

Collection #  
M 1537  
OM 0789

**JUDGE MERCER M. AND KATHALYN STUART MANCE  
COLLECTION, CA. 1870-2015**

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Processed by

Matt S Holdzkom  
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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department  
William Henry Smith Memorial Library  
Indiana Historical Society  
450 West Ohio Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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

## COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 5 manuscript boxes, 6 oversized manuscript folders, 3 printed items, 1 box of photographs, 1 half-size box of photographs, 1 OVA photographs folder, 2 OVB photographs folders, 1 OVC graphics folder, 6 artifacts

COLLECTION DATES: ca. 1870s-2015

PROVENANCE: Kathy Mance O'Brian and Stuart Montgomery Mance, 2016

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Judge Rufus C. Kuykendall Collection (M1468); Rosalyn Comer Richardson Papers (M0649); Henry J. Richardson Papers (M0472); Robert Lee Brokenburr Papers and Photographs (M0492)

ACCESSION NUMBERS: 2016.0180; 2016.0273

NOTES:

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Mercer Montgomery Mance was born in 1910 in Beaufort, South Carolina. He received his secondary education at Allen University in Columbia, a school co-founded by his grandfather and namesake, Mercer Montgomery Mance. His parents were Robert Weston Mance and Elizabeth [Grimes] Mance; his father was an AME minister and educator, while his mother was a schoolteacher and homemaker for the five Mance children: Evelyn (called Sa), Robert, Jr., Charity (called Chat), Lilla Nerissa, and Mercer.

Mercer M. Mance attended college at Howard University, graduating in 1931, and Harvard University Law School, graduating in 1934. Beginning in 1935, he practiced law in Indianapolis. Thereafter he held many positions, including public defender, referee for juvenile court, city attorney, and finally, in 1958, became the first Black judge elected in Indiana.

Mercer Mance was a veteran of World War II, a trustee of Bethel AME Church in Indianapolis, and served on numerous boards, including that of the Fall Creek YMCA.

In 1951, he married Mary Kathalyn Stuart, always called Kathalyn or Kay by friends.

Kathalyn Stuart Mance was born in 1919 in Indianapolis. She graduated from Crispus Attucks High School in 1937 and earned a degree in social work from Ohio State University. Her parents were Mae Lewellyn [Stokes] Stuart and William Weir Stuart; her mother was a teacher originally from Darke County, Ohio, but who attended Muncie Normal School in Muncie, Indiana, and Earlham College in Richmond. There is some indication that Mae Stokes was adopted. She was raised by William H. Stokes and Emily McCoy Stokes. Kathalyn's father was a dentist in Indianapolis who, as a young man, worked as the personal valet to bandleader John Philip Sousa and toured the world with him. This couple had nine children: boys Edwin, Charles, Joseph, Marion, and Weir, and girls Jane, Emily, Kathalyn, and Natalie.

Kathalyn Stuart Mance pursued a career in social work and did her fieldwork at the Phyllis Wheatley YWCA. Beginning in 1942, she served as a case worker for the Marion County Department of Public Welfare. From 1974 to 1984, she was a social administrator for the Indianapolis Metropolitan School District. She was a member of the Kliques Club, the Gay Northeasterners, the Progressive Mother's Club, and served as district chair for the American Cancer Society's April Crusade.

Mercer and Kathalyn Mance had two children, Stuart Montgomery Mance, born about 1957, and Charity Kathalyn (called Kathy), born about 1962. Mercer passed away in 1990 and Kathalyn followed in 1994.

Sources:

Materials in the collection

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection consists of two accessions from 2016, one chiefly made up of Mercer Mance material, and the other Kathalyn Stuart Mance material. It has been arranged in three series, keeping those distinctions largely intact. The processor moved items from one group to the other in very few cases, and only when the item's creator was clearly the other individual. Series III consists of materials postdating the deaths of Mercer and Kathalyn Mance and is titled for their daughter and primary donor of the collection, Kathy Mance O'Brian.

Series I is Mercer Mance materials, including items of both professional and personal nature. One highlight is a receipt book from 1964, when Mance was working as an attorney. Other highlights include materials from three US presidential inaugurations, which have been unframed for conservation purposes, and records from two legal complaints made by Mance himself. One comes from an incident in 1949 when an Indianapolis police officer mistook Kathalyn for a white woman, a common occurrence due to her fair complexion and naturally wavy blonde hair, and then harassed and unjustly arrested the couple along with their friends. Mance filed a petition to have the officer immediately fired. Then in 1957, a group of "young white men" repeatedly targeted the Mance home with harassment and vandalism. The collection includes a detailed detective's report about the incidents.

Series II is Kathalyn Stuart Mance materials. Highlights from this series include Stuart family photographs dating back to the 1870s. Handwritten on one photograph of William H. Stokes are the words "Mom's adoptive father." Also included are some books given to William W. Stuart Sr. by John Philip Sousa and signed by him, as well as Stuart's account book from a tour with Sousa in 1903. The book lists expenses paid by Stuart on Sousa's behalf in New York, Paris, and cities in England and Ireland. Also included in Series II are many photographs of Kathalyn and her family members. Lastly, a 1927 issue of the Crispus Attucks High School annual *The Attucks*, believed to be the first issue to be published.

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#### CONTAINER

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