

The Filson

A Publication of The Filson Historical Society, Kentucky's Oldest and Largest Independent Historical Society



Recent
Acquisitions
1

Browsing in
our Archives
2

Expansion
Campaign
6

House
Tour
10

Past Perfect
Online
12

The Denhart
Tragedy
13

Filsonians
List
16

FROM THE CHAIR

Construction on the new Owsley Brown II History Center and the renovations to the Ferguson Mansion and the Carriage House continue to move forward. We are pleased that we are on schedule and on budget. On Thursday, May 7, 2015 we held our "Topping Out" ceremony which included "hard hat" tours of the site. Helping us celebrate the raising and setting of the final steel beam were Christy Brown, Congressman John Yarmuth, Mayor Greg Fischer, and Attorney General Jack Conway. It was a beautiful, warm spring day and we so appreciated the attendance of so many of our donors, members and neighbors. Christy Brown also proudly announced the naming of the Dan and Frances Street Lecture Hall, named in memory and honor of board member Bill Street's parents. We have begun planning for our grand opening in the spring of 2016, about which you will be hearing more shortly. We still need to raise approximately \$1 million to reach our goal of \$11.7 million.

On Monday, May 18, 2015 Aaron David Miller was our guest speaker for the Gertrude Brown Lecture Series, now in its 22nd year. We sincerely appreciate the generosity of Dace Brown Stubbs and George Garvin Brown IV for their generous sponsorship of the series. A terrific crowd of almost 500 attended his presentation at The Temple about the presidency which is examined in his recent book, *The End of Greatness*. His topic was fascinating and we have received many compliments. Our appreciation goes to Dr. Mark Wetherington, Director, Judy Miller, Deputy Director and the staff for organizing this outstanding event.

As always, you have our gratitude for your support as we pursue our mission "to collect, preserve and tell the significant stories of Kentucky and Ohio Valley history and culture."



Carl M. Thomas
Chairman of the Board

FROM THE DIRECTOR

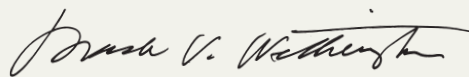
Summer is here and it promises to be an exciting one because of the continued work on our Old Louisville campus. Almost daily, work on the Owsley Brown II History Center brings it nearer to its full size. If you have not had a chance to drive by lately, you're in for a surprise. Work has started in the Carriage House and in the Ferguson mansion as well.

Though all the change, we are committed to serving our members and the public despite the challenges imposed by construction. First, our research collection remains open. The manuscript collection continues to see steady use by general researchers and fellows on the third floor. Because demolition has started on the second floor of the Ferguson Mansion, access to the print collections and genealogy files has moved to the first floor, where many other resources remain available. It is always a good idea to call ahead or check out our website for the latest information on access to research collections before visiting.

Our summer programs have moved to Oxmoor due to construction. During the first quarter of 2015 we held eighteen programs at Oxmoor; the parking is free and the gardens are beautiful.

We are in the final stretch of fundraising. We need \$1 million to reach our \$11.7 million goal. We need everyone's help. How much you give is not as important as your participation at some level. Please visit our website, www.filsonhistorical.org, or call our Development Department at (502) 635-5083 and join all of those who have made this exciting project possible.

Thank you!



Mark V. Wetherington, Ph.D.
Director

Cover Photo:

Onlookers watch as the steel beam is placed during The Filson's recent Topping-Out Ceremony on May 7. The beam was signed by those who attended the event, including board members, Filson staff, and members of the community.

BOARD MEMBERS

Carl M. Thomas
Chairman of the Board

J. McCauley Brown
President

A. Stewart Lussky
Vice President

W. Wayne Hancock
Secretary

J. Walker Stites III
Treasurer

Anne Arensberg
David L. Armstrong
William C. Ballard, Jr.
Phillip Bond
Kenneth H. Clay
Marshall B. Farrer
Laman A. Gray, Jr.
Robert E. Kulp, Jr.
Patrick R. Northam
Anne Brewer Ogden
H. Powell Starks
John P. Stern
William M. Street
Orme Wilson III

FILSON STAFF

P. Richard Anderson, Jr.
Kathryn Bratcher
Sasha Caufield
Jennifer Cole
Sarah Strapp Dennison
Jamie Evans
Kevin Griffanti
James J. Holmberg
Laura Kerr
Jana Meyer
Judy Lawrence Miller
James Prichard
Johna Picco
Heather Potter
Aaron Rosenblum
Jordan Sangmeister
Scott Scarboro
Mark V. Wetherington
Laura Wheaton
LeeAnn Whites

The Filson

is published quarterly by
The Filson Historical Society
1310 South Third Street
Louisville, KY 40208
We welcome your feedback
and story ideas.
Phone: 502-635-5083
Fax: 502-635-5086
www.filsonhistorical.org
filson@filsonhistorical.org

OUR MISSION:

To collect, preserve, and
tell the significant stories
of Kentucky and Ohio
Valley history and culture.

Recent Acquisitions



The Filson maintains an excellent collection of medically related manuscripts and printed material. It also has photographs, prints, and a few artifacts related to the history of medicine in Kentucky and the Ohio Valley. One area in which we are lacking is that of paintings. Historical portraiture of physicians, medical facilities, and related people and places are not well represented in the collection. That's why the donation by W. Winston Cochran IV is so welcome. Mr. Cochran, from the Cincinnati area, recently donated the portraits of his ancestors, Dr. and Mrs. William Cochran. [At some point an e was added to the end of the name.] Both were natives of Virginia and moved to Kentucky in the early 19th century. By the early 1830s the Cochrans had settled in Louisville where they resided until Mildred's death in 1843 and his death in 1853. The portraits are thought to have been painted from life, giving them a circa date of 1840. The artist who painted the couple is a mystery. Perhaps one day an attribution will be made. Interestingly, one of the few other medically related paintings already in the collection is a fine portrait of the Cochrans' son Dr. Patrick H. Cochran by Charles Bond dated 1860.

Historically conscientious and generous donors such as Winston Cochran keep The Filson's collections growing. We look forward to continuing to "grow" our portrait and other area collections through like-minded donors.



Top

Winston Cochran with the portraits of his ancestors Dr. William and Mildred Cochran

Bottom Left

Dr. William Cochran (1779-1853), artist unknown, ca. 1840

Bottom Right

Mildred Meriwether Syme Cochran (1782-1843), artist unknown, ca. 1840

Courting Miss Nall

BY JANA MEYER | ASSOCIATE CURATOR OF SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

To paraphrase Jane Austen: it is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single woman in the late 19th century must be in want of a husband. A young woman in her early twenties, Blanche Nall was of the “marrying age.” The young men of the town were certainly aware of her eligibility.

