

McGAUGHEY, FLORENCE HELEN, 1904-

Florence Helen McGaughey Collection

Dates: 1923-1976

Accession No. Transfer- RBSC, CML

Collection No. FC- 3

Donor: Florence Helen McGaughey

Description: 3.0 cubic feet

Biographical Note

Florence Helen McGaughey, writer and Indiana State University faculty member, was born in Roachdale, Indiana, on March 1, 1904. She was the only child of Charles E. and Sallie Edith Brumfield McGaughey. Her father was president of the Citizens National Bank and Trust Company of Greencastle, Indiana; he also served as mayor of that city.

McGaughey was educated at the Roachdale Common School, Greencastle High School (graduation in 1922), Western College for Women (Oxford, Ohio, 1922-1923), DePauw University (Greencastle; A.B. with distinction in 1926), and Middlebury College (Bread Loaf, Vermont; A.M. in 1932). She did graduate work at DePauw University, Indiana University, Indiana State Teachers College, and Colorado University.

McGaughey taught English, speech, and history for a number of years in Indiana high schools at Kentland (1926-1927), Cloverdale (1927-1928), Plymouth (where she headed the English Department, 1927-1932), and Greencastle (where she was a supervising teacher for DePauw). Her twenty-five year association with Indiana State University began in 1946 when she joined the English faculty. She was promoted to Professor in 1961 and granted Emeritus status when she retired in 1970.

McGaughey authored poetry, librettos, fiction, essays, speeches, plays, songs, etc. She is best known for her poetry published in seven volumes. Her numerous awards include the Award of Honor, gold cup, gold medals, Talisman Key International, Poets Corner, International 1969; Alumni Citation, DePauw University 1959; National League of American Pen Women, 1st prize ballad, 1948; Accademia Internazionali Leonardo da Vinci diploma of Merit, gold medal 1968; World Poetry Society Magna Cum Laude Distinguished Service Citation 1970; Diploma Signalazione and Poet Laureate Award in English Centro Studi e Scambi 1962; Poet Laureate Award, Indiana State Federation of Poetry Clubs for 1973; Centro Studi e Scambi Internazionali Roma Poet Laureate for 1975.

McGaughey was recognized with many national and international honors, including listing in International Who's Who in Poetry, Who's Who of American Women, Who's Who in America, Who's Who in the United States, Contemporary Authors, Dictionary of American Scholars, Dictionary of International Biography, National Register of Prominent Americans and International Notables, among others.

She held memberships in the National Arts Club; National League of American Pen Women; Centro Studi e Scambi Internazionali, Rome; International Poetry Society; Academy of American Poets; and the Eugene Field and Mark Twain Societies, among others.

Scope and Content Note

The Florence Helen McGaughey collection contains three cubic feet of incoming letters; writings in handwritten, typed, and published form; photographs; printed materials; clippings; reel-to-reel tape; and awards, certificates, and medals. While the earliest pieces in the collection are undated photographs of her grandparents, most items date from the 1930's through 1976. The emphasis of the collection is on her writing rather than on her Indiana State University teaching career.

The collection has been arranged into thirteen series. Of particular interest to researchers are numerous holograph and typed copies of particular writings containing revisions so that the evolution of some works can be studied.

A related collection in this repository is the Jon J. Polifrone Collection. He was her collaborator on "The Dispossessed" and several other pieces of music.

Series Descriptions

Biography

Includes general biographical information about McGaughey and some of her ancestors; professional licenses; resumes; clippings; Roachdale High School Class of 1922 reunion materials; letters and photographs concerning Southeast Asian children she supported through Operation "Happy Child," and materials from writer's conferences she attended at Middlebury College and Indiana University.

General Correspondence

Consists of three letters (or drafts) from McGaughey but is primarily composed of incoming letters from friends, colleagues, and other writers. It is arranged alphabetically by correspondent; when there is more than one letter, the arrangement is chronological. There is one exception to this arrangement; letters from publishers are grouped not by name of correspondent but by publisher's name.

It is important to note that the series does not contain correspondence exclusively. There are sometimes newspaper clippings, clipped journal articles, photographs, etc. and a reel to reel tape from Jeffrey King arranged with the letters, since that is the way the materials were found in the most recent processing. Also, all of the correspondence in the McGaughey Collection is not collected in this series; more can be found throughout the collection, grouped with topics to which the letters pertain.

Of special interest to researchers are short letters from Indiana State University presidents Alan Rankin, R. W. Holmstedt, Ralph Tirey, and Richard Landini, as well as writer May Sarton; letters from Mrs. Rolland Ade about writer George Ade; lengthy correspondence from Professor Oliver William Robinson from 1966 to 1973 for which access was restricted until 1985; and a packet of correspondence for which access is restricted until 1990. In addition, McGaughey conducted a survey from 1935 to 1941 where she requested a list of "Ten Representative Americans." There are responses to this survey from Margaret Mead, Charles Beard, Frederick Allen, and Jesse Stuart.

