

Friendscript

Honoring Ancestral History

Map purchase lauds forebears of Civil War descendants



The large map (an impressive 57 x 37.5 inches) offers a hand-colored view of the infamous Andersonville Prison, drawn by Thomas O'Dea, a Union soldier held captive there during the Civil War.

In 1885, two decades after being imprisoned in Andersonville, a former Union soldier completed a map of the Confederacy's notorious prisoner-of-war camp. He dedicated the meticulous illustration "respectfully and fraternally" to the survivors and to the family and friends of the fallen.

Nearly a century and a half later, in a continuing spirit of honoring those who suffered, descendants of Andersonville captives have ensured that drawing lies in the University of Illinois Map Library.

The magnificent piece offers a hand-colored depiction of the camp, taking the viewer from a train at top bringing in new prisoners, down through the Confederate quarters to a stockade fence punctuated by manned rifle towers. Within the fence confines are thousands of Union soldiers, in a highly detailed *Where's Waldo?* mass of wretched humanity, barely surviving in tented misery. Bordering the map are 18 scenes of everyday life, including

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Friendscript is a publication of the Office of Library Advancement, 1408 West Gregory Drive, Room 227, Urbana, IL 61801. Ideas and suggestions are always welcome and should be submitted to Heather Murphy at hmurphy@illinois.edu or (217) 333-3758.

The Office of Library Advancement garners interest and secures external funds from Illinois alumni and friends, provides visibility for the Library through its programs and events, and promotes the Library within the Illinois campus and the community-at-large.

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This publication is available in an accessible electronic format at www.library.illinois.edu/friends, or you may contact Heather Murphy to request an alternative format of this publication.

Printed with UV ink on recycled paper.

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Honoring Ancestral History, *continued from page 1*

death, torture, rations, prayer, and dreams of home and family. A key identifies 41 sites within the prison complex.

“I just think it’s a part of history that . . . needs to be told,” said James Dixon, who provided the funds to purchase the map after reading about it in *Friendscript*. Dixon, who spent a year at the Urbana-Champaign campus before receiving a bachelor’s degree in pharmacy from UI-Chicago in 1982, said, “I think the map is a great way of keeping that story alive.”

Dixon’s great-great-grandfather, a musically inclined private named Thornton Virden, served in Company F, 14th Regiment, West Virginia Infantry during the Civil War; upon being captured in 1864, he was sent to Andersonville. While there, the 20-something Virden was forced to provide musical accompaniment during Confederate recruitment efforts and managed to escape twice. He died in West Virginia in 1917.

Through tracing their genealogical history, Dixon’s family learned that Virden “talked about how . . . horrible the conditions” in the camp were (indeed, after the conflict its commander was the only Confederate officer to be tried and executed for war crimes). At one point, according to Dixon, his great-great-grandfather ended up trading his blanket for what he thought was a bag of rice—discovering too late it was but a sack of stones.



Stephen Fritz’s great-grandfather, Jacob Mayer



James Dixon’s great-great-grandfather, Thornton Virden, with his wife, Anna (they married in 1857)

Stephen Fritz ’71 LAS, MA ’73 LAS, PHD ’80 LAS, was also interested in purchasing the map, but Dixon had already fully answered the call. Fritz’s great-grandfather, Jacob Mayer, a member of Company F, 7th Regiment, Illinois Cavalry, was a prisoner at Andersonville for virtually all of its existence. A German immigrant who farmed

“[My great-great-grandfather is] somebody I would have loved to have met.”

— JAMES DIXON



“It strikes me that you can’t really be a serious historian if you don’t like maps.”

— STEPHEN FRITZ

in Illinois, Mayer was captured in December 1863 near Collierville, Tennessee, sent to a camp outside of Montgomery, Alabama, and was eventually transferred to Andersonville in Georgia.

Tapped by his aunt to preserve the family’s history, Fritz became the keeper of family papers and photographs. As a young boy growing up in St. Elmo, Illinois, he became enchanted with history, a subject he has taught at East Tennessee State University for nearly four decades.

