machinery. And so they went into the factory. They put on old clothes and went into the factory and when the man who was the manager of it saw them and saw that there were strangers in there, he ran them out. They went down the road and jumped in a ditch and pulled out some paper and drew diagrams of all the machinery. The family turned around and went back to England and to Leeds and they set up a bucket factory using machinery. But the English were not fond of new-fangled American things and, so, it did not fare very well. Then they sold the bucket factory to an Englishman who made a fortune off it and turned around and came back to the United States.

The father, William, died of ship fever in Zanesville, Ohio. He got that far. And he's buried there in that cemetery by the old National Road in Zanesville. John and William ended up in New Albany in the ship-building business. You see, by this time they were trained engineers and they were trained to do all kind of mechanical things like that so they worked in the ship-building in New Albany. Eventually they both married, a day apart, and came to Monroe County.

You know where Mt. Tabor is? It is near Stinesville. They had a saw mill and a grist mill. And they did that for a certain number of years and then they parted company. William went to Gosport, which is in the next county, and John went to Stinesville. And he started out making tombstones and then John's business branched out in making and providing stones for buildings, that sort of thing. What happened in Mt. Tabor was that the New Albany and Salem Railroad was being built north from Louisville and it bypassed Mt. Tabor and Mt. Tabor just died. If you went over there now you would see very little. But it was a thriving town that rivaled Bloomington. So John Hoadley started buying property and started quarrying limestone and had two mills over there and so on and so forth.

Now that's just a general sketch of them. Now, we have a much more detailed family history, but I just wanted –

FAY: Yeah, and this was your grandfather, or...

MCILVEEN: William Hoadley, who was at Stinesville, was my great-grandfather. He was born in Northern Ireland in Belfast. The youngest of eleven children – nine boys and two girls. Then they came to the United States.

FAY: The whole family did?

MCILVEEN: The whole family did. The father and two sons came first over to Canada and then they ended up down in Pittsburgh and then they sent for the rest of the family.

FAY: What prompted them to come to the United States?

MCILVEEN: Well my grandfather, my father's father, was a carpenter. I don't know whether they just thought, you know, it was the new world and I had never seen anything written by any of them that indicated why they came.

Part of the reason why they came, and I'm not sure if you want to put this in there, it's the same thing that's been going on in Ireland for years, was going on then, and they were Irish Presbyterian and I think they thought that if they came to the new world they could escape some of that. So, anyway, but about six months after they all settled in Pittsburgh my grandfather died and left my grandmother with eleven children. I have a photograph of them all.

FAY: And when exactly was this? What year?

MCILVEEN: Let's see, they came in, my father was born in 1885 and he was still carried in arms by his mother so he was very young.

FAY: So still late nineteenth century, 1888-1890s, something like that?

MCILVEEN: My father got a baseball scholarship they had an athletic club in Pittsburgh where the boys would hang out and my father and his brother Harry both went to the baseball club, the Brushton athletic club.

They both ended up going to college on baseball scholarships. My father went to Carnegie Tech, which is Carnegie Mellon now, on a baseball scholarship. He studied art for three years there.

FAY: Had he had any training or experience with art before that? As a child, or-

MCILVEEN: Not that I know that. Then he was an apprentice to an Italian carver for three more years.

FAY: After, did he graduate from Carnegie or did he?

MCILVEEN: No. He had three years of art at Carnegie Tech then he was an apprentice to an Italian carver for three more years.

FAY: Right there in Chicago?

MCILVEEN: I don't know whether it was in Chicago. I've been trying to find the name of the Italian carver. I have been on my computer and I have been unable to do this.

FAY: There were a lot of them, I guess, at that time.

MCILVEEN: He was playing baseball in the summer and carving in the wintertime at that point in his life.

FAY: In a minor league baseball team?

MCILVEEN: In a minor league baseball team in Iowa, what he called the bush leagues, in Iowa. And one day he saw in the paper where John Hoadley in Stinesville wanted carvers. And he came to Monroe County in 1912. Never left.

FAY: He settled in Stinesville when he came down?

MCILVEEN: Uh huh.

