



Porter School  
Records, 1868-1945

Collection 206

## Champaign County Historical Archives

**Compiled by:** Christine Willson

**Creator/Corporate Name:** Loring Porter and Porter School

**Inclusive Dates:** 1868-1945, bulk 1868-1935

**Physical Description:** 5 boxes (3.1 linear ft.)

**Language:** English

**Provenance:**

The Porter School records were donated to the Champaign County Historical Archives in two accessions. The record books for Porter School were donated in December 2014; the diaries and photographs were donated in May 2015. Both accessions were donated by David and Mary Porter.

**Access:**

These records are accessible to the public within applicable copyright restrictions and limited to use at the Champaign County Historical Archives of The Urbana Free Library.

**Biographical/Historical Note:**

Loring Hanger (L.H.) Porter was born in Gallia County, Ohio on November 5, 1845, and moved to Illinois in 1859. He married Mary Philbrook in 1871. They and their children, Mary, Edwin, Robert, Bertha, Cora, Luther, Arthur, Annie, Fred, and Wilbur, moved to Champaign County and lived on a homestead in section 8 of Somer Township. Although L. H. Porter was known as a talented stock breeder, he also served as the postmaster and director of the school that bore his name, being elected to the latter position on April 23, 1898. For more information about the Porter family, see the *Portrait and Biographical Album of Champaign County* (1887). For a map of Somer Township in 1930 that includes the Porter's land and the school, see *Materials on One-Room Schools in Champaign County* by Barbara Roberts.

The Porter School, located in Somer Township, was one of the original one-room schoolhouses in Illinois. It took its name from the Porter Farm adjacent to the school. The school most likely opened its doors in the 1880s or 1890s. The first known photo of the school was taken in 1893. The Porter School burned down in 1934 when the stove malfunctioned.

**Scope and Content Note:**

The Porter School and Porter Family Collection spans the years 1869-1945 and falls into two categories: the personal materials of the Porter family, primarily Loring H. Porter, in the form of diaries and photographs, and the records and books related to the school in Somer Township. The diaries, photographs, and record books in the collection were created and preserved by the Porter family, most notably by the patriarch, L. H. Porter.



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Loring Porter kept the journals in this collection between the years of 1869-1935, with one journal written almost every year. Within these journals he recorded the weather and his daily activities, with the exception of the 1935 journal where someone else recorded the events leading up to his death. Within the pages of many of the journals there are notes and bank checks written by or to Loring H. Porter. The collection also contains three small notebooks kept by Loring H. Porter.

This collection contains photographs of various sizes and formats of the Porter family. Some of these photos are labeled with names and dates but most are not. The collection also contains a photo album with twelve photos of people who are probably Porter family members.

The administrative records were created by members of the Porter School Board of Directors as well as the teachers, who filled in the reports on their students annually.

This collection contains five ledger books from the Porter School that document the school records from 1911-1941 and 1944-1945 and two School District Record Books that document the activities of the school board from 1888-1916 and 1918-1928. The collection also contains four books from 1903-1928 used by the Porter School students: *The Hoosier School Master*, *Cudjo's Cave*, *The White Indian Boy*, and *Literature and Living Book 2*.

**Arrangement:**

This collection is organized into three series: Loring Porter Journals (1869-1935); School Record Books (1888-1945); and Photographs (circa 1870-1935).

**Subject Terms:**

One-room schools  
Porter School (Somerset Township, Ill.)  
Rural schools  
Schools  
Somerset (Ill.: Township)

**Name Terms:**

Porter, Loring H.

**Container List:**

**Box 1**

**Series 1: Diaries of L.H. Porter**

Folder 1: Book 1, 1869; Book 4, 1874  
Folder 2: Book 2, 1871; Book 3, 1873; Book 5, 1876  
Folder 3: Book 6, 1877; Book 7, 1878; Book 8, 1880  
Folder 4: Book 9, 1881; Book 10, 1882; Book 11, 1883  
Folder 5: Book 12, 1884; Book 13, 1885; Book 14, 1886  
Folder 6: Book 15, 1887; Book 16, 1888; Book 17, 1889



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Folder 7: Book 18, 1890; Book 19, 1891; Book 20, 1892

**Box 2**

Folder 8: Book 21, 1893; Book 22, 1894; Book 23, 1895

Folder 9: Book 24, 1896; Book 25, 1897; Book 26, 1898; Book 27, 1899

Folder 10: Book 28, 1900; Book 29, 1901; Book 30, 1902

Folder 11: Book 31, 1903; Book 32, 1904; Book 33, 1905

Folder 12: Book 34, 1906; Book 35, 1907; Book 36, 1908

Folder 13: Book 37, 1909; Book 38, 1910; Book 39, 1911

Folder 14: Book 40, 1912; Book 41, 1913; Book 42, 1914

**Box 3**

Folder 15: Book 43, 1915; Book 44, 1916; Book 45, 1917

Folder 16: Book 46, 1918; Book 47, 1919; Book 48, 1920

Folder 17: Book 49, 1921; Book 50, 1922; Book 51, 1923

Folder 18: Book 52, 1924; Book 53, 1925; Book 54, 1927

Folder 19: Book 55, 1928; Book 56, 1932; Book 57, 1933

Folder 20: Book 58, 1934; Book 59, 1935

Folder 21: Book 60, 1890; Book 61, 1895-1896; Book 62, 1899-1903; Book 63, 1906-1909

**Box 4**

**Series 2: Porter Family Photos**

3 Photo envelopes

1 Panorama: 1919 Porter family 15<sup>th</sup> reunion

**Series 3: Books**

4 schoolbooks owned by the Porter School

**Box 5: Oversized Materials**

**Series 2: Porter Family Photos, cont.**

2 family photos

**Series 4: School Records**

7 school ledgers, 1898-1941