

**An Inventory of the Papers of
U.S. Representative Lawrence Lewis
(1879-1943)**

Collection Number 385

**A holding of the
Library of the Colorado Historical Society
1300 Broadway
Denver, CO 80203**

Processed by Tracie Etheredge

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Lawrence Lewis was born in St. Louis, Missouri on June 22, 1879. His family moved to Pueblo, Colorado in 1890 where his father worked in the real estate business. After graduating from Central High School in Pueblo, Lewis attended the University of Colorado for two years. He left college due to financial troubles and went to work as a reporter on the Pueblo Chieftain, where his brother, Hume Lewis, was managing editor.

After making enough money to return to school, Lewis entered Harvard University and received his law degree in 1909. He then returned to Colorado where he opened a law practice in Denver.

During World War I, Lewis was extremely active in supporting the war. He served for a time on the Colorado Civil Service Commission and acted as legal adviser to the Selective Service Board and the Adjutant General of Colorado. He was also very active in assisting Liberty Loan and Red Cross drives. In 1918, he enlisted as a private in the United States Army. He was sent to Camp Zachary Taylor, Kentucky for field artillery training, but never saw active duty overseas.

After the war, Lewis returned to Denver to resume his private law practice and joined the American Legion, at one point serving as city commander.

Lewis was first elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1932, largely on his call for the repeal of prohibition.

Although he was a Roosevelt Democrat and entered Congress at the beginning of the New Deal, Lewis made a strong plea for conservative economic policies and warned that the nation was drifting toward national insolvency and high inflation.

In Congress, Lewis gained a reputation for being a conscientious and tireless representative, achieving as much as possible for his constituents. After only being in office a short time, he was able to help secure the retention of Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center in Denver. Opened during World War I, plans had been made to close it before Lewis and other congressmen campaigned for its remaining in Colorado. He is also partially credited with the creation of the Air Force's technical training facilities at Lowry Field and stopping the abandonment of Fort Logan. Lewis also called for adequate flood control for the Cherry Creek drainage basin.

Lewis never married. After the death of his mother in 1927, he made his home at the University Club in Denver. After a period of failing health, which was attributed to long hours of work in Congress and a grueling 1942 election campaign, Lewis died of a heart attack at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C. on December 9, 1943.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1879 June 22: Lawrence E. Lewis is born in St. Louis, Missouri.
- 1890 The Lewis family moves to Colorado.
- 1909 Lewis moves to Denver and establishes a private law practice.
- 1909 Lewis receives his degree from Harvard Law School.
- 1916 President Woodrow Wilson is reelected.
- 1917 The United States declares war against Germany and enters World War I.
- 1917 Lewis serves on the Colorado Civil Service Commission and acts as legal adviser to the state Selective Service Board and to the Adjutant General of Colorado.
- 1918 Lewis volunteers for service the Army and serves as private stationed in Kentucky.
- 1918 Army General Hospital Number 21 is opened in Aurora as a tuberculosis clinic for the army.
- 1918 November 11: Armistice Day signals the end of World War I.
- 1919 Prohibition (the 18th Amendment) is passed.
- 1919 Lewis leaves the army to return to Denver and resume his law practice.
- 1920 Warren G. Harding is elected president.
- 1920 The name of the Army General Hospital Number 21 is changed to the Fitzsimmons Army Medical Center.
- 1923 President Harding dies in San Francisco and Calvin Coolidge becomes President.
- 1924 Calvin Coolidge is elected President.
- 1928 Herbert Hoover is elected President.
- 1932 Franklin D. Roosevelt is elected President.

- 1932 Lewis is elected to the United States House of Representatives.
- 1933 To combat the Great Depression, President Roosevelt initiates his New Deal programs, including the Federal Emergency Relief Act (FERA).
- 1933 Prohibition is repealed by Congress.
- 1935 The Works Progress Administration (WPA) is formed.
- 1936 Roosevelt is reelected.
- 1939 The first plane lands at the newly constructed Lowry Airfield in Denver.
- 1941 The United States, prompted by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, enters World War II.
- 1943 December 9: Lawrence Lewis dies at Walter Reed Army Hospital, Washington, D.C.

SCOPE AND CONTENTS

This collection serves as important documentation for Representative Lawrence Lewis as he helped lead Colorado through the Great Depression and the early part of World War II.

The series, which span the years 1900 to 1943, include: 1. **Miscellaneous Records** (1900-1932); 2. **Personal Diaries** (1933-1941), which include daily entries covering his years in Congress through the Great Depression and the early 1940's; and 3. **Scrapbooks** (1901-1943) containing newspaper clippings and other documents pertaining to events in American politics.

The collection was donated in part by Margaret Marquis, Lawrence Lewis's long-time secretary, in 1948.

There are no other known repositories of Lawrence Lewis materials.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

1. Miscellaneous Records (1900-1932).....File Folders 1-11
2. Personal Diaries (1933-1941).....Books 1-9
3. Scrapbooks (1901-1944).....Books 1-14

COLLECTION CONTENTS

1. Miscellaneous Materials (1900-1932)

FF#	Description	Date
1	Programs	1900-1905
2	Correspondence	1903-1904
3	Article, "The Romance of Iron and Steel in America"	1907
4	"The Development of a New Western Territory," <u>Banker's Magazine</u>	1909
5	"Colorado and the Fighting Front"	1918
6	Colorado State Council of Defense, legal booklet	1918
7	Correspondence	1929 & 1942
8	Newspaper clippings	1932
9	Creede Camp, booklet	undated
10	Map, Moffat Road	undated
11	Ouray tourist booklets	undated

2. Personal Diaries (1933-1941)

Book #	Date
1	1933
2	1934
3	1935
4	1936
5	1937
6	1938
7	1939
8	1940
9	1941
Loose	Daybooks, microfilm 1937-1938

3. Scrapbooks (1901-1944)

Book #	Inclusive Dates
1	1901-1909
1A	1930-1931
2	1932-1933
3	1933
4	1933-1934
5	March-April 1934
6	May-December 1934
7	1935-1936
8	January-October 1936
9	September-October 1936
10	1937-1938
11	1938-1940
12	1941-1944
13	1942-1943
14	1943-1944

