



NEWS RELEASE

INDIANA LAW ENFORCEMENT MEMORIAL

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Remembering Evansville Constable John Walsh Solving the Mystery of His Burial Place After Eight Years

Vanderburgh County | After the Indiana Law Enforcement Memorial was launched in April 2017, two primary research projects began — to determine where each fallen officer was buried and the location where their incident occurred. While the incident locations of 528 officers have been determined, the burial place of one officer remained a mystery until now.

Evansville Constable John Walsh died on April 14, 1862, the day after being shot by one of two subjects wanted for burglary and robbery who were sought by officers from Henderson, Kentucky. Walsh was shot twice by Miles Ogle, a 22-year-old man, with a double-barreled shotgun when located on a flatboat along the Ohio River. Ogle was found guilty of manslaughter, sentenced to five years in prison and discharged in 1867.

Walsh was survived by his wife, Mary and had served in the United States Army during the Civil War. He had been re-elected to a one-year term as the Pigeon Township constable with 822 votes only six days prior to his death.

His name appeared most often as Welch but variations included Walch, Walsh and Welsh. Although the Evansville Police Department provided where his incident took place, where he was buried eluded them as well. Since death certificates were not required by the state until 1900, our research had to rely on other resources but none ever revealed his burial place.

Upon receiving information recently that a John Walsh is buried in Saint Joseph Catholic Cemetery in Evansville with no other identifying details, the cemetery was contacted and provided us with his limited interment record, which contained two details that are more than coincidental:

- The date May 8, 1862, that is listed on the headstone of John Walsh as his date of death, is also the date in which his Last Will and Testament was accepted and entered into the records of the Court of Common Pleas of Vanderburgh County, which may suggest he was not buried until his will was probated and this date, for whatever reason, was used on his headstone as his date of death instead of his confirmed date of death of April 14, 1862
- The name Patrick Boyle, who is listed as the owner of his burial plot, was also the appointed executor and sole beneficiary of the real estate and personal property of John Walsh as contained in the recorded copy of his Last Will and Testament in Vanderburgh County

Additional details that support the conclusion the John Walsh buried in Saint Joseph Catholic Cemetery is one and the same as the constable killed in the line of duty:

- Only one John Walsh appears in the Evansville Directory for 1860-1861 in a city of 11,484 and none with the last name Walch, Welch or Welsh variations
- In U.S. Census records, John Walsh was listed as 67 years of age in 1860 (68 appears on this headstone two years later) and was born in Northumberland, England
- As John Walsh died in 1862 and buried in the original Saint Joseph Catholic Cemetery that opened in 1841, this would explain the notation in his interment record that he was re-interred on October 25, 1879 to the current cemetery location, which opened in 1872
- As "Assumption/Catholic" was listed in his interment record, it can be surmised that John Walsh was a parishioner at Our Lady of the Assumption Church, which opened in 1837 and was the only Catholic church in Evansville until 1851

Constable Walsh is recognized as John Welch on the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington on Panel 15W, Line 22 and on the Indiana Law Enforcement and Fire Fighters Memorial in Indianapolis on Panel L12, Line 9. He is the fourth known line of duty death in the history of our state, the first of four fallen officers of the Evansville Police Department and the first of nine line of duty deaths that have originated from Vanderburgh County.

Our research will continue in its mission to bring our visitors and the law enforcement community the most accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date website dedicated to honoring all of our state's fallen officers.

View our memorial for Constable Walsh at: www.officersearch.inlem.org/officer.php?id=0122

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About the Indiana Law Enforcement Memorial

Founded in 2017, the Indiana Law Enforcement Memorial is a nonprofit organization dedicated to honoring all of our state's fallen officers. Its mission is to honor law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice; provide support to their surviving family members and affected agencies; and conduct research into and foster public awareness of Indiana line of duty deaths. Each of these over 500 officers are memorialized through a website maintained as an exclusive resource to our state with the most comprehensive details to preserve the history surrounding their incidents and an extensive compilation of statistical data.