

**Collection #
M 1118**

**MARIE HAMMONTREE
PAPERS, 1927–2010**

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Processed by

Paul Brockman

July, 2013

Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 4 manuscript boxes; 1 artifact

COLLECTION DATES: 1927–2010

PROVENANCE: Second Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, 2014

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2014.0065

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Marie Hammontree (1913–2012) was born in Jefferson County, Indiana, but later moved with her family to Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana. She was a graduate of Arsenal Technical High School in 1929. She attended Butler University for three years but dropped out because of financial reasons. Hammontree found employment as an office secretary before joining Bobbs-Merrill Publishing Company first as a stenographer and later as a secretary in the publicity department. With the outbreak of World War II, she worked as a censor and as a surgical stenographer at Indiana University Medical Center. In 1948 she returned to Butler and finished her degree in English one year later. She next went to New York City to work at a publishing house but returned to Indianapolis one year later because of her mother's health. In 1950 she began working for the F.B.I. in Indianapolis as a stenographer. Seven years later, she became secretary to the agent in charge of the Indianapolis office.

In 1952 Hammontree began her other career as a children's author. Writing in her spare time she wrote children's biographies of famous people. Her first one was of the Mayo Brothers, Will and Charlie, founders of the Mayo Clinic, was published by Bobbs-Merrill. Other biographies followed which included A. P. Giannini, founder of Bank of America, Mohandas Gandhi, Albert Einstein and Walt Disney.

Hammontree retired from the F.B.I. in 1975 and worked part time for Indianapolis mayor Bill Hudnut and the Republican Party until 1992. In 1988, she moved to Marquette Manor, an assisted living facility in Indianapolis. She continued to be active in revision her biographies, supporting the Republican Party, and writing articles for the *Marquette Mirror*, the newsletter for the facility until her death.

Sources:

Information in collection.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Marie Hammontree papers contain correspondence, writings and related materials centering on her career as a children's author, 1952–1997. Correspondence primarily comes from children and publishers regarding her books, although there are several letters from J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the F.B.I., including those saying bureau policy would not permit her writing a biography of him, and congratulating her on her accomplishments both for the bureau and as an outside author. Also included are book contracts and various printed items regarding her books and the Childhood of Famous Americans Series.

Other items in the collection include travel essays she authored, 1946–1986; essay submissions she critiqued for the Institute for Children's Literatures, 1986–1004; biographical material; notebooks in shorthand from travel stories and other writings; and submissions made for professional directories such as *Who's Who* and *Dictionary of International Biography*, 1969–1999. Additional material contains printed items and correspondence on a variety of topics including her involvement with home front organizations during World War II, 1944–1946; the Society of Former F.B.I. Women, 2002–2010; Arsenal Technical High School, 1927–1929, 2001; and Pen Women, 2001–2002.

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