Poetry

This series is the largest in the collection. It consists of several subseries.

Early Poems- contains bound and unbound copies of unpublished writings and information about early acceptances (1923-1941).

Collections- contains copies of and correspondence and clippings concerning her seven published books of poetry: Wind Across the Night (1938), Music in the Wind (1941), Spring is a Blue Kite (1946), Reaching for the Spring (1958), "Selected Poems" in Quaderni di Poesia (1961), "Shadows" in Quaderni di Poesia (1965), and Petals from a Plum Tree (1967).

Individual Poems- contains single and collected copies of poems arranged by both McGaughey's numerical system (according to date of acceptance for publication) and alphabetical by title. A notebook compiled by McGaughey also contains reviews, clippings, and correspondence connected with these poems.

Journals- contains periodicals which contain one or more poems.

Poetry-- Miscellaneous- contains worksheets and revisions which are particularly revealing of changes that McGaughey made as her poems evolved. There are two folders of clipped poems and tear sheets, some sheets containing several of her poems. Translations of several of her poems into French and related correspondence are also included.

Librettos

The series contains numerous revisions of McGaughey's two librettos, "The Dispossessed" (originally called "Malinda") written between 1966 and 1973 and "Written in the Stars" (originally called "Elizabeth") written in 1975. Essays

The series contains holograph, typed, and printed copies of essays, listed in alphabetical order by title.

Fiction

The series contains miscellaneous short stories and "Eyes for Mr. Stanley" (1945-- the folder also contains photographs of seeing eye dogs); "Lakemont," an unfinished story of life in a school for girls along with a critique (1945-1946); and "Rainbow on the Stair" (1946).

Plays

The series contains Christmas plays which were written each year from 1965-1975 for the Kentland Women's Club.

Other Writings

The series includes book reviews, a term paper written in 1932 for the Bread Loaf School of English, talks given at Indiana State University English Department Coffee Hour, the Pen and Brush Club, and the Unitarian- Universalist Church, and miscellaneous writings and research notes.

Photographs

The series contains family and professional photographs. Some photographs have been left in frames to preserve McGaughey's notations on the back.

Awards

This series includes certificates, correspondence, clippings, and medals concerning the numerous honors that McGaughey received for her writing.

Affiliations

This series includes brief information and correspondence about Indiana State University library regulations and about membership in numerous organizations, notable the American Academy and the National Arts Club.

The Morris Award

This series contains correspondence, applications, clippings, etc. from 1966-1976 concerning the award established by McGaughey in honor of her aunt, Kathryn Brumfield Morris. Works of Others

The series contains poetry and artwork by other writers and artists which McGaughey kept.

Processing Notes

McGaughey's papers had originally been committed to the University of Kentucky in 1963, but she was invited by Earl Tannenbaum to house them at the Indiana State University Library. On September 17, 1969, she agreed to do so.

The collection was arranged in folders, but in no apparent related order. A note with the collection indicates a prior arranging of the collection. It is also evident that McGaughey herself maintained some type of organized filing system. It was unclear how much of McGaughey's original arrangement had been preserved. In the most recent processing, the reorganization of material was kept to a minimum. Because of this, correspondence, photographs, and clippings are dispersed throughout the collection since that is the way they were found, grouped according to subject. For instance, there may be correspondence, book reviews, and awards about a particular book of poetry all grouped together in the same folder with the collection.

Clarification or expansion of original folder titles was designed to assist researchers in locating materials. Regrouping of folders attempted to assemble similar materials, to impose some type of order on the collection to assist researchers.

Container Inventory

BIOGRAPHY

Box 1

General Information

Ancestry

College Credits, Licenses, Transcripts, Resumes, Clippings

Reunion-- Class of 1922-- Roachdale High School

Western College for Women, Class of 1926

Bread Loaf

Writer's Conference, Indiana University, 1945, 1946

Operation "Happy Child" (and photographs)

Retirement

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

Outgoing, 1958, 1973, 1974

Incoming:

Ade, Mrs. Roland and related materials and correspondence

Anderson, C. Joseph

Ba-Big

Billman, James B.

Bo-C

Connick, Charles and articles and photographs

D-Fa

First Christian Church, Greencastle

Francis, Arlene

G-Hof

Holmstedt, R. W.

Hop-K

Indiana State University (repository letters)

King, Jeffrey (and reel to reel tape)

Landini, Richard G.

"Moon River," Radio WLW

M-Pe

Polifrone, Jon J. (and related items)

Price, Francis (Mrs. Ralph)

Publishers

Rankin, Alan C.

Reed, John Thomas

Robinson, Oliver William (1943, 1966)

" " " (1967)

" " " (1968-1969)

" " " (1970-1971)

" " " (1972-1973)

S

Sarton, May

"Ten Representative Americans" Survey

Tirey, Ralph N.

