



Photo: Allen County – Fort Wayne Historical Society

Eliza “Mother” George

Fort Wayne, Allen County

October 20, 1808 – May 9, 1865

Eliza Hamilton George was born in Bridgeport, Vermont, in 1808 and married W. L. George before coming to Fort Wayne sometime prior to 1850. During the Civil War, her daughter’s husband was killed at the Battle of Shiloh in 1862. The loss of her son-in-law and the suffering of Union soldiers convinced Eliza to apply for duty in the Sanitary Commission, the forerunner of the Army Nurse Corps in 1863 when she was 54 years old.

Stationed in Memphis hospitals, her value as a nurse was commended by many including the doctors in the field with whom she worked and Indiana’s Governor Oliver P. Morton. Near the end of the war, “Mother” George – as she had been called by the soldiers she attended – was assigned to the army hospital in Wilmington, North Carolina. Caring for nearly eleven thousand newly freed Union prisoners of war, she contracted typhoid and died on May 9, 1865.

Her body was brought back to Fort Wayne where she was buried with full military honors in Lindenwood Cemetery, the only woman to have been so honored there. Later that same year, the Indiana Sanitary Commission and the Fort Wayne Ladies Aid erected a monument in her memory in the cemetery. In addition, a historical marker was placed on the north side of East Berry Street between Barr and Lafayette that is near the site of her first home in Fort Wayne to honor her memory.

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- For more information about Eliza George, go to:
<http://historycenterfv.blogspot.com/2013/11/eliza-mother-george.html>.
 - For more information about *Writing Her Story*, go to:
<http://www.in.gov/icw/2440.htm>.

Additional and more detailed references available at the end of Women’s History Month