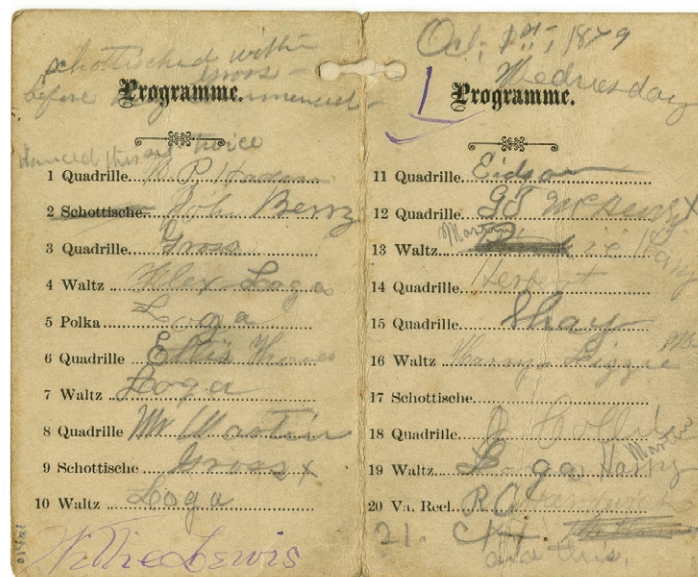
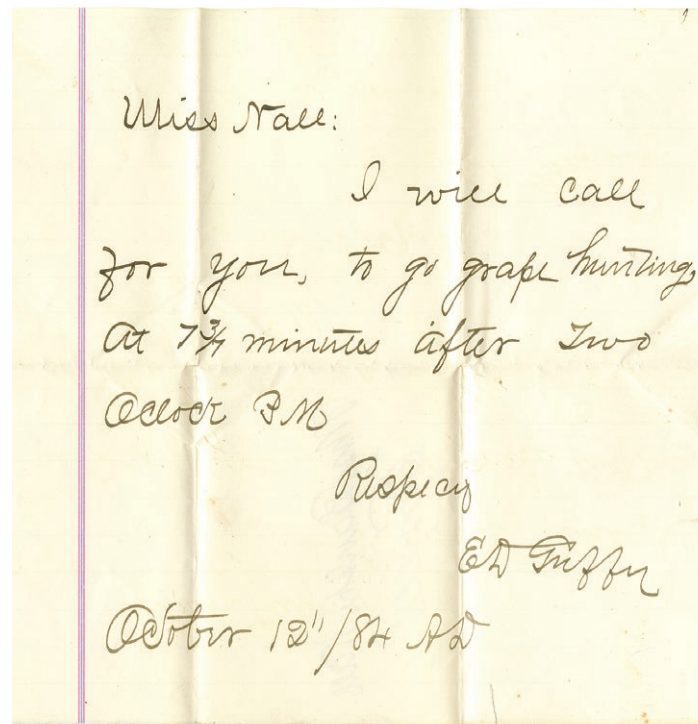
It was the early 1880s and Blanche was living in Hartford, the principal town of Ohio County, Kentucky. The town had been named for a deer crossing along the banks of the nearby Rough River – literally, a “hart ford.” In earlier years, steamboats had traveled up and down the waters. With its location along the river, Hartford had been a center of trade, shipping tobacco, timber, and agricultural products from the surrounding farmlands. By the 1880s, the river traffic had declined, supplanted by the railroads which had come to the county in the previous decade.

There were about 3,000 people living in Hartford in 1880. In the fall of that year, a few more may have trickled in to attend Hartford College, a school for young men and women, which had just opened its doors. It was a small town and Blanche was one of the young women at its social center.

She was the eldest of four girls. Her mother had passed away recently; the pain was still fresh. Two of her sisters, Jessie and Margaret, were away from home. Jessie was living with family in Louisville, completing her schooling. Margaret was away as well, perhaps studying music; she would become an accomplished pianist. Blanche remained in Hartford, looking after her ailing grandmother and youngest sister Mary, or as she was fondly referred to, “Poppie.” Blanche especially missed Jessie; they wrote to each other often.

But Blanche’s correspondence consisted of more than just letters from her absent sister. Over the course of just a few years, she would amass an enviable collection of love letters and invitations from her numerous admirers.

Letters from Ned, who had traveled west to work in Missouri and Kansas, contain poetic declarations of his undying affection. To a young man far from home, Blanche was a connection to the familiar – a link to the life he had left behind. He wrote, with Victorian sentimentality, “To think of life without you is to think of a dreary sadness without aim or purpose.” Although Blanche had rejected his attentions before, Ned maintained hope: “I have had the idea that a woman’s no meant yes.” Despite his persistence, Blanche must have eventually convinced him that she really did mean “no.” By 1883, their



Independence, Mo _____ 188

that which rains my ambition and
inspires my heart-with courage
your love I sometimes think that
when you refused me you only thought
my love a mere boyish fancy
But believe me Blanch I love you
truly and with all the devotion of
which my Soul is capable. Reflect and
see if you cant grant me your love
in return for the sincere devotion I feel
for you. To think of life without you
is to think of a many sadness
without aim or purpose
awaiting your earliest convictions
I remain

Yours affectionately
Fred

(Excuse Lagunas Pen & Bad Ink)

I am up to his office to get away from
the noise & confusion below in the store
Fred

correspondence had subsided. Ned met and married another woman.

Not all of Blanche's relationships were so melodramatic. Another beau, Cicero Truman Sutton, sent notes which were characterized by their light-heartedness. In one note, Cicero wrote "the spirits move me to call on you" - referring to the current popularity of Spiritualism and communing with the dead through séances. He added, "this spirit business is a huge joke." The two exchanged books and poetry. Edgar Allen Poe was a favorite. On one occasion, Cicero provided Blanche with some "Sunday reading" to keep her entertained during church. He signed this note as "your brother heathen."

Ned and Cicero were only two of many. The others came and went in a dizzying succession. E. D. Guffy, J. Roach, McHenry Phrads, Jake Smalls. They called on her at home. They went on carriage rides. They took her dancing at the Hartford House. E. D. Guffy asked her to go grape hunting. But none of them married her.

What did Blanche think of all the attention? She enjoyed it, certainly. A love letter from a young man she barely knew merited laughter. "I got the funniest love letter you ever saw from one of Mrs. Ambrose's cousins...I was in there and played cards with them twice, I believe, but I did not know the young fellow was taking any particular notice of me. But forth with here was the most laughably earnest letter." Writing to her sister in the fall of 1882, she boasted of the lovely time she had at the fair. "I went along in that old dark brown dress with my hair not combed, no gloves or anything, and had the gayest time of anybody there and more beaux than any of the other girls, though they had just come from the Exposition with nice new clothes." Despite the many letters and notes she received, there is no indication that she was ever very serious about any of the young men who came to call on her.

Perhaps Blanche had not met the right young man yet. Or maybe she was simply too busy to be bothered with settling down into married life. Like young people of this day, Blanche spent much of her time engaged in activities with her friends. She often wrote to Jessie about her social engagements, including details about activities such ice skating, oyster suppers, and candy pullings. She loved to dance. Her beaux often escorted her to "hops" at the Hartford House. Entertainment was paramount. Blanche always mentioned when a traveling band or circus came to town.

However, Blanche was more than just a social butterfly.

HARTFORD

Amateur Theatrical

PROGRAMME FIRST NIGHT.

Tableau, - Look Here, Young Man

The Comedietta, in One Act, entitled

TO OBLIGE BENSON

Mr. Benson.....	Calvin Keown
Mrs. Benson.....	Maggie King
Mr. Trotter Southdown.....	J. T. Iglehart
Mr. John Meredith.....	Wm. Jones
Mrs. Trotter Southdown.....	Mary Pendleton

—MUSIC—

Drama,

Bolts and Bars!

Mr. Saveall.....	H. L. Jarbue
Mr. Cautious.....	C. Hardwick
Julia Saveall.....	Blanche Nall
Letty, (her Maid).....	Maggie King
Captain Moore.....	J. T. Iglehart
Mr. Piousgood, (a Minister).....	E. P. Barnett

—MUSIC—

To conclude with the roaring Farce, in One Act

WANTED!--1,000 SPIRITED YOUNG MILLINERS

Joe Baggs, (Clerk).....	Calvin Keown
Tom Tipton, (a Medical Student at Guy's).....	Wm. Wittinghill
Mr. Singleton, (a Solicitor).....	Fred Cooper
Angelica Todd, (a Milliner's Apprentice).....	Loga Walker
Salina Smith.....	} Young Milliners. {
Sophy Stokes.....	
Charlotte Simpson.....	
Caroline Jones.....	
Bella Brown.....	
Jemima Jukes.....	
Blanche Nall
Maggie King
Dora Gibson
Lilla Baird
Lula Walker
Laura Midkiff

Admission	25 Cents
Children,	10 Cents

Herald Print.

