

TITLE: Winnie Ruth Judd papers

DATE RANGE: 1932-1953

CALL NUMBER: MS 1203

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: .25 linear ft. (1 box)

PROVENANCE: Donated in August 2001.

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CREDIT LINE: Winnie Ruth Judd papers, MS 1203, Arizona Historical Society-Tucson

PROCESSED BY: Riva Dean, August 2001.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE: Winnie Ruth Judd was convicted in 1931 for the murders of her friends Anne LeRoi and Hedvig Samuelson. She was sentenced to death, but pled insanity to avoid execution. She spent most of her life in the Arizona State Hospital (though she escaped several times) and was finally paroled in 1971. Her case was notorious in Arizona after the women's bodies were cut up and packed away to Los Angeles in trunks. Judd was known as the "trunk murderess" but there was a great deal of controversy over whether or not she actually committed the murders. Judd died in 1998.

Howard G. Richardson was an attorney and judge. He was appointed Pinal County Superior Court Judge in 1941 by Governor Bob Jones. He was Judd's attorney at the time of her sanity hearing in 1933. He died in 1944.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: Many accounts have been given of the "trunk murders" and subsequent life of Winnie Ruth Judd. The primary item in this collection is the confession written by Judd (every page is signed and dated) in 1933. In the confession, Judd writes of her relationship with Anne LeRoi and Hedvig Samuelson as well as her relationship with Jack Halloran. She confesses to the murders as well as to cutting up the bodies and packing them in the trunk. This confession is a different account than the one she wrote at a later date (found in MS 1185). In this account, she claims that she murders the women and takes care of everything herself.

The collection also contains letters written by Judd to her attorney, Howard G. Richardson, and after his death to his wife, Fern. The letters describe her treatment at the Arizona State Hospital and her ongoing attempts to get out of the State Hospital.

Four photographs show Judd at her 1933 sanity hearing with Richardson and other attorneys. Also included in the collection are some printed materials, including a tabloid account of Judd's story, "The Truth About Winnie Ruth Judd" by her brother, Burton Jay McKinnell in 1932. Includes newspaper clippings and an excerpt from Winnie Ruth Judd: The Trunk Murders by J. Dwight Dobkins and Robert J. Hendricks.