

# WAYNE GUTHRIE PAPERS, 1933-1977

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Collection #  
M 606

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Processed by  
Charles Latham  
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## USER INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION: 18 manuscript boxes

COLLECTION DATES: 1933-1977

PROVENANCE: Richard W. Guthrie, Indianapolis IN, and Ruth M. Patterson, Cleveland, OH, 16 June 1978

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS: None

ACCESSION NUMBER: 78.0610

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Robert [Wayne Guthrie](#) (1896-1977), Hoosier newspaperman, was born in Nashville, Indiana, and graduated from Columbus High School in 1915. He entered Indiana University, but his studies were interrupted by World War I, during which he served as a second lieutenant in the Field Artillery. After the war he attended the University of Chicago, but returned to Indiana University to receive a law degree in 1920.

In 1921 Guthrie joined the staff of the *Indianapolis News*. What was intended as a stopgap job for a budding lawyer

turned into a fifty-six-year career as a newspaper man. Guthrie's first big story was his eyewitness account of an interurban train wreck at Alfonte, Indiana, in February 1924. He became assistant city editor of the News in 1926 and city editor in 1933. After fourteen years in the latter job, he began writing the column "Ringside in Hoosierland," which continued until a few months before his death thirty years later.

Guthrie's column dealt with Indiana and its folklore and history: how places got their names, how long people had been doing their jobs, how to make things like vinegar pie. There was a good deal of reader response; sometimes this produced material for future columns; sometimes it turned into a campaign. Two successful campaigns resulted in naming a state park after Col. Richard Lieber and changing the name of the Indianapolis baseball park from Victory Field to Bush Stadium. An unsuccessful campaign in the 1950s tried to rename 38th Street in Indianapolis after General Douglas MacArthur.

Guthrie was a very active Mason (Scottish Rite), and edited the lodge magazine.

Guthrie became a popular public speaker. In 1946, after witnessing the nuclear test at Bikini Atoll, he gave a speech called "Ringside at Bikini," which he was called on to repeat 854 times. His speech on "Americanism" was given 250 times.

Guthrie was active in Kiwanis International, serving as international chairman in four different years between 1952 and 1962. He was a longtime member of the American Legion, and was president of the Indianapolis Press Club in 1966. He was twice named a Sagamore of the Wabash, and in 1973 was inducted into the Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame.

Sources: *Indiana Biographical Series*, Vol. 81 pp. 60-61; Vol. 87 pp. 17, 18  
*Indiana University Alumni Magazine*, Vol. 40 no. 4, December 1977

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## SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection, filling seventeen manuscript boxes and three small photographic boxes, contains notes, correspondence, photographs, and clippings, spanning the period 1933-1977. It is arranged alphabetically and chronologically.

Boxes 1-3 contain Guthrie's notes for his column "Ringside in Hoosierland," along with some correspondence. This is a working file, arranged largely as Guthrie had it; material for a given subject might include notes, a clipping or so, a letter from a reader, and a snapshot.

These notes are arranged in two series. First, there is a series by county, filling Box 1 and half of Box 2; second, a file by subject, in Boxes 2 and 3; each series is arranged alphabetically (see box and folder listing). Guthrie was greatly interested in the origin of place names, and notes on this subject fill Folders 2-6 of Box 3.

The remainder of the collection is a file of Guthrie's columns during its thirty years. In Box 4 are articles about towns and place names, arranged alphabetically. There are also two folders of collected verse.

Box 5 begins with a scrapbook of congratulatory letters received by Guthrie at the inception of his column in 1947. The next twelve boxes contain the column as it appeared year by year. As noted in the biographical sketch, the column was a homey mixture of history, reminiscence, and give-and-take with readers about various aspects of Hoosier history and folklore.

The collection ends with three and a half boxes of photographs. Perhaps the most notable are twenty-eight shots of the celebration of V-J Day in Indianapolis in 1945 (Box 17 Folder 11) and a number of pictures of newspaper carriers, including several early ones with descriptions on the back telling how hard the work was (Box 17 Folder 10).

In Box 21 are ten folders of correspondence. Perhaps the most interesting is in Folders 2-3, concerning Guthrie's work

as city editor; this is amplified by some teletype releases which deal largely with censorship during World War II. There are also articles by Guthrie and others; booklets; documents; and clippings.