Thursday Night at 7
at Court House
Hartford

14x1

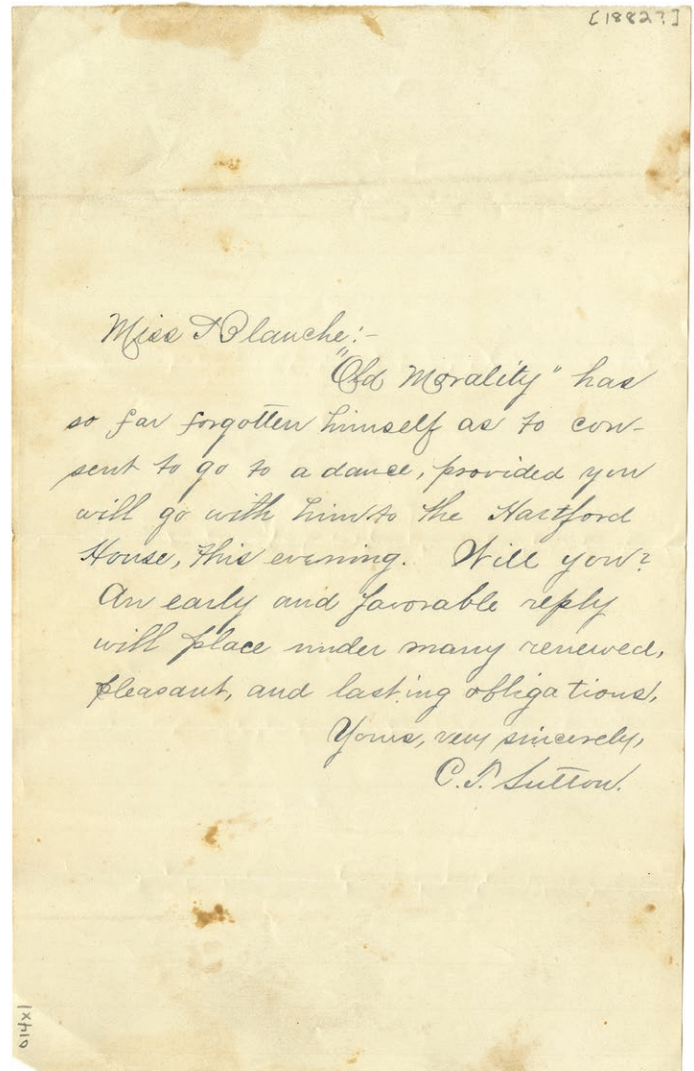
In Blanche's family education was valued, and not just for the boys. Two of her aunts had attended Shelbyville Female College, and her mother had applied for a teaching position in Hartford shortly before her death. Like the other women in the family, Blanche was also well-educated. A note from Blanche's father indicates that she was sent away to school as a teenager. In 1883, Blanche considered a teaching position in the Primary Department of South Carrollton, Kentucky. Although she declined the opportunity, her interest remained; in the summer of 1885 she was tutoring two girls in arithmetic.

Of course, there was also the theater. It is unsurprising, perhaps, that such an outgoing and sociable young woman would have a talent for the performing arts. Blanche was actively engaged in Hartford's theater community. In 1884, Blanche wrote to her sister Jessie about organizing plays for the Christmas season. Perhaps "Running for Congress" would be a good choice, she mused. Jessie wrote back, suggesting "The Jerseyman" - a play she had recently seen performed at the Masonic Temple in Louisville. In the end, neither play was selected. Instead the troupe performed two dramas, "Esmeralda" and "Down by the Sea", and the farce "Lend me Five Shillings." Shortly before opening night, Blanche wrote to Jessie, thanking her for a dress she had sewed (most likely in preparation for the performance). The plays were coming together; she was rehearsing every night. In January, she happily reported that the Christmas plays had been a success.

Church was the one thing that did not hold fascination for Blanche. One may have already suspected this to be the case, given that Cicero had supplied her with entertaining material to read during Sunday service. Revivals, especially, had little appeal for Blanche. In 1884, she declared that the winter revivals in Hartford had "raked in nearly every girl in town but myself." On another occasion, she complained that the preachers at the spring meetings were keeping the people "nearly all the time stirred up."

Blanche may have made her peace with religion before the end. For her, the end would come swiftly and tragically all too soon. On July 28, 1885, Blanche Nall died unmarried after a "brief but painful illness." She was only about twenty-four years old. Among her final words, she is said to have remarked that she was "now beyond the skill of man, and trusted One who alone had the power to save." The writer of her obituary went on to muse: "When we looked upon this dreamless sleeper, so pure and beautiful in death, we were made to realize that the soul is the jewel of all things earthly."

Blanche Nall's correspondence comprises a portion of the Nall family papers. The collection is available for research at The Filson Historical Society.



Page 2 - Top

E. D. Guffy proposes a very exact time for their grape hunting excursion.

Page 2 - Bottom

Blanche's full dance card.

Page 3

Ned proclaims his undying affection, 10 July 1881.

Page 4

A theatrical program, listing Blanche's roles in two performances.

Page 5

Cicero sets aside his moral compunctions and asks Blanche to accompany him to a dance.

CAMPUS EXPANSION PROJECT TOPPED OUT AND MOVING FORWARD

Our Cornerstone Campaign and Campus Expansion Project continue to make great strides. The Campaign has reached the \$10.7 million mark, against our total goal and Project budget of \$11.7 million. Project construction is progressing rapidly, especially on the new Owsley Brown II History Center and the Ferguson Mansion's Carriage House. Renovation work on the Mansion itself has also begun. We invite you to visit, just please "pardon our dust", while this exciting work continues.



On May 7, 2015, we held a Topping-Out Celebration to mark the Project's progress by the installation of the highest and final beam of the Owsley Brown II History Center's structure. It was a special time for The Filson and our constituents, with all supporters participating in this milestone event by taking hard-hat tours of the construction, signing the final beam, and cheering as it was hoisted and placed on top of the new building. At the event, we recognized community leaders and longtime Filson supporters Bill and Lindy Street for their generous contribution to the Campaign by naming the new History Center's event hall the Dan and Frances Street Hall, in honor of Bill's parents. The next major Project celebration will be its grand opening in spring 2016.

The Project is achieving one of its goals: the broadening of public awareness and interest in The Filson, and our base of support, as we enter the "New Filson" era. Commitments to the Project have come from over 300 donors, many of them first-time Filson contributors, with pledges ranging from the \$50 level to well over \$1 million. In 2014, we saw record gains in membership and program audience – 320 new members, more than 6,500 attendees at our 100 annual events, more visitors to our website, and well over 3,000 followers on social media.



An exciting way to get involved in our Expansion Project is by purchasing a personalized, engraved wooden wall panel that will be installed in the Dan and Frances Street Hall. The panels will be engraved with the name(s) of your choice and are available in three different sizes at three one-time donation amounts. There are a limited number of these panels, with over 100 of them already reserved, so please order yours today.

You can order your panel by completing the form on the attached postage-paid envelope and mailing it with your payment to The Filson. You may also order panels online at filsonhistorical.org/give-join/campus-expansion/ or by calling Laura Kerr at (502) 635-5083. Thank you for your support!



Mayor Greg Fischer



Orme Wilson, Cornerstone Campaign Chair



Laura Wheaton, Reference Librarian, and Cassie Bratcher, Technical Services Librarian



William M. Street, Board Member



Virginia Lee signing the beam.

