

**Collection #
SC 3098**

**JUDGE THOMAS B. COULTER
PAPERS, CA. 1917–1938**

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Processed by

Kate Scott
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Manuscript and Visual 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: 4 manuscript folders

COLLECTION DATES: ca. 1917–1938

PROVENANCE: Jane Hixson, Austin, Texas

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS: Lieutenant Claude N. Settles Photograph Album. Photograph Collection: P 0013; Lieutenant Joseph E. McCurdy Photo Album. Photograph Collection: P 0259.

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2004.0168

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Thomas B. Coulter (1874–1938) was the youngest of three children born to Thomas F. and Ella Harrison Coulter of Vincennes, Knox County, Indiana. He attended Vincennes High School and the Indiana Law School (Indianapolis), from which he graduated in 1898.

With his enlistment in the Indiana National Guard in 1891, Coulter embarked on a long military career that often coexisted with his legal practice and judgeships. After completing law school, he fought in the Spanish-American War, serving as Captain, Company A, 159th Indiana Volunteer Infantry. He was honorably discharged at the war's end, and began practicing law in Vincennes. In 1905 he was appointed Vincennes City Judge. Coulter was called back to service in 1916 as Colonel, Second Indiana Infantry, and sent to Camp Llana Grande near the Texas-Mexico border. Immediately thereafter, he served in the First World War, and received an honorable discharge in January 1918.

In 1918, although he was a Republican in a heavily Democratic district, Coulter was elected Knox County Circuit Court Judge. He sat on the Knox County bench for twelve years. Beginning in 1922, he entered the newly-created Officers Reserve Corps (later integrated into the Army Reserve) as a colonel. In 1930, he unsuccessfully ran on the Republican ticket for an Indiana State Supreme Court judgeship. In 1932 he headed the Civilian Military Training Camp at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Coulter was active in the Knox County and Indiana State Bar Associations, veterans' organizations, the Y.M.C.A., and the Masonic lodge. He was also secretary of the War Memorial Board of Indianapolis.

In 1905 he married Nellie Campbell, with whom he had two daughters, Ruth (born ca. 1906–07) and Mary (born ca. 1915). In 1938 Thomas B. Coulter had a stroke while visiting Indianapolis, and died several days later on 28 September 1938. His wife and daughters survived him.

Sources:

Ancestry.com

Collection Materials

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This short collection consists of papers belonging to Thomas B. Coulter. Folder 1 holds news clippings related to his military service, political career, and death. The second folder comprises miscellaneous papers, including invitations, a song written by Coulter, and a military Statement of Service. Several dedication ceremony programs for the Indiana World War Memorial make up the third folder.

A series of letters from Coulter's unsuccessful run for the Indiana State Supreme Court in 1930 comprise the fourth and final folder. Of the seventy-nine letters, nearly all offer congratulations at his nomination early in the year. Three offer condolences after his loss that November. In all, they reveal one of the most prominent issues in the race to be support, or lack thereof, for Prohibition. Several letters refer to Coulter as a "dry" candidate, though several others decry newspaper reports that the Anti-Saloon League supports his candidacy. It appears most likely that he was a moderately dry candidate and the Anti-Saloon League did not consider him devoted enough. The following letters mention the issue of Prohibition, either briefly or at length:

6 June 1930, Rev. E.A. Arthur

6 June 1930, Frank Greenwald

8 June 1930, Horace Ellis

14 June 1930, John Rabb Emison

14 June 1930, Russell B. Harrison

16 June 1930, Philip C. Gould

CONTENTS

CONTENTS	CONTAINER
News Clippings, circa 1917–38	Folder 1 of 4
Miscellaneous Papers, 1927 and not dated	Folder 2 of 4
Indiana World War Memorial Dedication Programs, 1927–33	Folder 3 of 4
Correspondence, 1930 and 1938	Folder 4 of 4

CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, SC 3098).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.