“I’ve always had a fascination with maps,” Fritz said. “It strikes me that you can’t really be a serious historian if you don’t like maps.”

According to Fritz’s research, Mayer, who died in 1897, “felt drawn to volunteer for the Union cause because that . . . was the proper thing to do.” Virden also was inspired to assist the Union, along with two brothers (although a third fought for the Confederacy). And Thomas O’Dea, who drew the Andersonville map from memory, was so fervently pro-Union that the young Irish immigrant lad first tried to volunteer at age 14.

“To me, [my great-great-grandfather is] . . . somebody I would have loved to have met,” Dixon said.

“We talk about the greatest generation, you know, the World War II generation, but I don’t know,” he mused. “Look at the generation of Americans that fought in that Civil War,” referencing the brutal carnage that took place. “It’s just horrific.”

And thus, the sacred purpose of the Andersonville prison map, as well as of history itself: to truthfully remember, respect, and record the many sacrifices made throughout time. O’Dea, Dixon, and Fritz want to ensure that mission continues.

Editor’s Note: The Andersonville Map is viewable online at go.library.illinois.edu/Andersonville. A digital collection of U.S. Civil War maps, and maps from the era, will be available through the Digital Library in 2023.

Details on O’Dea

Thomas O’Dea, creator of the Andersonville map, was an Irish immigrant who, at age 16, was sent to the infamous Confederate prison. He was a drummer boy from the 16th Regiment, Maine Infantry.

At the time of O’Dea’s imprisonment, 35,000 Union soldiers inhabited the camp, which had been constructed to house 10,000. Death, disease, and deprivation were so rampant that more than 40 percent of all Union POWs who died in captivity did so at Andersonville, despite the camp having operated for just 15 months.

Following the war, O’Dea became an itinerant mason. Encountering inaccurate descriptions of Andersonville’s conditions, he began drawing his own recollections; six years later, he had completed a 9-foot-long piece. With the drawing transformed into a lithograph, O’Dea made 10,000 copies, which he sold at \$5 each (with a discount for posts of the Grand Army of the Republic).

On the 50th anniversary of his capture, O’Dea revisited the Andersonville site, which was under the auspices of the War Department. He was surprised to learn that, upon Southerners’ objections, his best-selling print had been removed. Today, the location is a National Historic Site run by the National Park Service.



**Andersonville Map Author
Thomas O’Dea**

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Grainger Librarian Bill Mischo Steps Down

Megan Sapp-Nelson takes up the reins

William H. Mischo, a longtime fixture at the University of Illinois, retired in June after four decades of serving the campus.

Perhaps best known as a moving force behind the planning, construction, and world-class status of the Grainger Engineering Library Information Center (GELIC), Mischo stood at its helm from its opening in 1994 until this year. The five-floor structure, the nation's largest library dedicated solely to engineering, encompasses all engineering disciplines and is a significant landmark on the north side of campus.

Mischo, who has served as a faculty member at Illinois since 1982, earned a reputation for developing innovative systems to make data accessible to end users. He created the campus's digital portal and the "Easy Search" gateway software, a cornerstone of the Library's search and discovery strategy. His expertise led to his being named a 2015 Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science for "research relevant to the development of new digital library technologies."

Upon Mischo being named the inaugural holder of The Berthold Family Professorship in Information Access and Discovery in 2015, Dean John Wilkin said, "He embodies the Jeffersonian ideal, sharing his efforts generously in ways that advance the work of his colleagues without diminishing his own research agenda."



Bill Mischo



Megan Sapp-Nelson

Mischo earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Carthage College in 1971 and a master's degree in library and information science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1974. In 2009 he received the Frederick G. Kilgour Award for Research in Library and Information Science from the American Library Association; in 2017, he took on additional leadership duties for a year as acting dean of libraries and university librarian when Wilkin became interim vice chancellor for academic affairs and provost designate.

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Bell Joins Advancement Team

In August, the Office of Library Advancement welcomed Alyson Bell, MS '16 LIS, as the new associate director of advancement for stewardship and donor relations.

