



The Ripest Moments: A Southern Indiana Childhood

Norbert Krapf

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In the 1840s and 1850s, thousands of German families left Europe for a new life in America. Hundreds of these immigrants eventually settled in the Dubois County community of Jasper, Indiana, the county seat. Surrounding the town were dense hardwood forests that provided the raw materials for craftsmen to begin the furniture-making firms for which the area became well known. Two of the German families that put down roots in the Jasper area, the Schmitts and the Krapfs, produced a son who today remembers those days of close ties to family and the land. *The Ripest Moments: A Southern Indiana Childhood* is a memoir by noted Indiana poet and essayist Norbert Krapf of his childhood and growing up in Jasper. In the book Krapf, who was born in 1943 and whose poetry has been nominated for a Pulitzer Prize, recalls his rural, small-town upbringing in the German-Catholic community and unearths the distinctive place and culture in which he lived. As Krapf observes, "Behind this book and my collections of poetry is a conviction that an awareness of individual and collective origins can enlighten, nourish, guide, and sustain us and those who come after us."

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