

Collection #  
SC 3031

## ARTHUR FRANKLIN MAPES PAPERS, 1971

[Collection Information](#)

[Biographical Sketch](#)

[Scope and Content Note](#)

[Contents](#)

[Cataloging Information](#)

Processed by

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[www.indianahistory.org](http://www.indianahistory.org)

## **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF  
COLLECTION: 1 manuscript folder

COLLECTION  
DATES: 1971

PROVENANCE: Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society

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ACCESSION  
NUMBER: 2013.0231

NOTES:

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Arthur Franklin Mapes was born March 16, 1913 in Kendallville, Indiana to James E Mapes and Clara Helen Brown Mapes. At the age of thirteen he began writing poetry, an activity with which he would continue throughout his life. In 1936 he married Ruth Acker Mapes, with whom he had ten children, including two sets of twins. Mapes was never a full-time poet, working thirty-three years as a machinist for Flint and Walling Manufacturing Company. In the 1950s, his poetry became locally known, and was read at civic group meetings, in schools, and on the radio.

Inspired by a snowstorm, Mapes wrote the poem "Indiana" in a span of 15 minutes in 1961. Due in part to support from Allen County residents, the Indiana General Assembly named "Indiana" as the official state poem in 1963. For his contribution to the state's literature, he was named Kendallville Citizen of the Year in 1966 as well as Older Hoosier of the Year in 1980. Additionally, the International Association of Machinists presented him with its 1963 Anniversary Award for community service. In 1980, Mapes' collected works were published as the book *Indiana Memories*.

Arthur Franklin Mapes died January 4, 1986 at the age of 72.

Sources:

"Arthur Franklin Mapes, Indiana poet, author." *The Evening Independent* 6 January 1986, p. 9A.

Arthur Franklin Mapes Official Site. <http://arthurmapes.com/>

Indiana Birth, Death, and Marriage Records (Ancestry.com)

"Indiana State Poem." <http://www.in.gov/history/2801.htm>

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This short collection consists of two documents pertaining to Arthur Franklin Mapes and his poem "Indiana," which was designated the official state poem in 1963. The first document is a printed copy of the poem on Flint and Walling Manufacturing Co. stationery, signed by Mapes and dated May 22, 1971. The second is a letter dated the same day from Mapes to the Fort Wayne *Journal-Gazette* Action Line, asking if any other states have official poems. A reply penned on the same page tells Mapes that he would have to write to the legislature or Secretary of State in each state to find out. The letter and the Manufacturing Co. stationery reinforce the image of Mapes as an ordinary Indiana citizen who accomplished out-of-the-ordinary things.

## **CONTENTS**

CONTENTS

State Poem Documents, 1971

CONTAINER

Folder 1 of 1

## CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:  
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, SC 3031).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.