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## BOX AND FOLDER LISTING

### **BOX 1: Articles on Counties FOLDER**

1-33 Bartholomew County - Monroe County

### **BOX 2: Articles on Counties; Notes by subject A to L FOLDER**

1-25 Montgomery County - Whitley County

26 George Ade prayer

27 ASCAP

28 "Babes in the Woods" score

29 Bald Headed Glee Club

30 Circus street parade

31 Claypool Hotel

32 Schuyler Colfax

33 Covered bridges

34 Dr. Hiel Crum, naturopathic physician

35 English Hotel, Michigan at Meridian Streets--demolition

36 Hypnotism

37 *Indianapolis News*

38 *News* 75th anniversary program

39 Interurban-- T. H. I & E.

40 "A Knight of the Golden Circle"

41 Henry C. Lawrence

42 Legal

43 Lincoln in Indianapolis

44 Lindbergh

45 Lockefield Gardens

**BOX 3: Subject file M to Z**  
**FOLDER**

- 1 Maple sugar
- 2 Abe Martin Lodge
- 3 Masonic orders
- 4 Memorial Day
- 5 Peoples Bank and Trust Company
- 6 Group photo, 1899
- 7 Peace symbol
- 8 Place names I
- 9 Place names II
- 10 Place names III
- 11 Place names IV
- 12 Place names V
- 13 Place names-- articles
- 14 "Red Sails" (horse)
- 15 Sachems
- 16 Margaret Schindler
- 17 Senators and governors
- 18 D. C. Stephenson
- 19 Tanneries
- 20 Wabash, Ind.
- 21 Wabash College
- 22 Victoria Evans Wagner-- articles
- 23 E. P. Whallon
- 24 Whitewater Canal
- 25 Earl Williams
- 26 Wood carving

**BOX 4: Articles on towns; Verse**

## **FOLDER**

1-16 Towns

17-18 Verse

BOX 5: "Ringside in Hoosierland" Aug. 1947-June 1949

BOX 6: "Ringside in Hoosierland" July 1949-Dec. 1951

BOX 7: "Ringside in Hoosierland" Jan. 1952-Dec. 1953

BOX 8: "Ringside in Hoosierland" Jan. 1954-Dec. 1956

BOX 9: "Ringside in Hoosierland" Jan. 1957-June 1959

BOX 10: "Ringside in Hoosierland" July 1959-Dec. 1961

BOX 11: "Ringside in Hoosierland" Jan. 1962-June 1964

BOX 12: "Ringside in Hoosierland" July 1964-Dec. 1966

BOX 13: "Ringside in Hoosierland" Jan. 1967-June 1969

BOX 14: "Ringside in Hoosierland" July 1969-Dec. 1971

BOX 15: "Ringside in Hoosierland" Jan. 1972-Dec. 1973

BOX 16: "Ringside in Hoosierland" Jan. 1974-June 1976

## **BOX 17: Articles; photographs**

### **FOLDER**

1-4 Articles July 1976 - July 1977

5 (VC) Fountain County

6 (VC) Marion County-- Public School #3; State Capitol draped for Lincoln's death

7 (VC) Noble County-- Samuel Wilson tombstone

8 (VC) Posey County-- New Harmony-- Workingmen's Institute

9 (VC) Stewart Donnelly (boxer)

10 (VC) Newspaper carriers

11 (VC) V-J Day

12 (VC) Electric trolleys

13 (VC) Fires

14 (VC) Miscellaneous

15 (VC) Emrichsville [?] Bridge

**BOX 18: Photographs**, 4" by 5"-- Allen County - Randolph County

**BOX 19: Photographs**, 4" by 5"-- Tippecanoe County - Whitley County; gravestones; portraits

**BOX 20: Photographs**, 5" by 7"-- Bartholomew County - Hendricks County; gravestones; unknown locations

**BOX 21: Correspondence; Articles; Documents; Clippings  
FOLDER**

1 Correspondence-- 1920-1921

2 Correspondence as city editor

3 Teletyped news releases, 1945

4 Correspondence-- 1961-1962

5 Correspondence-- 1973

6 Correspondence-- 1974-1977

7 Correspondence-- Elizabeth Eitel Miesse

8 Correspondence-- "Sassafras Spencer"

9 Correspondence-- "Shrigley"

10 Correspondence-- general

11 Article-- Brown County

12 Article-- "Indiana"

13 Typescript of one column

14 Cartoon souvenir of 1917 Indiana General Assembly

15 Russell Webster

16 Printed booklets

17 Galley proofs

18 Documents

19 Articles by others

20 Bills, coupons, cards

21 Clippings

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**CATALOGUING INFORMATION**

MAIN ENTRY: Guthrie, Wayne, 1896-1977

SUBJECT ENTRIES: Journalists--Indiana--Indianapolis

Journalism--Indiana--Indianapolis

Journalism--Social aspects--Indiana--Indianapolis

Feature writing

Folklore--Indiana

Newspapers--Sections, columns, etc.

Newspaper carriers--Pictorial works

Authors, American--Indiana--Indianapolis

Electric railroads--Indiana--Pictorial works

Names, Geographical--Indiana

World War, 1939-1945--Indiana--Indianapolis--Armistices--Pictorial works

World War, 1939-1945--Censorship

Sepulchral monuments--Indiana--Pictorial works

Indianapolis (Ind.)--History

Indiana--History

END