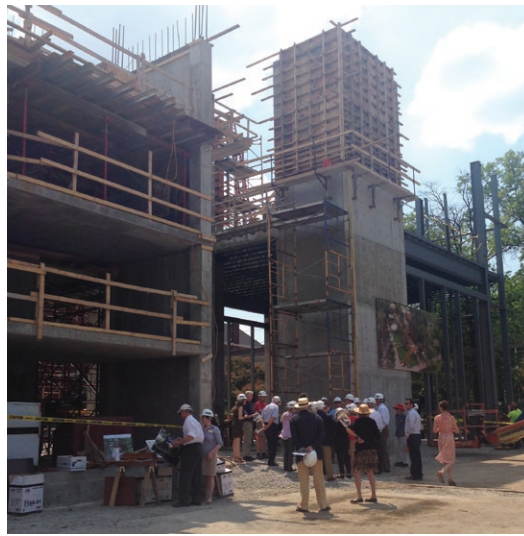


Installing the "Topping-Out" Beam

THE FILSON THANKS OUR CORNERSTONE CAMPAIGN DONORS:

Mr. and Mrs. Daniel L. Abbott
 Vincent Akers and Lisa Green
 Mrs. William O. Alden, Jr.
 Rick and Marilyn Anderson
 Anonymous Foundation (3)
 Anonymous Donor in memory
 of Henry Dumesnil Ormsby III
 Anne and Charles Arensberg
 Hon. David L. Armstrong and
 Carol Armstrong
 Thompson L. Armstrong & Sara
 Ann C. Armstrong
 Bradley Asher
 Allen Atherton
 Nancy C. Baird
 Nick Baker
 Stoll-Ballard Fund
 Bill and Julie Ballard
 Marsha E. Barnes
 William E. Barth Foundation
 Mr. and Mrs. Gary L. Bates
 Paul Berrier
 Turney and Kendra Berry
 Mr. and Mrs. George Venable Beury
 Mary Rose Beyerle
 Bingham Greenebaum Doll, LLP
 in honor of Rick Anderson
 Mrs. Barry Bingham, Jr.
 Terry Black
 Neville Blakemore, Jr. and Gray Henry
 Dr. Arthur Thomas Blanford, M.D.
 Harold Blevins
 John Boh
 Ina Brown Bond
 Theresa and John T. Bondurant
 Edward and Nina Bonnie
 Jack and Brenda Brammer
 Joan Brennan
 Betty Ann Broecker
 George and Kathy Brooks
 Betty Dabney Brown
 Mr. and Mrs. Campbell Brown
 David T. Brown
 G. Garvin Brown IV
 Leo J. Brown, Jr.
 Marion Brown
 Mr. Martin Shallenberger
 Brown, Jr.
 Eileen and Mac Brown
 Meredith M. Brown
 Mr. and Mrs. Robinson S.
 Brown III
 The Owsley Brown II Family
 Brown-Forman Corporation
 Ben L. Brumleve
 Ray Brundige
 William F. Burbank
 The C. E. and S. Foundation
 David and Jamie Calzi
 Sally Van Winkle Campbell
 Mr. and Mrs. R. Lawrence Caperton
 Laurence Carr
 Linda W. Carter
 Katherine Nash Cary, Margaret
 Nash, Louise Nash Farnsley
 Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Lin Caufield II
 D. D. Cayce III
 L. Stanley Chauvin
 Kathryn Christopherson
 Mr. and Mrs. William N. Clark
 Kenneth H. Clay
 Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. C. Clay
 Clifton Foundation
 William Coke
 Lisa Collins
 William Copher
 Earl Cox
 The Cralle Foundation
 Jerome A. Crimmins
 Virginia Croket
 John Crum
 Mr. Lawrence M. Crutcher
 Christopher Davenport
 Mark and Kate Davis
 Sarah Strapp Dennison
 Priscilla Diamond
 John Dietrich
 Alice Dodd
 Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Dunn
 Michael Dunn
 John G. Eifler
 Linda and William Ellison
 John and Connie Emmerich
 Ernst & Young, LLP
 David and Lucille Fannin
 Fifth Third Bank
 Mr. George E. Fischer
 Robin A. Fisher
 Ben Franklin
 Frazier-Joy Family Foundation
 Paul H. Fridell
 Mrs. Rudy H. Fritsch
 Speed S. Fry
 Vincenzo Gabriele
 Louise Farnsley Gardner
 Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Gaston, Jr.
 Holly and Joe Gathright
 Stephen C. Gault
 Gary Gerlach
 The Gheens Foundation
 The Gilbert Foundation
 Don J. Glaser
 William H. Glys
 Norbert E. Gnadinger, Sr.
 Mrs. Mary Louise Gorman
 James E. Graves
 Bonnie Burks Gray
 Susan and David Gray
 Downey M. Gray
 Terry and Edwin Grosel
 Emily M. Durrett and
 Leonard Gross
 Kim Gruenwald
 Barbara and Bruce Haldeman
 Walter N. Haldeman
 Joan Urband Hale
 Kathy Hall
 Libby and Wayne Hancock
 Dr. Mathew J. Hanka
 The Wood & Marie Hannah
 Foundation
 Hardscuffle, Inc.
 Barbara B. Hardy
 Paul and Shirley Harmon
 Colonel Douglas A. Harper
 Michael N. Harreld
 Robert and Martha Haynes
 Charles and Carol Hebel
 Joseph B. Helm
 Barbara Ormsby Henlein
 H. Edgar Hill
 J.J.B. Hilliard, W.L. Lyons, LLC
 Marc Hilton
 Theresa Hinton
 The Honorable Order of
 Kentucky Colonels
 Robert B. Horner
 Thomas Howard
 Bixler W. Howland
 Gerald G. Hubbs
 Dave L. Huber and Kelley Abell
 Julie and Bryan Hudson
 Humana Foundation
 Richard Iler
 James Graham Brown
 Foundation
 Lawrence and Sherry Jelsma
 Ellen Pearson Johnson
 Thomas Johnson
 Guy Jolly
 David A. and Betty A. Jones
 Thomas H. Jordan
 Mrs. Barbara Brown Kannapell
 Paul and Sarah Keith
 David and Betty Keller
 Laura Lee Kerr
 Linda and John Kiesel
 Mary Jean Kinsman
 Steven L. Klapheke
 John E. Kleber
 Philip Klein, Jr.
 Robert E. Kulp, Jr. in memory
 of Margaret Barr Kulp
 Stephen C. Lannert
 Charles and Sally Lehman
 Mr. and Mrs. Stephen F.
 LeLaurin
 Mr. James B. Lentz
 Mr. and Mrs. Hunter G. Louis
 Lois S. Louis and David B.
 Ratterman
 Gary and Jeanne Luhr
 Abby and Fairleigh Lussky
 Ms. Stewart Lussky and Mr.
 Robert Jones
 Stanley K. MacDonald
 Skipper and Hana Martin
 Stu and Joan McCombs
 Bob Uhl and Arlette McDaniel
 Mary T. Means
 Dr. and Mrs. R. Wathen Medley, Jr.
 Judge and Mrs. Henry Meigs II
 Berl Meyer
 A. Stevens Miles, Jr.
 Eleanor Bingham Miller
 Representative Jerry T. and
 Laura J. Miller
 Jerry T. and Laura J. Miller
 Judy Lawrence Miller
 The Mills Foundation
 The Monday Afternoon Club
 Raymond Montgomery, Jr.
 Kenneth W. Moore
 Morel Construction Co., LLC
 Robyn S. and Stephen P. Morris
 Clay L. Morton
 Munson Business Interiors, Inc.
 Duane and Anne Murner
 Austin and Jane Musselman
 Judge and Mrs. John David Myles
 David H. Neustadt, M.D.
 Eleanor and Phillip Newman
 Mr. Nicholas X. Simon
 Mr. W. Barrett Nichols
 Vivian Ruth Sawyer and
 Thomas T. Noland, Jr.
 Patrick and Margie Northam
 Judge Boyce F. Martin, Jr. and
 Anne Brewer Ogden
 Paul Ogle Foundation
 Paul Olliges
 Ouerbacker Court Arts and
 Crafts Neighborhood Association
 Douglas Owen
 Mary Pace
 D. N. Palmer
 Paradis Foundation
 Bo and Penny Pearson
 David and Penny Pearson
 Hensley and James Peterson
 Joan Thomason Pike
 Charles Pittenger
 Loren H. Plunkett
 The PNC Foundation
 John W. and Eugenia K. Potter
 Publishers Printing Company
 Mr. George W. Rapp, Jr.
 David and Pam Ray
 Peggy Ray
 Joseph Reinhart
 Lynn Scholl Renau
 Barton H. Reutlinger
 Elizabeth Reutlinger
 Robert W. Rounsavall, Jr.
 Family Foundation
 Jerry and Linda Robertson
 William T. Robinson III
 Mr. and Mrs. Fon Rogers II
 John Rose
 Jacqueline and Theodore S. Rosky
 Robert Rowan
 Mary S. Sachs
 Betty H. Schwartzel
 Second Street Neighborhood
 Association
 Lewis P. Seiler, Jr.
 Louise B. Seiler
 Vicki Shain-Eckley
 Alfred R. Shands
 Sarah and Robert Shaw