FAY: And did he stay with Hoadley his whole life?

MCILVEEN: No, that's something I need to explain to you. When a stone company was asked to bid on a building, to furnish the stone for a building— that also had carving. The carvers, some of the carvers, were contractors. My father was a carving contractor and was at one stretch in his life in a partnership with Joseph Graf. And so this Joseph Graf needs to be mentioned in that they eventually broke up their partnership.

Joe Graf got his start carving wood in the Black Forest in Germany.

Anyway, if a stone company was asked to bid on a building with carving they would call in the contractors to make bids on the carving and they were paid separately for the carving.

FAY: And so they didn't work for a particular quarry, they marketed themselves out?

MCILVEEN: Well, yeah I can show you where. I've got some of my father's records here. On some of these he tells which company it is.

That tells the building and where it was. But I saw a Woolery Stone Company, for example, I don't know whether you've heard of that name or not, but we had Woolery. It was a big stone company down south of Bloomington.

But he would write on some of these. These were one of the ways he kept his record. Here's where the building was and these were the carvings he did and these were the charges. I think one of these yellow ones may be Woolery, I'm not sure.

FAY: Was work pretty steady or did it pick up in certain seasons?

MCILVEEN: Well, thereby hence another tale. Carving originally was like this and then at the point in time when air hammer came along there was some bloody strikes came along because the union people thought that it would make it go faster and that there wouldn't be as much work for the workmen.

And by this time the carving industry was just booming and there wasn't any question of they not being able to get enough work. The union – it was a closed shop – would not allow a carver to have any more than three apprentices at the same time.

Now I have – you may want to copy this – carvers.

FAY: And these are all the carvers in the region, in the area, in Monroe County?

MCILVEEN: Yes. Dugen Elger was one of the ones my father trained and he prepared this list but he made a separate list for the ones in the Bedford area.

FAY: It seems like quite a few carvers. But I guess when you think that this is not stuff that's just produced for Monroe County or Indiana, but it's contracting out all over.

MCILVEEN: It was really booming.

FAY: Was this the biggest hub for carvers, do you know?

MCILVEEN: In the country?

FAY: In the country, or even in Indiana or the Midwest.

MCILVEEN: Well, stone for building purposes had been produced in other parts of the country, like in Texas, there's a kind of sandstone. At one point in time they called limestone "marble" and I never really understood that. It belongs to the same family as

marble but it's not really. They're about two or three other major places in the country where the stone was produced. You can find that on your computer. You know what limestone is anyway, don't you?

FAY: And did your father ever have certain companies he liked to work with more than others or would he just sort of work where ever the work came up?

MCILVEEN: Well, he basically worked where the work was. I noticed on one of these, as I told you, they had Woolery Stone Company on it and written at the top. I should explain to you that he married the granddaughter of the owner of the mill. He married John Hoadley, Sr.'s granddaughter.

FAY: And when was that?

MCILVEEN: It was, uh, let me think a minute. They were married in about 1918, somewhere around there. My mother had gone to IU and that was in the days when you could get a teacher's license if you took two or three years of college and then you got a teacher's license. And they eloped in Indianapolis. But anyway she went back to school later and finished up her degree at IU. She had a degree in music.

FAY: And did she become a professional musician after that?

MCILVEEN: No, no she used music all the rest of her life but, and she had a very pretty singing voice, but no she did not become a professional musician. They first had my sister Mary Elizabeth and then my brother and then I was the youngest.

FAY: So he was in the business with this Joseph Graf fellow for a number of years and then they split apart?

MCILVEEN: One of the things that happened was the financial crash. It did a great deal of damage. There wasn't any money for building buildings at that point time. And it took a while for the limestone business, like every other business, to recover.

FAY: Were there other times in his life that were similar? I mean that would have obviously been the major slow down during the great depression.

MCILVEEN: Well later on, much more recently, the architectural pendulum began to swing in a different direction and then we had office buildings built with steel and glass. Now compare that to the Chicago Tribune building which was made of limestone. That was one of the buildings that the Hoadleys furnished them for, the Chicago Tribune building.

