

Collection #
M 0741
OM 0678

**WILLIAM M. S. MYERS
PAPERS, 1926–1995 (BULK 1940S, 1970–1995)**

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Processed by

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5 June 2000

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28 July 2017

Manuscript Collections Department
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Indiana Historical Society
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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	15 manuscript boxes; 1 oversized folder, 11 photograph folders, 6 cold storage photograph folders, 1 OVA photograph folder, 2 printed items.
COLLECTION DATES:	1926–95 (bulk 1940s, 1970–1995)
PROVENANCE:	Marva Chubb, 196 Merriford Lane, Rosedale, IL 60172
RESTRICTIONS:	None
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ALTERNATE FORMATS:	None
RELATED HOLDINGS:	None
ACCESSION NUMBER:	1999.0550
NOTES:	

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

William Moses Samuel “Red” Myers (22 November 1914–2 July 1995) was born in Greenville, South Carolina. The son of William M.S. Myers, Sr., and Laura Belle Johnson Myers, he moved to Indianapolis in 1920. He attended elementary and secondary school in Indianapolis, graduating from Crispus Attucks High School in 1932. He was a member of the National Honor Society and he graduated in the Upper Decile. Later Myers attended Indiana Central University (now University of Indianapolis) and the American Institute of Banking.

During his youth in Indianapolis, Myers worked as a drug store clerk at the Douglass Park Pharmacy; he was a stockroom assistant at the G. C. Murphy Company; and he worked as a truck driver and janitor for House Trailers, Inc. From 1934 to 1937, he worked as a laborer, in forestry, and as an office clerk and senior foreman with the Civilian Conservation Corps, an emergency unemployment relief program designed to give jobless persons work on projects that preserved and restored natural resources. It was geared toward young men, ages seventeen to twenty-three. Myers enrolled with the CCC at Ft. Knox, Kentucky. His first assignment was in Corydon, Indiana. During most of his tenure with the CCC, he was in Company 517, first assigned to Corydon and then to the Harrison County State Forest. The Corps rebuilt many state and national forests and parks. It suppressed forest fires, planted trees, and completed and maintained roads and trails.

While at Corydon, Myers was the leader of A Barracks. He was also a member of a singing quartet that made appearances in southern and central Indiana. Other quartet members included Frank Wilson, William Maynard, and William Moore. Myers worked as an office clerk and senior foreman at Corydon before moving to Fort Benjamin Harrison, his last assignment, where he was a senior foreman at Company 3550. In 1937, he was discharged from the CCC at the expiration of his term of enrollment.

Around 1950, Company 517 began having annual reunions at the Jay County Fairgrounds in Portland, Indiana. Alumni and their families were invited to attend. William M.S. Myers was instrumental in publicizing the reunions. He sent out notices to local newspapers, as well as letters to alumni.

Myers married Erma Helen Adams on 15 November 1935. Six children were born to this union. They were Ruth Elizabeth Myers (18 May 1937; passed at two-days-old), William (25 February 1939–), Marva Marie (27 November 1945–), Claud Wesley (8 July 1949–), Michael Edgar (31 July 1953–), and Gloria Jean (26 January 1958–). The family resided on the north side of Indianapolis. All of the surviving children attended the Indianapolis Public Schools and Indiana institutions of higher learning.

William M. S. Myers volunteered to serve in the Indiana State Guard in 1941. In preparation for the State Guard, Myers completed the Fifth Service Command School at Fort Knox, Kentucky. He served in the State Guard and concurrently worked as a surgical ward attendant at Fort Benjamin Harrison Hospital and later as a fireman with the

Indianapolis Fire Department. Upon deactivation from the State Guard in 1947, Myers was a captain and commander of the Second Separate Company, Third Infantry in Indianapolis.

From 1942 to 1968, Myers worked with the Indianapolis Fire Department. Most of his time with the Fire Department, he was an engine chauffeur, operating the fire engine and fire pumps. He was stationed at Firehouse 1 for 20 years and Firehouse 22 for six years. The American Red Cross honored him for his work during the 31 October 1963 explosion disaster at the Indianapolis Coliseum.