Darrell and Nancy Shelton
 Robert Slaton
 Don Smith
 Diane and Walter Snowa
 The Snowy Owl Foundation
 The South Fourth Street Association
 John S. Speed
 George E. Stablein
 Pamela Steffen
 The Steinbock Family
 Sharon and John Stern
 The James W. Stites Jr. Family
 J. Walker Stites III
 Stock Yards Bank & Trust Company
 Elizabeth S. Stokes
 Richard and Mary Ellen Stottmann
 Lee and John Stough
 Bill and Lindy Street
 Frank Strickler
 Dace and King Stubbs, Marshall
 and Heather Farrer, and Dace Maki
 Clay W. Stuckey, D.D.S.
 David Stuedle
 Patrick Sumner
 Robert and Susan Schenkel
 Avanel Sutherland
 Mr. and Mrs. R. E. Sutherland
 Kate and Harry Talamini
 Peter and Margaret Tanguay
 Amy and Lawrence Tannheimer
 The Third Street Neighborhood
 Association
 Carl M. and Ellen B. Thomas
 Tom and Sarah Thornton
 Ellen Miller Timmons
 Rose Mary Rummel Toebbe
 Brenda and Waverley Townes
 Martha S. Trotter
 Samuel G. Tyler
 Jane Norton Tyrrell
 V.V. Cooke Foundation
 Thorne and Sally Vail
 Patricia and Michael Vairin
 Edith Van Slyck
 Brig. Gen. R. R. Van Stockum
 Mr. and Mrs. James R. Voyles
 Dr. Will W. Ward, Jr.
 Gayle and Herb Warren
 Porter Watkins and George Bailey
 Mrs. James S. Welch
 The Wells Foundation
 Glenna Pfeiffer and Mark Wetherington
 Carol Proctor Whyne
 Robert and Suzanne Whyne
 The William M. Wood Foundation
 Keith L. Williams
 Jean Wilson
 Mary and Orme Wilson
 Dr. Charles and Sharon Wolter
 David and Susan Wood
 Frank Wood
 Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Woodcock
 Bruce and Pat Zimmerman
 Herbert M. Zimmerman
 Stephen R. Zollner



Orme Wilson welcomes Congressman John Yarmuth.



Sarah Strapp Dennison, Membership Coordinator, and Sasha Caufield, Development Coordinator



Holly Gathright signing the beam.



David and Penny Pearson signing the beam.



James Joy and J. McCauley Brown



Laura Lee Kerr, Development Coordinator



YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE

◆ 22ND ANNUAL HOUSE TOUR ◆

Distinctive Dwellings

— SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2015 —

Filson members and their guests are invited to The Filson's Annual House Tour, celebrating the distinctive beauty of Louisville homes. At the end of the tour, please join us for a cocktail reception at the home of Maxine Bird.



Distinctive Dwellings

SUNDAY, SEPT. 27, 2015
TICKETS \$150 EA.

To register for this event: visit filsonhistorical.org/events; call The Filson at (502) 635-5083; or clip this registration form and return it to:

The Filson Historical Society
Attn: Jordan Sangmeister
1310 S. Third St.
Louisville, KY 40208

Please send ____ ticket(s) for The Filson's 22nd Annual House Tour

Member Name(s) _____

Guest Name(s) _____

Please mail tickets and tour notes to:

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Method of Payment (Please make all checks payable to The Filson Historical Society):

Check ____ Visa ____ MC ____ Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Name on Card _____ Signature _____



Portion of Filson Photograph Collection now Available Online!

Over the last year and a half, Special Collections staff have worked to clean up records in our PastPerfect database, which is used to describe both our audiovisual and museum collections. This clean up process has focused on our photograph collections, specifically to make sure data was in appropriate fields, to conduct additional research, and to update records with high-quality images.

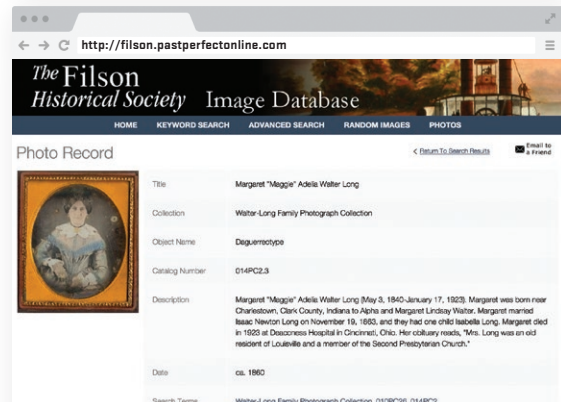
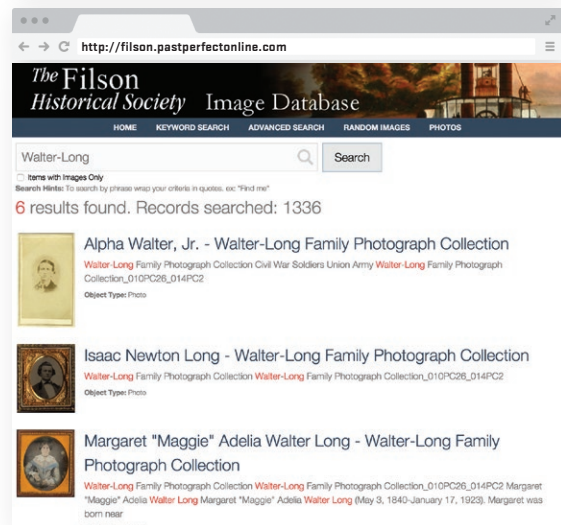
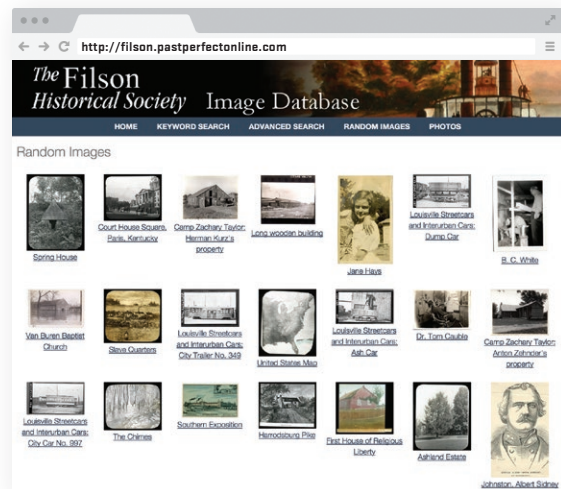
In Spring 2015, The Filson implemented PastPerfect Online, which allows researchers to search and view a portion of this visual materials database online for the first time.

PastPerfect Online joins the virtual card catalog, finding aids, online MARC catalog, and other tools that make descriptions of our collections available through remote access. New collections will continually be added to these online resources.