Bell comes to the Library from the University of Illinois Grainger College of Engineering, where she worked in a similar role for the last six years.

Originally from southern Illinois, Bell returned to the Midwest for graduate work. She pursued a master's degree in library and information science at the U of I after earning a bachelor's degree from the College of the Atlantic, which is located on Mount Desert Island, surrounded by Acadia National Park and the Atlantic Ocean, off the coast of Maine.

Even as an undergraduate, fundraising intrigued her. At COA, all students major in human ecology (the relationship between humans and their environment) but craft their own focus. Bell's was fundraising and music. In addition, she has always been drawn to libraries, having worked in them during her undergraduate and graduate schooling.

As Bell earned her master's degree at Illinois, "I really started learning about how amazing the Library is," she said, with its vast collection presenting exciting opportunities.

She is enthusiastic about joining the advancement team and building relationships across campus.

As an advancement professional, Bell created a three-part mission statement to guide her stewardship: acknowledge all gifts that come in, ensure they are spent correctly, and demonstrate the impact of those gifts. She looks forward to applying those principles to her work at the Library.



Library Is Looking For

\$375 for *Map of the Lakes and Drives Adjacent to the Wisconsin Central Lines* (1896), a pocket map of northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin, highlighting summer resorts. Shortly after this map was released, the Wisconsin Central Lines declared bankruptcy and was reorganized as the Wisconsin Central Railway. The **Map Library** would like to be this item's final destination.

\$450 for *Statement of the St. Paul & Chicago Railway Company* (1864), sought by the **Map Library**, indicating routes in the Upper Midwest region and preceding the Great Chicago Fire of 1871.

\$675 for *Map Showing the Eastern Portion of the Union Pacific Railroad and its Connections* (1866), an item tracing rail lines heading westward from Chicago and Bluff City, Illinois, to Omaha, Nebraska, and Sioux City, Iowa. This early map, published a decade after the first bridge opened at Rock Island, Illinois, also indicates bridges spanning the Mississippi River at Fulton, Illinois, and Burlington, Iowa (the bridge at Quincy, Illinois, would not open until 1868). The **Map Library** wants this item on board!

\$950 for *Correct Map of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Rail Road and its Principal Connecting Lines* (1881), a large railroad map of the eastern two-thirds of the United States, centering on Illinois. Produced by the well-known American mapmaker George F. Cram, the map shows railroad lines in red and state boundaries in green; the verso features timetables, as well as descriptions of New Mexico's stage lines, Colorado's mines, and a small plan of Chicago. The **Map Library** would like to own this item, considered large and scarce for its kind.

\$950 for a press pass to the *World's Columbian Exposition*, a world's fair held in Chicago in 1893 to mark the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the New World. These daily admission tickets were allocated to "Mrs. M.J. Cobb, Press, Journal of Education, Boston Mass," whose photograph is affixed inside the front cover. Cobb was a Chicago educator, an author of educational and children's books, and journalist for periodicals in the education field who had earned a teaching certificate from the Chicago Board of Education in 1891. She wrote textbooks as well as historical works like *The Story of Lafayette* (1898) and *On Board a United States Battleship with Evans to the Pacific* (1919). This item would augment materials held by the **Illinois History**

and **Lincoln Collections** on the Chicago World's Fair, as well as document the role of women in journalism.

\$1,600 for *Atlas Containing Maps of Chicago River, Illinois and its Branches* (1899), a complete, 28-sheet atlas detailing improvements made to the Chicago River by the Chicago Sanitary District and the federal government between 1896 and 1899 (preceding the construction of the Sanitary and Ship Canal). The project, completed during a momentous decade in the city's history—including the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and a population increase of 600,000—depicts the work done toward the construction of a new sanitation and commercial shipping system, touted a century later as a "Civil Engineering Monument of the Millennium" by the American Society of Civil Engineers. Eventually completed by 1900, the effort reversed the flow of the river to avoid polluting the city's water source (Lake Michigan), and significantly upgraded the region's commercial navigation needs. This item is sought by the **Map Library**.