T-Z

University of Kentucky (repository letters)

Miscellaneous

* Correspondence Packet (sealed until 1990)

POETRY

Early Poems: Bound Copy

: Unpublished-- Bound

: Unpublished-- Unbound

: Early Acceptances

Collections: Wind Across the Night (1938)

: Music in the Wind (1941)

: Spring is a Blue Kite (1946)

: Reaching for the Spring (1958)

: "Selected Poems" (Quaderni di Poesia (1961)

: "Shadows" (Quaderni di Poesia (1965)

: Petals from a Plum Tree (1967)

Individual Poems: Index, Alphabetical by Title

: Index, Numerical by Acceptance

: Index, Poems Sold 1936-1952

: Holograph Copies

: No. 1-65

: No. 66-125

: No. 126-190

: No. 191-250

: No. 251-310

: No. 311-375

Box 2

Individual Poems: No. 376-430

- : No. 431-492 and 2 poems
- : Titles "A"
- : Titles "B"
- : Titles "C"
- : Titles "D"
- : Titles "E" and "F"
- : Titles "G," "H," and "I"
- : Titles "J" and "L"
- : Titles "M," "N," and "O"

Individual Poems: Titles "P"

- : Titles "R"
- : Titles "S"
- : Titles "T"
- : Titles "U" and "W"
- : Notebook compiled by number

Journals: Poet (January 1969-February 1972)

- : Poet (May 1972-June 1973)
- : Premier Poets (1969-1970, 1971-1972)
- : Quaderni di Poesia (formerly Accademia Internazionale "Leonardo da Vinci" (1963)
- : Quaderni di Poesia (1965-1967)
- : Quaderni di Poesia (1968-1969)
- : Quaderni di Poesia (1971-1972)
- : Quaderni di Poesia (undated)
- : Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous: Worksheets and Revisions

- : Clipped Poems and Tear Sheets
- : Translation into French (and correspondence)
- : Books-- Krishna Srinivas's Great American World Poets

LIBRETTOS

"The Dispossessed" ["Malinda"]- October 17, 1966

- October 28, 1966
- 1967
- May 2, 1967
- June 8, 1967
- February 1973
- February 16, 1973
- February 27, 1973
- March and April 1973
- April 6, 1973

- April 13, 1973
- April 24, 1973
- Read to WDC, May 1973

ESSAYS

"Written in the Stars"-- First Draft

- Second Draft
- Sixth Draft
- Early Version
- Later Version
- February 1975
- March 6, 1975
- Miscellaneous

List of Titles by Date and Miscellaneous

Titles "A"

Titles "B" - "F"

Titles "G"

Titles "H"

Box 3

Titles "I"

Titles "J" - "N"

Titles "O"

Titles "P" and "R"

Titles "S" and "T"

Titles "U" - "Z"

FICTION

"Eyes for Mr. Stanley" (1945) and photographs

"Lakemont"-- Unfinished story of life in a school for girls (and critique) (1945-1946)

"Rainbow on the Stair" (1946)

Miscellaneous Short Stories

PLAYS

"There is a Santa Claus!" (1965) and clippings and correspondence

"The Sapphire Pendant: A Christmas Play" (1966)
"Missing at the Creche" (1967) and correspondence
"A Committee Meeting at Martha's" (1969) and correspondence
"A Few Minutes with Jennifer" (1970) and correspondence
"As You Might Like It" (1971) correspondence and clipping
"The Open Door" (1972) and correspondence
"Christmas in Gossip Alley" (1973) and correspondence
"All in a Fog" (1973)
"Mother Goose Impinges on Christmas" (1974)
"Why Didn't I Know This a Long Time Ago?" (1975)

OTHER WRITINGS

Book Reviews (and correspondence)
Bread Loaf School of English (1932)-- Term Paper (and clippings)
Research Notes
Songs
Talks: English Department Coffee Hour
 : Pen and Brush Club
 : Unitarian-Universalist Church
 : Miscellaneous
Miscellaneous

PHOTOGRAPHS

Family
Writer's Conference Winners, Indiana University, 1946 (framed)
DePauw Alumni Citation, 1959 (framed)
Conference Table Scenes
Miscellaneous

AWARDS

DePauw University Alumni Citation (1959)
Poets Corner Award of Honor (1959)
Indiana State University, Professor Emeritus of English (1970)
Indiana State Federation of Poetry Clubs Laureat (1973) and correspondence
Centro Studi e Scambi Internazionali Poet Laureat (1975)
Medals, Miscellaneous
On Unprinted Work
Miscellaneous

AFFILIATIONS

American Academy and Others
Indiana State University: Library Regulations (and correspondence)

: Miscellaneous
National Arts Club, NYC

MORRIS AWARD

1965 and 1966
1967 and 1968
1969 and 1970
1971 and 1972
1973 and 1974
1975 and 1976

WORKS OF OTHERS

Foster, Betty
White, Mary Jane (Mrs. Ray Bigler)-- Original Drawings for McGaughey
Miscellaneous

Mary-Margaret Byerman
Spring 1989