Notable photograph collections now available online include: Camp Zachary Taylor (CZT) Photograph Album, ca. 1917, which depicts images of the government-purchased land used to develop CZT; Ryan-Hampton Tobacco Company Photograph Collection, ca. 1914, a small collection showcasing Ryan-Hampton Tobacco Company staff working in the tobacco warehouses; and the Novia James White Photograph Collection, ca. 1863-1960, a collection relating mostly to White's service in the Air Force during World War II.

Be sure to get online and check out our collections! The Filson's PastPerfect Online holdings can be accessed through the "Finding Aids and Research Tools" page at <http://filsonhistorical.org/finding-aids-research-tools> or directly at <http://filson.pastperfectonline.com>. This service is free and is open to the public.

For more information about The Filson's PastPerfect Online materials, please contact Associate Curator Heather Potter at hpotter@filsonhistorical.org.



©2015 The Filson Historical Society, 1210 S. Third Street, Louisville, KY 40203 | T: (502) 635-5093 | F: (502) 635-5098 | E-mail: research@filsonhistorical.org
Please note: The Filson's Online Image Database does not contain every image in the Photograph and Print Collections; records will be updated frequently. If you do not find what you are looking for, please feel free to contact us. Use and/or reproduction of the images shown on this website is prohibited without prior permission from The Filson Historical Society.

A MOONLESS, STARLESS NIGHT: THE DENHARDT- TAYLOR TRAGEDY

JAMES M. PRICHARD, MANUSCRIPT CATALOGER

On the night of November 6, 1936, Coroner Dillard L. Ricketts was summoned by phone to a dark stretch of road in Henry County, Kentucky. Not far from a local farm house he found the body of Mrs. Verna Garr Taylor lying in a ditch beside the highway. She had been shot once through the heart with a .45 caliber pistol. The weapon belonged to Brig. Gen. Henry H. Denhardt who stood nearby with a small group of on-lookers. Denhardt claimed that he had been out for a drive with Mrs. Taylor, his fiancée, when they were forced to pull off of State Route 22 due to car trouble. At some point afterwards, he continued, she slipped his army pistol from the glove box, walked down the road on the pretext of looking for a lost glove and took her own life.

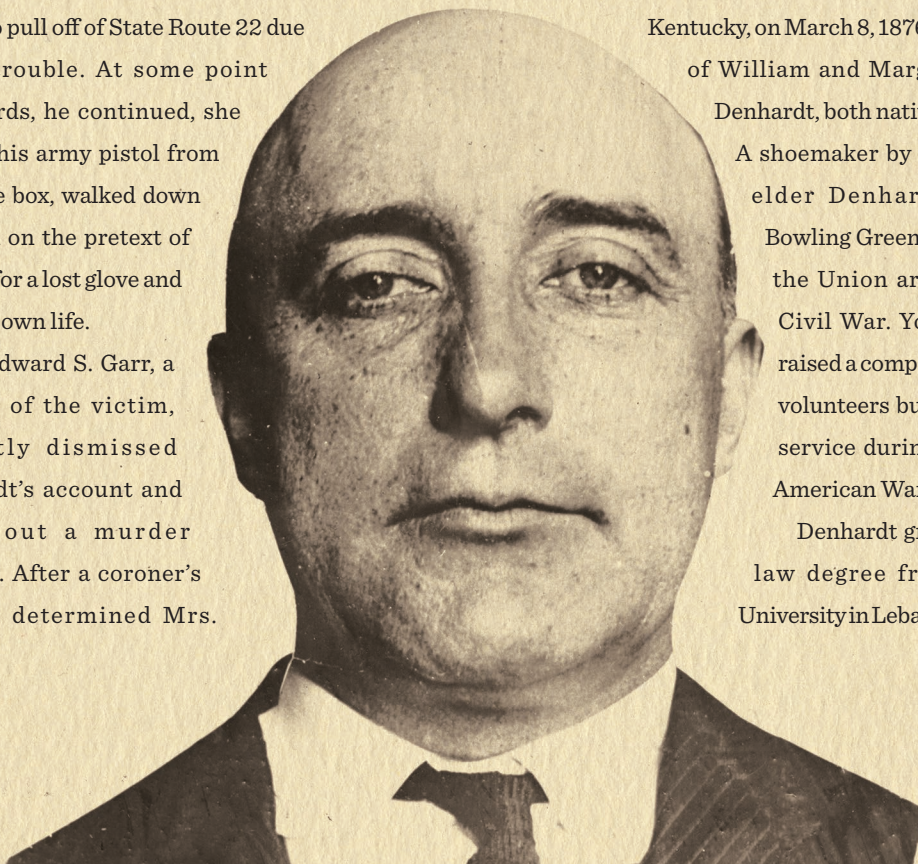
Dr. Edward S. Garr, a brother of the victim, promptly dismissed Denhardt's account and swore out a murder warrant. After a coroner's inquest determined Mrs.

Taylor's death was possibly the result of foul play, Gen. Denhardt was arrested on November 12th. Released on bail, Denhardt was formally charged with murder at a subsequent preliminary hearing and ordered to be tried at the April 1937 term of the Henry County Circuit Court. The stage had been set for one of the most notorious murder trials in Kentucky history.

Prior to his arrest, Henry H. Denhardt had played a colorful and sometimes controversial role in early 20th century Kentucky. Born in Bowling Green, Kentucky, on March 8, 1876, he was the son of William and Margaret (Geyger) Denhardt, both natives of Germany.

A shoemaker by profession, the elder Denhardt settled in Bowling Green after service in the Union army during the Civil War. Young Denhardt raised a company of Kentucky volunteers but saw no active service during the Spanish-American War of 1898.

Denhardt graduated with a law degree from Columbia University in Lebanon, Tennessee,



and began practicing law in Bowling Green in 1899. He afterwards served ten years as city prosecuting attorney and two terms as Warren County judge. With his brother he established a local newspaper, the Bowling Green Times Journal, around 1901.

In addition to his civil activities, Denhardt was promoted from captain to major in the Kentucky State Guard which was re-organized as the Kentucky National Guard in 1912. In this capacity he served with the 3rd Kentucky Infantry in Gen. John J. Pershing's operations against Gen. Francisco "Pancho" Villa along the Mexican Border in 1916. During World War I he first served with the 319th Field Artillery Regiment and earned a commendation for valor during the Saint-Mihiel offensive. He afterwards served with the 139th Field Artillery Regiment and was promoted to lieutenant-colonel.

During the post-war years, the flamboyant officer led the Kentucky National Guard troops ordered to suppress labor unrest in Newport and Harlan County. Promoted to brigadier-general in 1921, the staunch Democrat later served as lieutenant-governor under Governor William J. Fields from 1923 to 1927. He made a bid for governor in 1927 but was defeated in a hotly contested primary. A combative personality, he was shot and gravely wounded by a Republican campaign worker in Bowling Green in 1931. He subsequently served as Kentucky Adjutant General (1931-1935) under Governor Ruby Lafoon.

In 1933 his twenty-eight year marriage to Elizabeth Glaze ended in divorce and he moved to Oldham County.

There he met the beautiful widow, Verna Garr Taylor, in the summer of 1936. Although twenty years her senior, the corpulent, balding suitor asked for her hand and by the autumn of that year the couple was engaged. The hot-tempered, hard drinking old soldier was not seen as a suitable match by Mrs. Taylor's brothers and children. According to Denhardt, the constant emotional turmoil caused by her family's opposition to their marriage finally

led her to take her own life on that dark, fateful night. However, the family was dead certain that she was shot to death after she told the General she decided to break off their engagement. Both sides now looked to the courts to decide where the truth lay.

