# NORMAN MERRIFIELD ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW, 9 JANUARY 1980

Collection Information

**Biographical Sketch** 

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Contents

**Cataloging Information** 

Processed by

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William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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### **COLLECTION INFORMATION**

VOLUME OF 1 folder, 1 cassette tape

**COLLECTION:** 

COLLECTION 9 January 1980

DATES:

PROVENANCE: Indiana Historical Society project, 1980

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION 1980.0124

NUMBER:

NOTES: Previously numbered as OH 3.

#### **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Norman Merrifield, born 19 August 1906 in Louisville, Kentucky, was the son of Clarence and Henrietta Merrifield. The family moved to the south side of Indianapolis, Ind., on 5 July 1913, where the elder Merrifield worked as a coal and ice delivery man. Norman attended Schools 19 and 34, and graduated from Tech High School in 1923.

Merrifield earned his BA in Music Education from Northwestern University in 1927. He taught school for four years and then went back to Northwestern for his master's degree. Afterwards, he served as the Dean of the College of Music at Florida A&M. He returned to Indianapolis in 1933 and taught music at Crispus Attucks High School until 1967, interrupted only by his military service during World War II. During the war he saw action in France, Belgium, and Germany.

Merrifield married Estelle Perry in 1943. The couple had one son, born in May 1950. Merrifield was a respected member of the Indianapolis community. He published several musical works, including arrangements of "Somebody's Knocking at Yo' Door," and "Ah Done, Done." He was a member of Olivette Baptist Church and Garfield Baptist Church. Merrifield died on 3 February 1997 and is buried in Crown Hill Cemetery.

Sources:

Information in collection

Ancestry Plus: <a href="http://search.ancestry.com">http://search.ancestry.com</a> (accessed 4 June 2004).

#### SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection is comprised of a cassette tape and a transcript of an oral history interview of Indianapolis music teacher and composer Norman Merrifield. On 9 January 1980, Florabelle Wilson interviewed Merrifield about his experiences growing up on the south side of Indianapolis.

Merrifield discusses his family and his father's business, as well as his friends and church. He talks about race relations between blacks and whites and the negative impact that the rise of the Ku Klux Klan had on his neighborhood. He also discusses Crispus Attucks and the importance of the Baptist church in his life.

#### **CONTENTS**

CONTENTS CONTAINER

Norman Merrifield oral history interview, transcript Folder 1

Norman Merrifield oral history interview, cassette CT 1514

## **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: <a href="http://opac.indianahistory.org/">http://opac.indianahistory.org/</a>
- 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 2728).
- 5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.