In 1968 William M.S. Myers began employment as a teller with the Indiana National Bank. Later he worked as an instructor in the Teller Training School, as a supervisor of the Mail, Messenger and Insert Services Department, and as a property management counselor in the Real Estate Department of the Trust Division. He was a licensed real estate broker. Previously, from 1955 to 1970, he owned Myers Real Estate Company.

Myers was a Republican ward and precinct committeeman and a state organizer for young Republicans. He was appointed to the Marion County Tax Adjustment Board.

Myers was elected to the Indianapolis School Board in May 1972. He was elected on a slate of the Committee for Neighborhood Schools.

William M.S. Myers was a member of the Northside New Era Baptist Church. He was very active in the church. A trustee and the church treasurer, he regularly served as the financial officer for Men's Day. He was also director of Religious Education.

Myers was a member of several career-related organizations including the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors, Indiana State Real Estate Association, Indiana Firefighters Association, Indianapolis Local-Indiana Firefighters Association, and the Indianapolis Retired Firefighters Club. He was on the board of directors of numerous civic organizations including Citizens Forum; Greater Indianapolis Information, Inc.; Marion County Cancer Society, Inc.; Indiana Cancer Society, Inc.; Senior Enterprises, Inc.; and the United Cancer Council. Myers was on the Legislative Committee of the Indiana School Boards Association and he was a life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He served as president of the Downtown Optimist Club (Indianapolis) and the Little Red Door, an agency of the Marion County Cancer Society, Inc.

A member of two fraternal organizations, Myers was a 32nd degree Mason. He was a member of the Constantine Consistory No. 25, Valley of Indianapolis. He was also a member of the Southern Cross Lodge No. 39 of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge, F & AM.

During the late 1970s, Myers was a delegate to the Indiana Governor's Conference on Libraries (August 1978), the White House Conference on Library and Information Services (November 1979), and the White House Conference on Libraries and Literacy (April

1979). He was also a delegate to the 1992 White House Conference on Library and Information Services.

William M.S. Myers received many awards. When he retired from Indiana National Bank in 1978, Indianapolis Mayor William Hudnut declared 23 June 1978 William M.S. Myers day. In 1982, he was honored with the Service to Mankind award from the Broadripple Sertoma Club. The Little Red Door bestowed a Recognition Award upon Myers in 1991.

Myers was entombed at the Crown Hill Cemetery on 7 July 1995.

Sources:

Materials in the collection.

Robert Fechner, "Civilian Conservation Corps," in James Truslow Adams (general editor), *Dictionary of American History*, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940, Volume I, page 393.

William M.S. Myers obituaries in the *Indianapolis News*, 5 July 1995, page E4
Indianapolis Star, 6 July 1995, page B6.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection contains a wealth of biographical information about William M. S. Myers. There are 15 manuscript boxes. Box 1 contains materials pertaining to Myers and many of his family members. In grade school, Myers served as a traffic guard (accident prevention officer). A certificate dated 15 June 1928 (Box 1, Folder 3), one of the oldest items in the collection, commemorates his service. There are folders that relate to the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Myers' grade school graduation from Indianapolis Public Schools #26 in 1978 and his golden wedding anniversary in 1985. There are three personal scrapbooks in the collection. A general personal scrapbook that has several divisions (personal profile, military days, education, employment, children, memberships, writings, and awards, etc.) is contained in Box 1, Folders 20–33. It is dated from 1935–1994 and has been retained in its original order. Correspondence (1950–1990, n.d.) is in Box 1, Folders 35–40. Myers was a member of numerous civic, social, and religious organizations. He maintained several card files of contacts. Those files are in Box 2. Myers was in the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) from 1934 to 1937. Box 3 contains a CCC scrapbook. A copy of Myers' 1937 discharge, a handwritten history of CCC Company 517, and photographs from post-1950 CCC reunions are contained in the scrapbook. There is also a scrapbook that includes poems by Myers (including a dedicatory poem to Company 517), membership cards, photographs of family and friends, news clippings, and a 1932 Crispus Attucks High School commencement program in Box 3.