Among the team of attorneys hired to defend Denhardt was 35-year-old John Marshall Berry of Henry County. The father of Kentucky author and poet Wendell Berry, the young lawyer preserved his case records which were donated to The Filson by his children. His correspondence reveals that Denhardt could be a difficult client. In a

letter to his co-counsel, Rodes Myers, on December 18, 1936, Berry expressed his concern about their client's loud conduct in a Shelbyville restaurant. He reported that Denhardt was drinking and "made a dam (sic) fool of himself." He suggested removing the General from the vicinity before the trial began.

Another co-counsel bluntly advised Berry that he planned to withdraw from the case. In a letter dated December 16, 1936, Beckham Overstreet declared that, "I never was in all my practice for twenty-six years



treated by a client like General Denhardt has treated me.” He complained that he was “continually insulted, assaulted and offended” by him. In a letter dated February 15, 1937, Overstreet informed Denhardt that he had withdrawn from the case and demanded his legal fees. He declared, “No gentleman will stand and take the insults and assaults that I have taken from you and continue as your consul.”

Berry’s correspondence also includes numerous letters and telegrams from a New York detective named L. S. McMahan, probably Louis McMahan a retired New York police sergeant. Berry, in the language of Raymond Chandler, did not completely trust this shadowy shamus who claimed to have located letters from Mrs. Taylor to a friend in which she expressed

thoughts of suicide. The collection also includes exchanges between members of the defense team reveal they requested veteran Louisville detective Col. Jacob H. Haager to investigate McMahan’s background and credentials.

As the case made national headlines, Berry also received letters from old friends who offer congratulations on his new found celebrity. Other correspondents offer their views on the guilt or innocence of Gen. Denhardt. In an undated letter to Berry, the “Countess” Julie LaSalle, a self proclaimed beauty expert, wrote Berry from Los Angeles and expressed her conviction that Denhardt was innocent. She claimed that she met Mrs. Taylor in New York and “she told me of her coming marriage, great happiness and future with him.”

The trial, which convened in the Henry County courthouse in New Castle, ended in a hung jury in April

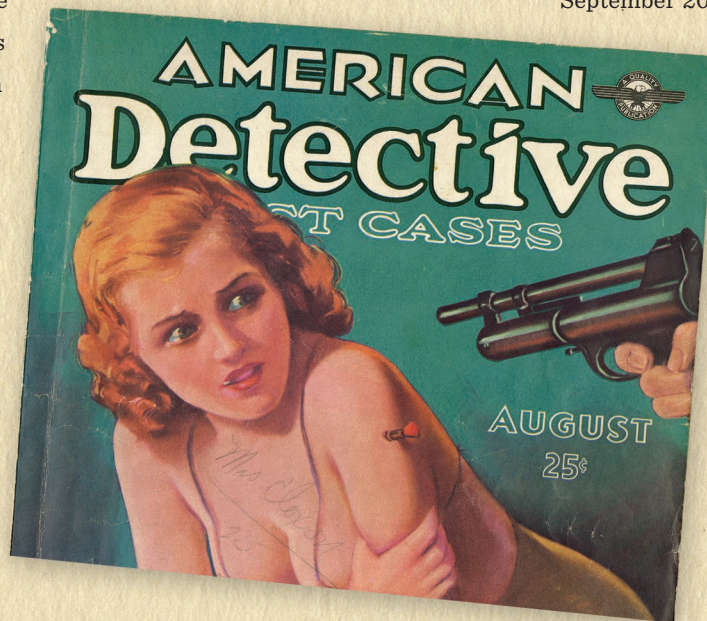
1937. As the prosecuting attorney pushed for a second trial, Denhardt sought a meeting with Berry to settle their dispute over the latter’s legal fees. On June 14, 1937 the General wrote that he preferred to meet Berry outside of the judicial district in which he was tried because he feared for his life. Denhardt’s words foreshadowed the tragedy that followed. On the eve of his second trial he was shot to death on the streets of Shelbyville on

September 20, 1937 by Dr. Edward S.

and Roy Garr, the brothers of his alleged victim. Incredibly both men, who claimed Denhardt appeared to be reaching for a weapon, were subsequently found not guilty of murder and set free.

In a letter to Denhardt’s brother, Jesse, dated May 18, 1938, Berry expressed his conviction that the

General was innocent. To this day the events surrounding the death of Verna Garr Taylor remain shrouded in mystery. The ill-fated lovers took the secret of that dark, tragic night to their graves.



- p.13 **Henry H. Denhardt**
Filson Photograph Collection
- p.14 **Verna Garr Taylor**
(From American Detective Magazine, August 1937)
- p.15 **American Detective Magazine**
One of the many lurid, true-crime tabloids of the era that covered the sensational trial.

The Filsonians

March 15 - May 31, 2015

How can you give a gift that will provide the greatest benefit to you and The Filson Historical Society? Through Planned Giving.

By informing us of your intent to include The Filson Historical Society in your estate, you are helping to ensure The Filson's ability to meet our mission of saving and sharing the significant stories of Kentucky and Ohio Valley history and culture. Your commitment allows us to remain a strong and vital educational resource for our community both today and tomorrow.

Planned gifts create opportunities for both you and The Filson Historical Society. Choosing the right type of commitment for you and your needs is just as important as making the gift. It could be something as simple as naming The Filson as a beneficiary to a more complex trust arrangement. In addition to the tangible benefits of planned giving, you will have the joy of knowing that your commitment helps The Filson continue to be a steward of the past and ensures our future as a resource for Kentucky and the Ohio Valley. To learn more about planned giving options, please contact Rick Anderson at 502-634-7109.

FILSON Membership (\$5,000)

Hudson Holdings, LLC
David A. and Betty Jones

CLARK Membership (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph R. Gathright, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. William M. Street

SHELBY Membership (\$1,000 - \$2,499)

Mr. Irvin Abell, III
Mr. and Mrs. P. Richard Anderson, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Charles S. Arensberg
Hon. and Mrs. David L. Armstrong
Mr. and Mrs. J. McCauley Brown
Mr. and Mrs. S. Gordon Dabney, Sr.
Mr. and Mrs. J. David Grissom
Judge Boyce F. Martin, Jr. & Anne Ogden
Mr. John S. Speed
Ms. Betty Stokes
Dr. and Mrs. King Stubbs
Carl and Ellen Thomas
Mrs. James S. Welch
Dr. Mark V. Wetherington &
Ms. Glenna Pfeiffer

CLAY Membership (\$500 - \$999)

Dr. Nancy D. Baird
Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. C. Clay
Ms. Polly Cochran
Mr. and Mrs. Ian Henderson
Lawrence and Sherry Jelsma
Ms. Jan S. Karzen
Mr. R. Douglas Krawczyk
Dr. and Mrs. Forrest S. Kuhn
Mr. Robert E. Kulp, Jr.
Mr. William Gast Lussky, Jr.
Ms. A. Stewart Lussky and Mr. Bob Jones
Mr. Harry Lee Meyer
Mrs. Robert M. Nash
Mr. John L. Roberts

Mr. and Mrs. K Michael Roberts
Dr. and Mr. George Sonnier
Ms. Elizabeth Todd
Mr. David Waterman

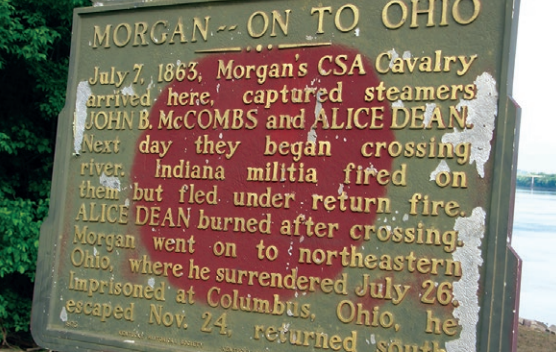
AUDUBON Membership (\$250 - \$499)