\$2,400 for *A Bird's-Eye View of Chicago Showing the City Heights Where the Finger is Pointing on the Map* (1892), a promotional piece published by Rand McNally & Co. to sell properties in the "City Heights" area of Chicago (roughly the area surrounding the intersection of Armitage and Grand avenues). Developer Thomas P. Keefe lauds the location as "the greatest opportunity ever opened up and offered in Chicago," where buyers can buy a beautiful residence for a few hundred dollars. The bird's-eye view map touts the virtues of the area, detailing its major streets, transit lines, oak forest, and high ground; the back side features a partial plat of the area and illustrations of houses already in the location. Keefe pronounces: "Some people are born rich . . . and still others have riches thrust on them. The latter are those who are now buying property at the City Heights at the present prices." The **Map Library** would feel rich indeed to have this unusual item; no copies are known in collections elsewhere.

\$5,000 to underwrite an annual speaker series highlighting an author or poet who will lead a craft talk and give a public reading of their work. As a vital part of the university's literary community, the **Literatures and**

To fund one of these items or to ask for additional titles in an area of interest, call (217) 333-5682 or email friends@library.illinois.edu.

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Languages Library looks to this initiative as a way to expand its commitment to creative writing and the unit's robust collection of literature and literary criticism. Contributions of any amount are sought to sustain this public forum that will enrich the lives of the library's local and regional patrons and visitors.

\$5,000 to create a memorable space for the newly combined Scholarly and Media Commons. Contributions of any size are welcome to put the finishing touches on a renovated area that will provide equitable access to innovative spaces, digital tools, and expert assistance enabling media creation, data visualization, and digital storytelling. Funding would go towards art and signage, new marketing materials, and an open house in Main Library 220. All for the goal of offering an inspiring destination for interdisciplinary discovery and discussion!

Thank You

The following donors have adopted these items previously featured in *Friendscript*:

- ◆ **Christine Burgess** for *Le Rêve du Fou: The Madman's Dream* (Map Library)
- ◆ **James Dixon** for *Andersonville* in memory of his great-great grandfather, Thornton Virden (Map Library)
- ◆ **David Good** for 改正測量皇國明細全圖/[*Complete and Detailed Revised Survey Map of the Empire*] (Map Library)
- ◆ **Karl Greve** for *Cram's Map of the Loop and Vicinity* (Map Library)
- ◆ **Jo Ann McNaughton-Kade** for the Zoom H6 Pro (Music and Performing Arts Library)
- ◆ **Adrienne Navon** for *Camps des Prisonniers Français d'après les documents du Ministère des Prisonniers de la France Libérée* (Map Library)

Upcoming Events

EXHIBIT

Exploring Esoteric Signs and Symbols using the Mandeville Collection

Esoteric/occult thought and practices often rely on the use of signs and symbols to convey hidden meanings. As thought and practices evolve, however, so do the meanings behind the signs and symbols that are used. Items from the Merten J. Mandeville Collection in Parapsychology and the Occult Sciences in the University Library at Illinois explore the cultural history of Western esoteric thought and practices over the last 300 years, focusing on how the signs and symbols used in practices such as tarot, astrology, and witchcraft have changed over time.

- ◆ October 1–31
- ◆ 1st Floor, Main Library, 1408 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana
- ◆ Visit friends.library.illinois.edu

EXHIBIT

Memorabilia from Charlie Meyerson's Student Experience at Illinois

Peruse materials from Charlie Meyerson's own personal collection which capture his days as a student at the University of Illinois in the 1970s.

- ◆ October 1–31
- ◆ 2nd Floor, Main Library, 1408 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana
- ◆ Visit friends.library.illinois.edu

EXHIBIT

The Viceroyalty of Peru and the Times of the Conde de Montemar

RBML's fall exhibit featuring the University of Illinois Library's extensive Conde de Montemar letters collection, as well as other rare and fascinating books about the 16th-Century Spanish conquest and colonization of Perú.