FAY: And did your father supply some of the carving for the –

MCILVEEN: I don't know that. I don't have any record of his having done carving on it.

FAY: Did your father ever have particular buildings that he was particularly proud of having worked on or particular carvings that he was especially, of which he was especially proud?

MCILVEEN: Let me say rather that he did more carvings on Catholic churches because they had more carving. But you'll see in these pictures a very wide variety of... I'm not sure I can answer that question for you. He did whatever the job called for is what he did. There's one here. That's a *Looking Back* article I did about him. I wrote about him for the local newspaper [*The Herald-Times*].

FAY: Is this for IU?

MCILVEEN: This is for IU. That's on the Wright Quad. And let me explain that my father did not carve every single one of these. They were produced by himself and his carvers. He carved in addition to the carvers.

FAY: So he had people under him, apprentices and such?

MCILVEEN: Right.

FAY: How many did he have in his shop?

MCILVEEN: I have pinpointed Dugan Elger who's on the top of this page here. Doc Szatkowski and Bill Cantrel. I'm sure he trained more than that. Doc Szatkowski was his best carver. He was very proud of these. This was a Catholic church in Pittsburgh or in Pennsylvania. And these are caps for the tops of columns. And one of them has the disciples all the way around. See this one, see this one key? That's Peter. Are you Catholic? Well, you know, Peter had the key to the kingdom. Well, so each one of them had his –

FAY: That distinctive –

MCILVEEN: Yes, and my father had a fairly good library of carvings, professional books of carvings. And so sometimes he would go in – let me back up even farther than that. Sometimes the architect would send a clay model or a plaster model and say I want that copied exactly. Sometimes the architect would say "I want you to submit a clay model or drawings for a particular saint or a particular decoration for a building" or whatever. It varied a lot. He had a drawing table in our back sitting room which was kind of his study and so he could do drawings at home if he wanted to. Anyway, the other one of these is the Life of Christ. Mary and, there's angel, there's Mary I think. I'm looking at it upside down.

FAY: It looks like she has a veil there. Is this on the same church in Pittsburgh?

MCILVEEN: Yes, same church.

FAY: Just a different column?

MCILVEEN: Different column.

FAY: That's gorgeous. And again you said he didn't have any favorite buildings or anything. Did he have a favorite medium to work on? Did he prefer to do column work or friezes?

MCILVEEN: I don't think so. I think he just did whatever the job called for. This one right here I should explain to you. Ninety-nine percent of the carving was done in the mill and then it was shipped to where ever it was going to be set in the building. This one, the limestone blocks was put up here and they got up on scaffolding and did it.

FAY: For this building?

MCILVEEN: Yes. And my father said, it was in 1931, and my father said Joe Graf went to carve and to supervise there. My father may have taken a trip out there to look at it but Joe Graf is the one who supervised it. It was so cold. You see the car here? It was so cold that they had to leave the cars running in the wintertime. They had to leave the cars running all day long because at the end of the day they couldn't get them started. That's how cold it was. Can you imagine being up that high and wind whipping across there? In Buffalo, New York.

FAY: So for this particular building they just put a block of limestone across. There was nothing on it. How long did it take to do a job like this?

MCILVEEN: It was two years. Joe Graf's daughter wrote an explanation. It was 1931. She said he spent most of 1930 and 1931 in Buffalo with a crew of carvers he took with him from Bloomington.

FAY: But you said more typical was going to the mill itself and doing the carving in-house.

MCILVEEN: In the mill, yes.

FAY: So your father would just drive to the Matthews mill or the Hoadley mill and be right in the factory floor, doing it there?

MCILVEEN: Right. And if – you've been in a mill, haven't you?

FAY: Yes.

MCILVEEN: Well, have you been in one with the railroad tracks in it? What they typically had was a big opening and a big railroad track in there and that's how they brought the stone in and took it out.

There's that substance called "dugan." I don't know whether they're still using it or now they're maybe using something more modern than dugan. I don't know. And you also know the difference between a cutter and a carver don't you? They're very definite. See they're not closed shop anymore and they don't have to belong to a union but a cutter could put lettering on tombstones and that kind of thing but they were two entirely separate disciplines.