Dr. and Mrs. George Venable Beury
Dr. and Mrs. Harold W. Blevins
Mr. Stan Craig
Mr. Stephen A. Dobbins
Mrs. Joyce D. Fischer
Mr. Thomas Bartley Gorin
Mr. John R. Hall
Ms. Theresa Hinton
Owen K. Hitt M.D.
Mr and Mrs. David L. Huber
Mr. Charles Kane
Mr. and Mrs. W. Edwin Lewis
Mrs. Robert H. Means Sr.
Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Owen
Dr. and Mrs. Barton H. Reutlinger
Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Rounsavall III
Mr. Steven Smith
John Clay and Charlotte Stites
Dr. Clay W. Stuckey
Ms. Carolyn N. Sweazy
Dr. and Mrs. B. Preston Thomas
Mr. Hays T. Watkins
Dr. and Mrs. Nathan Zimmerman

BOONE Membership (\$100 - \$249)

Edwin M. Ahrens M.D.
Mr. and Mrs. William Armstrong
Dr. and Mrs. Joe F. Arterberry
Mrs. Elizabeth Babcock
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas C. Ballantine
Bardenwerper Law Firm, PLLC
Dr. and Mrs. C. C. Barr
Mr. and Mrs. Henry R. Bennett
Mr. Paul L. Berrier, Sr.
Ms. Mary Rose Beyerle
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Birk

Mr. Donald M. Blandford
Mr. John Boh
Mr. Richard M. Breen
Mrs. Joan Brennan
Dr. Charles W. Brockwell
Mr. Stephen W. Brown
Mr. Meredith M. Brown
Mr. Ray Brundige
Mr. and Mrs. William and Margie Busch
Mr. Craig Buthod
Mr. William Hoke Camp, Jr.
Ms. Gloria Carl
Mr. and Mrs. L. Stanley Chauvin, Jr.
Nancy W. Church
Mrs. Loretta G. Clark
Col. Doral G. Conner
Mrs. Jill H. Cooper
Mr. James L. Coorssen
Corn Island Archaeology, LLC
Mr. James B. Coursey
Mr. and Mrs. William S. Creason, Sr.
Mr. Jerome A. Crimmins
Mrs. Virginia Croket
Mr. J. Griffin Crump
Mrs. Robert Dangremond
DAR- John Marshall Chapter
Mr. Christopher W. Davenport
William W. and Caroline T. Davis
Mr. Harold Dawson
Mr. Larry C. Deener
Sandra and William Dickinson
Thomas J. and Carolyn Diener
Stephen & Janet Dougherty
Mr. Jim Drewery
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas M Egan
Mr. and Mrs. William L. Ellison, Jr.
Dr. Henry T. Fairleigh
Ms. Melanie Fischer
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence L. Fravert
Mr. and Mrs. G. L. Gaston, Jr.
Mr. James L. Gibson and
Mr. Glen J. Elder
Mr. Scott Gill
Mr. Norbert E. Gnadinger
Mr. Thomas B. Graham
Mr. Downey M. Gray III
Ms. Mary Moss Greenebaum
Mr. and Mrs. William D. Grubbs
Mrs. Sharon K. Hackworth
Mr. and Mrs. John W. Hampton
Jane & Davis Harcourt
Mr. and Mrs. Michael T. Harpring
Lynn and Gwynne Harpring
Dr. and Mrs. William G. Hart
Mr. Bill Haswell, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Eugene W. Haupt
Mr. W. Thomas Hewitt
Mr. and Mrs. Conrad B. Hibbitt
Ms. Anne Stanley Hoffman and
Mr. J. Thomas Tucker
Mr. and Mrs. Wallace R. Horine
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Howard
Dr. Lounette Humphrey
Mr. and Mrs. Gary Inman
Mrs. Christine Johnson
Ms. Alice Carole Johnson
Mr. Charles J. Jones, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. David O. Keller
Mr. Philip A. Kirkland
Mr. and Mrs. David A. Kissling
Mr. Ervin A. Klein, Jr.
Ms. Heidi Koenig
Mr. Douglas Kremer
Mr. and Mrs. Marvin A. Kummer
Terry and Genevieve Lacer
Mr. and Mrs. William L. Landes
Mr. Charles W. Lannan
Dr. and Mrs. A. Gary Lavin
Richard and Connie Lewis
Mr. Steven R. Lindsey
Mr. and Mrs. Donald R. Lurding
Mr. Douglas M. Magee
Mrs. Robert H. Martin
Dr. Nancy C. Martin and Dr. Fred J. Hendler
Dr. and Mrs. Joseph J. McGowan, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. McLaughlin
Charles and Joan Medley
Mr. Berl S. Meyer
Mr. Carl E. Moore, Jr.
Mr. James D. Morgan
Mr. Paul S. Morrison
Mr. Sam Moseley
Duane and Anne Murner
Shea Nickell
Mr. Eugene C. Noonan
Mr. W. Allen Northcutt
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Oetken
Dr. Lynn L. Ogden
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Parrot
Mr. and Mrs. Arthur C. Peter
Mr. Mark S. Pitt
Mr. and Mrs. John E. Plamp, Jr.
Mr. James C. Powers
Delores and William Pregliasco
Ms. Terry Pyles
Ms. Julie Raley
Dr. and Mrs. Charles A. Ratliff
Mr. J. Michael Rhyne
Dr. and Mrs. Roland W. Richmond
Mrs. Donald H. Robinson
Mr. and Mrs. Janet and James Rowland
Mrs. Mary S. Sachs
Mr. William C. Schrader III
Mrs. Louise B. Seiler
Peter and Elizabeth Silitch
Dr. Guy D. Silva
Mrs. Frank E. Simon
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Simpson
Mrs. Maynette Smith
Mr. and Mrs. Don E. Smith
William R. and Jane A. Smith
Mrs. Cathy Smock
Mr. Alfred L. Spotts
Mrs. Elizabeth Steffen
Mr. and Ms. H. Alan Steilberg
Mr. Allen F. Steinbock
Mr. and Mrs. William F. Stites
Mr. and Mrs. Ted Stone
Mr. Nick Stouffer
Mr. David L. Stuedle
Mr. and Mrs. Walter J. Swyerst, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. William Biggs Tabler III
Ms. Joan Taylor
Mrs. Glenda Potts Thacker
Mr. and Mrs. David G. Thomas, Sr.
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas G. Thornton
Mr. and Mrs. Bosworth M. Todd, Jr.
Mr. S. Gwathamey Tyler
Mr. Robert Uhl
Miss Edith Van Slyck
Ms. Betsy Vaughan
Dr. and Mrs. G. Donald Venhoff
Mr. Chris Wakild
Mr. Porter F. Wallace, Jr.
Mr. James Wallace
Mr. Dennis Walsh
Mr. John Hardin Ward IV
Ms. Carita A. Warner
Ms. Vickie Weaver
Mr. Allan Weiss
Morris M. Weiss M.D.
Mr. Dean and Vicki Whitaker
David and Beverly Will
Maj. Gen. & Mrs. William P. Winkler
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Wiser
Charles and Sharon Wolter
Dr. Glenn R. Womack
Mr. Donald L. Wood
Mr. Keith M. Wulff
Ms. Patricia L. Zimmerman
Mr. Stephen R. Zollner



**THE FILSON
CIVIL WAR
FIELD INSTITUTE**

**JOHN HUNT MORGAN'S
GREAT RAID:
THE CONFEDERATE RIDE ACROSS INDIANA**

On May 29, 2015 members of The Filson embarked on a bus tour following John Hunt Morgan's path across Indiana. Led by David L. Mowery, the tour included a dinner lecture from historian Gary Matthews; an overnight stay in Scottsburg, Ind.; and stops at numerous historical sites to study Morgan's raiding tactics throughout the Northern Territory. Leonard Gross, a longtime Filson member and Civil War enthusiast, took these pictures and kindly provided them for The Filson. Keep an eye on our upcoming events for more field trips!