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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Historic Cedarville Woman Studied Worldwide

CEDARVILLE, OHIO -- Cedarville farmer's wife Martha McMillan lived her life just like any other person: She loved God, worked hard, poured wisdom into her children and cared for her community. These traits were recorded each day in her journal. McMillan, who passed away in 1913, never would have imagined that in 2019, people would be reading these journals worldwide through Cedarville University's online repository, Digital Commons.

Of the 267 scholarly items in the Martha McMillan collection on Digital Commons at Cedarville, there have been 4,198 downloads since 2015 and 1,359 downloads in the past year. Downloads have occurred in Turkey, Britain, Japan, China and all over the United States.

McMillan lived four miles outside of Cedarville, Ohio, in the 19th century. She began journaling on her wedding day and continued writing daily about her life, the farm, her family, her community and her faith until shortly before her death, resulting in 46 years of journals with more than 12,000 pages.

In 1986, McMillan's grandson donated the collection to Cedarville University, where the journals provide valuable insight into Cedarville history and the founding of Cedarville University. One of McMillan's sons, Homer, was in the first graduating class in 1897.

This spring, 11 students in the American Women Writers course each transcribed one month from McMillan's journals, which will be added to the Digital Commons repository. The class culminated with students creating an exhibit about McMillan, on display at Cedarville's [Centennial Library](#) through May 4.

This project originated in 2015 between Dr. Michelle Wood, associate professor of English, and Lynn Brock, university archivist, special collections librarian and professor of library science. The recovery work has been uploaded to the Digital Commons at Cedarville online repository.

The recovery project allows students to capture a piece of community history through working with a primary and unpublished text, which is a unique opportunity for undergraduate students. The repository allows faculty and students to share this recovery work with the rest of the world.

"This project not only deepens the community connection between the village of Cedarville and the university but also showcases an ordinary life of faithfulness," said Wood. "Many people think that significance is found in the extraordinary when in reality everyday faith is significant. Her work has such a global impact because the mundane life is important."

"Transcribing Martha McMillan's journals has been such a great project to experience and, honestly, isn't one that I would have thought I would love so much," reflected Meghan Largent, junior English major. "Martha taught me that an ordinary life is just as fulfilling — or maybe even more fulfilling — than something extraordinary because of the people we are placed in community with."

All 46 of McMillan's journals have been scanned and digitized as originally written for online viewing in the Cedarville [University Digital Commons](#). The journal collection can be viewed at http://digitalcommons.cedarville.edu/mcmillan_journal_collection.

Located in southwest Ohio, Cedarville University is an accredited, Christ-centered, Baptist institution with an enrollment of 4,193 undergraduate, graduate, and online students in more than 150 areas of study. Founded in 1887, Cedarville is recognized nationally for its authentic Christian community, rigorous academic programs, strong graduation and retention rates, accredited professional and health science offerings, and leading student satisfaction ratings. For more information about the University, visit www.cedarville.edu.