

# **William H. English papers**

## **S427**

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July 22, 2014

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Books and Manuscripts  
140 North Senate Avenue  
Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204  
317-232-3671

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Rare Books and Manuscripts
<b>Title</b>	William H. English papers
<b>Date</b>	1784-1870, undated
<b>Extent</b>	0.01 Cubic feet 1 folder
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Text [Folder]</b>	S427

### Preferred Citation

William H. English papers, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library

## Biographical Note

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William Hayden English was born on August 27, 1822 to Elisha Gale and Mahala (Eastin) English in Lexington, Indiana. He was their only son. He studied at Hanover College for three years before being admitted to the Indiana bar in 1840. He practiced law briefly, then went into politics, beginning as postmaster at Lexington from 1842 to 1845. He was the principal clerk in the Indiana House of Representatives in 1843, He was a clerk in the U.S. Treasury Department from 1845-1849. He married Emma Mardulia Jackson in 1847, with whom he had two children, including William Easton English; she died in 1877. He was elected secretary of the state constitutional convention in 1850 and oversaw the publication of the convention's proceedings. He was later elected to the Indiana House Representatives from Scott County and was selected as speaker during the 1851-1852 session. As a northern Democrat opposed to slavery, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, serving from 1853-1861. He was a member of the House Committee on Territories and worked on the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1820, thus allowing residents of western territories to decide on the slavery issue.

He aided Indiana governor, Oliver P. Morton, in disbanding the Knights of the Golden Circle, a secret society opposed to the policies of Morton and President Lincoln, during the Civil War. He served as the provost marshal in Scott County during the Civil War. He co-founded the First National Bank of Indianapolis on May 11, 1863, serving as president until 1877. He and his family moved to Indianapolis in 1865. He also secured a controlling interest in the Indianapolis Street Railway Company, which he held until 1876. He built the English Hotel and Opera House, the Opera House opening in 1880. He was appointed to the Monument Commission in 1893 and helped plan and finance the Soldiers and Sailors Monument on the Circle. In 1880 he was nominated for Vice-President by the Democratic Party. After his defeat, he retired from politics. He was president of the Indiana Historical Society from 1886-1896 and wrote several nonfiction historical works. He was a member of the Sons of the American Revolution. He died on February 7, 1896, and his body lay in state in the Indiana State Capitol. He is buried in Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis, Indiana. English Avenue and the English Foundation Building in Indianapolis and the town of English in Crawford County are named for him.

"English, William Hayden". (1980). In *A biographical directory of the Indiana General Assembly* . (v.1, p. 119). Indianapolis, IN: Indiana Historical Bureau. ISLI 920 B15G

"English, William Hayden". U.S., *Find a Grave Index, 1700s-Current*. <http://archives.ancestry.com>  
Nichols, Stacey. (1994). English, William Hayden. In *The Encyclopedia of Indianapolis*. (pp. 544-545). Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. ISLI 977.201 M341Ien

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## Scope and Contents

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This collection includes copies of autographed, signed documents from Indiana state government, governor Joseph Wright, Elisha G. English, the Democratic Party, Captain E.L. Billings, and William. H. English in Indiana and elsewhere ranging from 1734 to 1870 regarding the Civil War, banking business, legislative business, organizational seals, and political party nominations.

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## **Arrangement**

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This collection is arranged chronologically.

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## **Administrative Information**

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### **Publication Information**

Rare Books and Manuscripts

### **Conditions Governing Access**

This collection is open for research.

### **Conditions Governing Use**

Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Rare Books and Manuscripts.

### **Custodial History**

This collection was received by Rare Books and Manuscripts as a records transfer from the Indiana Division in 1971.

### **Accruals**

No further additions are expected.

### **Processing Information**

Collection processing completed 2014/07/02 by Edythe Huffman. EAD finding aid created 2014/07/02 by Edythe Huffman.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Personal Name(s)

- Billings, E.L.
- English, Elisha G.

### Subject(s)

- Banks and banking--Law and legislation
- Civil war
- Correspondence
- Nominations, Political