- ◆ Through May 12, 2023
- ◆ Rare Book & Manuscript Library, 346 Main Library, 1408 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana
- ◆ Visit library.illinois.edu/rbx

HANDS-ON WORKSHOP

The Art and Science of Preserving Our Library's Collections

Learn about how the Library works to preserve our collections and participate, hands-on, to see how some of our materials are made. We'll have preservation and conservation staff showing attendees how to bind several different styles of small books, guiding attendees through the Japanese paper marbling art called *suminagashi*, and explaining the



15th and 16th-century practice of “letter locking” after which you can learn to lock your own letters. In addition, a preservation expert will be on hand to answer any preservation questions you have about your own collections and heirlooms.

- ◆ October 14, 1:30–3:00
- ◆ Reading Room, 200 Main Library, 1408 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana
- ◆ Visit friends.library.illinois.edu

PRESENTATION

From Dorm Broadcasting to the Digital Frontier: A Journalist’s Journey

Charlie Meyerson’s the winner of dozens of journalism awards—including a national 2016 Edward R. Murrow Award for online audio investigative reporting and a 2018 Chicago Headline Club Award for best radio newscast. He rounds up the news daily via his email news briefing, Chicago Public Square—named by the Chicago Reader in 2022 the “best free daily roundup in your inbox.” His broadcasting career began at Illini Media’s WPGU-FM in Urbana, 1973-77, and he was a 2008 inductee into the Illini Media Alumni Hall of Fame.

- ◆ October 14, 3:00–4:30
- ◆ University Archives, 146 Main Library, 1408 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana
- ◆ Visit friends.library.illinois.edu

ONLINE EVENT

Hysteria: Tracing Early Modern Witchcraft

Rare Book & Manuscript Library Curators Ruthann E. Mowry and Dr. Cait Coker will host this live, interactive presentation of materials documenting the history of European witchcraft. Bring your questions as we discuss witch trial records and accounts in their historical context and our contemporary parallels.

- ◆ October 26, 7:30–9:00
- ◆ Visit go.library.illinois.edu/Hysteria

OPEN HOUSE

RBML Holiday Open House and Print Crawl

Drop by the RBML on Reading Day to view some rare book favorites, enjoy a few refreshments, and print your own holiday card on our tabletop proofing press! Then, make your way over to the Champaign-Urbana Community Fab Lab, located at 1301 S. Goodwin Avenue, to print text inside your card using their letterpress equipment!

- ◆ December 8, 3:00–5:00
- ◆ Visit library.illinois.edu/rbx



We encourage you to visit the Library’s online calendar at go.library.illinois.edu/calendar for the most up-to-date information about events.



Annual gifts strengthen the Library and ensure its standing as one of the world’s preeminent public university collections. We invite you to join this tradition of private support, which makes a critical difference in the quality of the Library’s collections, programs, and services.

Please mail this form with your gift to:

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Questions? Please call (217) 333-5682 or e-mail friends@library.illinois.edu.



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Grainger Librarian Bill Mischo Steps Down, *continued from page 4*

Having stepped down as GELIC's head this past summer, Mischo will serve as an emeritus professor and bibliometrics and information research librarian and as The Berthold Family Professor Emeritus in Information Access and Delivery.

Taking Mischo's place at GELIC is Megan Sapp-Nelson '01 LAS, MS '03 LIS, who returned to her Illinois campus roots in August. Sapp-Nelson earned a UI undergraduate degree in English and a master's degree in library and information science. She worked as a graduate assistant in GELIC, and in what was then called the Map and Geography Library as an undergraduate.

Sapp-Nelson comes from Purdue University Libraries, where she served as a science and engineering data librarian since 2004 and as associate head of the School of Information Studies since 2021. Her extensive leadership and administrative experience includes developing courses on data management, sharing, and literacy. In 2016 she received the Homer I. Bernhardt Distinguished Service Award from the American Society for Engineering Education Engineering Libraries Division.

"[Mischo] embodies the Jeffersonian ideal, sharing his efforts generously in ways that advance the work of his colleagues without diminishing his own research agenda."

—DEAN JOHN WILKIN