FAY: But you said the stone carvers were unionized?

MCILVEEN: They all had to be up until they stopped that. I have a union card at home somewhere that belonged to my father. My father got very angry with one of the other contractors because the Bloomington Limestone Company had – they wanted the contractors to come in and make a bid on some carving and my father sent Doc Szatkowski who was the best carver. He said Doc Szatkowski was the best carver he had. He sent Doc Szatkowski just to go and get the specifications for the carving. And the stoneworkers were picketing outside the building. And one of the contractors threatened Doc Szatkowski if he crossed the picket line. All he was going in there to do was get the specifications and that's all and one of the contractors – he was an Italian – threatened Doc Szatkowski. He said, "If you go in there I'll beat you up." Well, fortunately, he didn't.

FAY: Didn't go in or didn't get beat up?

MCILVEEN: He didn't get beaten up. But it was a very cut-throat business from that standpoint.

FAY: What were the relations like between people like your father and the quarry workers themselves that was different? Did they have much interaction with each other?

MCILVEEN: Not really. Of course at one point in time there were seven Hoadley stone companies. And we were part of the family because my father had married the granddaughter of the owner of the mill in Stinesville. So that's the reason my middle name is Hoadley. That was just a completely separate trade.

FAY: What was the typical day like for your dad, week in and week out? Would he be up at five in the morning, going to the mill and be back...?

MCILVEEN: About six.

FAY: Six in the morning.

MCILVEEN: And get to the mill at seven or seven-thirty. He had very large – he had jammed a couple of fingers playing professional baseball and one of the problems was in the wintertime they had potbelly stoves in the mill. It was cold in the mill. And in the wintertime he always fought chapped hands that would sometimes crack and bleed and so on and so forth and he would put some of something on them all the time. And he'd be home – I think they shut down around 4 o' clock.

FAY: And weekends? Off usually?

MCILVEEN: Oh no, no weekends. He played golf. We joined the Country Club during the depression because it wasn't all that much business. And my father, that's when he learned to play golf.

FAY: And did his baseball career stop immediately upon coming down to Stinesville?

MCILVEEN: Yes, he never went back to the baseball.

FAY: What did he play? Out of curiosity, in baseball, you know what position?

MCILVEEN: He was a fielder.

FAY: Outfielder? Or shortstop? Or –

MCILVEEN: I think he was an outfielder. He had a scar on his leg where a runner came in–

FAY: With the cleats?

MCILVEEN: The cleats, and hit him on the leg and opened up a place on his skin. He also had his nose broken once – from playing baseball.

FAY: And any incidents on the job working? Or major incidents with the stone carving? Never cut off a finger or anything?

MCILVEEN: No, no, no.

FAY: Is there anything else you can think of to share that you think would be important or noteworthy?

MCILVEEN: You know all the positions in the mill? Traveler. Operator. Blacksmith. They always had a blacksmith because they made the tools. In the office were the draftsmen. Cutters.

FAY: Foreman.

MCILVEEN: Cutters, carvers and apprentices.

FAY: I think those are the major ones I have.

MCILVEEN: And the gang saws. I've got gang saw written on there. They cut them with a diamond saw and use water and sand to reduce the heat.

FAY: And who were the men that attached the dog hooks into the stone out in the quarry?

MCILVEEN: I don't know. Let me see if I can find that one with Woolery on it and I see the Woolerys went out of business eventually. They're building condos down there in the mills on the south side of town.

FAY: And did your father work right up to his death on carving, or –

MCILVEEN: No.

FAY: He retired?

MCILVEEN: He retired.

FAY: When was that?

MCILVEEN: I have to stop and think when that was. He died of cancer, cancer of the colon. I can't remember the year. I've got his obituary and my mother's at home. Well, I'll supply you with that.

FAY: Great.

MCILVEEN: His brother Harry got a degree in engineering from Penn State and he became an engineer. And he played professional baseball, too. He played for the New York Yankees and Pittsburgh Pirates. Shortly. He had a baseball injury and that ended his career.

The End