More information about Myers' service with the CCC can be found in Box 4. Myers served in the Indiana State Guard from 1941–47. Correspondence, appointment certificates, and his discharge form are in Box 4, folders 5–7. Box 4 also contains many materials that demonstrate Myers' activeness in the community. There are business and membership cards, copies of his speeches, letters to the editor, certificates and awards, programs (some list Myers as a speaker for the event), and news clippings.

William M. S. Myers wrote many poems. "Complete Poems of William M.S. Myers," an unpublished manuscript is in box 4, folder 13. Some of his poetry was published in anthologies in 1935 (*Modern American Poetry*) and 1936 (*American States Anthology*). The published works are stored in Printed Collections.

Myers worked as a fireman with the Indianapolis Fire Department from 1942 to 1968. He was employed by the Indiana National Bank from 1968 to 1978. Box 5, Folders 1–16, contain information about his tenure with these two entities. Elected to a four-year term on the Indianapolis Public Schools Board in 1974, Myers was a vocal member of the body. In addition to attending and participating in Board meetings, he spoke at dedications, groundbreaking ceremonies, and graduations. His speeches, statements on school issues, and correspondence, along with other Indianapolis Public School materials are in box 5, folders 17–48.

Myers was very involved with several civic organizations, serving on the boards of Community Action Against Poverty; Downtown Optimist Club, Inc.; Greater Indianapolis Information, Inc.; the Little Red Door; Senior Enterprises, Inc.; and the United Cancer Council, Inc. Most folders pertaining to his organizational affiliations are arranged alphabetically within the collection. The exceptions follow. Myers volunteered with the Indianapolis Senior Citizens' Center, Inc.; and Senior Enterprises, Inc. In 1992, these two organizations merged. Materials related to the merger are arranged between the folders that pertain to the two organizations, with all materials in boxes 6 and 7. Myers was active with Indiana libraries. He was a member of the Indiana Library Association/Indiana Library Trustee Association, Indiana State Library Advisory Committee, Indiana Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services, and the White House Conference on Library and Information Services. All library-related materials are grouped under the broad subject heading "libraries," and are in boxes 7–8. Myers was a 32nd degree Mason. There are collection materials that relate to the Constantine Consistory No. 25 and the Southern Cross Lodge, No. 39. All relevant folders are grouped under Masonic Lodge in box 12, folders 1–15.

Materials that pertain to a real estate company owned by Myers and his wife Erma are in box 12, folders 17–23. Myers was a trustee and treasurer for his church.

Boxes 12–14 contain materials that pertain to the Northside New Era Baptist Church. The church was the result of a 1935 merger of two Indianapolis Baptist congregations, Northside and New Era churches. The collection contains materials that relate to the merger, building funds, church organization and structure, church programs and bulletins, and financial records.

Myers collected materials related to a wide range of topics. Many of his local news clippings have been interfiled in the Black History Program vertical files. Folders that contain topical information are arranged alphabetically in boxes 14 and 15. Some of the topics include: homelessness, religion, civil rights, and political activities. Myers also collected many obituary programs. The programs are in box 15, folders 2–3.

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William M.S. Myers (color)

William M.S. Myers, et al.

50th Wedding Anniversary, 1985

School #26, 50th Class Reunion, 1978

School #26, Class Reunion Receipts, 1978

School #26 Class Reunion, 1978

Indiana National Bank Retirement Dinner, 1978

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William and Erma Myers (color)

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Scrapbook: Awards, Honors and Recommendations, 1945–77, n.d.	Box 1, Folder 26
Scrapbook: Letters of Commendation, 1953–78	Box 1, Folder 27

Scrapbook: Memberships, 1976, n.d.; Miscellaneous, 1933–69 (Includes Civil Service Commission File)

Box 1, Folder 28

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Community Action Against Poverty, Certificate of Appointment, 1984

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