

The Filson Historical Society

**Denhardt, Henry H., 1876-1937
Papers, 1907-1931 (bulk 1923-1930)**

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for these papers, see the Curator of Special Collections, James J. Holmberg

Size of Collection:
5 Cubic Feet

Location Number:
Mss./A/D393

**Denhardt, Henry H., 1876-1937
Papers, 1907-1931 (bulk 1923-1930)**

Scope and Content Note

The Denhardt Papers include correspondence and other material related to Denhardt's political career in the 1920s and the issues important in those elections. Correspondence reveals how campaigns operated in that era and also includes information on organized labor, prohibition, gambling, and veterans' affairs. The collection also contains correspondence, lawsuits, and other items related to Denhardt's role in putting down a labor riot in Newport, Kentucky. Other topics include Floyd Collins and the 1926 lynching of Primus Kirby.

Certain newspapers were transferred from the Denhardt Papers to the Filson Library. These mostly included rare political and labor newspapers from Kentucky.

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Biographical Note

Born in Bowling Green in 1876, Henry H. Denhardt was a lawyer, soldier, and politician. After earning a law degree from Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee, Denhardt returned to Bowling Green and served as a prosecuting attorney and later as judge. In 1916, Denhardt joined General John J. Pershing's expedition into Mexico, and two years later, he fought on the western front in World War I, earning commendations for valor and a promotion to lieutenant colonel. Continuing his military career in the Kentucky National Guard, Denhardt attained the rank of brigadier general. In 1923, he entered politics and was elected as lieutenant governor, serving for four years under Governor William J. Fields. Denhardt unsuccessfully ran for governor in 1927 and returned to Bowling Green, while staying involved in local politics. On election day in 1930, a political rival shot Denhardt in the back at a polling place. After his recovery, Denhardt served a four-year term as Kentucky's Adjutant General. When his term ended in 1935, Denhardt retired to his farm in Oldham County and began a romantic relationship with Verna Taylor, a La Grange widow. In November 1936, Taylor was found on a country road, dead from a gunshot wound. Denhardt was suspected of her murder, and a trial ended in a hung jury. In the spring of 1937, on the night before the second trial was to begin, Taylor's three brothers killed Denhardt on the streets of Shelbyville. Their trial ended with an acquittal.

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African Americans - Suffrage
Barkley, Alben William, 1877-1956
Collins, Floyd, 1890-1925
Denhardt, Henry H., 1876-1937
Depressions - 1929
Fields, William Jason, 1874-1954
Kentucky - Politics and government - 1865-1950
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Labor unions - Kentucky
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United States - History - Civil War, 1861-1865 - Monuments
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World War, 1914-1918 - Veterans