

**Gilbert Bettman Papers  
US-71-1**

**Urban Studies Collection**

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**Gilbert Bettman, 1881 – 1942  
Papers, 1872 – 1943**

**US – 71 – 1**

Biography

Gilbert Bettman, youngest of four sons of Louis and Rebecca Bloom Bettman, was born October 3, 1881. He was educated in Cincinnati and entered Harvard University upon graduation from Hughes high School. He graduated cum laude in 1903 and in 1904 received a Master's degree. He graduated with high honors from Harvard Law School in 1907. Bettman then returned to Cincinnati and joined the firm of Kramer and Kramer. He soon became a full partner in the firm and by the mid 20's had established his own successful practice.

In 1917 Bettman gave up his practice in order to serve as counsel for the War Risk Bureau. He was later appointed Captain in the United States Army and assigned to the General Staff as an Intelligence officer. Following the war, Bettman returned to Cincinnati and became active in public affairs. He was elected Vice Mayor of Cincinnati but gave up the position to become Ohio Commander of the American Legion. He was active in Legion Affairs and was one of the authors of the Adjusted Compensation Bill. Bettman also took an interest in the Y.M.C.A. Evening Law School and was appointed to its faculty in 1919. He later became Dean.

Bettman's first major political campaign was that for his election as Attorney General of Ohio in 1928. He was re-elected to that office in 1930. In 1932 he was the Republican candidate for the United States Senate. Following his defeat in this election, he returned to private practice. In 1940 he was elected Judge of the Ohio Supreme Court. He served in this capacity until his death in July 1942.

In 1916 Bettman married Iphigene Molony, daughter of Cincinnati lawyer James Molony and granddaughter of Isaac Meyer Wise, the founder of Hebrew Union College. They had three children, Gilbert Jr. born 1917, Carol Helen born 1918, and Alfred Milton born in 1922.

## Description

The Gilbert Bettman Papers consist of 25 linear feet of material, dated 1872 – 1943. The material is divided into two major categories: Personal Papers and Professional Papers.

Personal Papers are contained in 14 Hollinger boxes and include correspondence, photographs, correspondence of Gilbert Bettman, Jr., and miscellaneous material. The earliest correspondence dates from Gilbert's year at school. While at Harvard he corresponded frequently with his mother and brothers, Milton, Irvin and Alfred. His father operated a clothing business in St. Louis and corresponded infrequently with Gilbert. This early correspondence reveals much about Gilbert's student life and family relationships. Correspondents during the period 1907 – 1942 include Gilbert's wife; his mother; relatives in New York, California, and Connecticut, including the Chauncey Hands, the Arthur Sulzbergers, Adolph Ochs, publisher of the New York Times, and Dr. Selina Bloom; as well as personal friends.

The fall of 1934 marked the beginning of Gilbert Jr.'s stay at Harvard. For the period 1934 – 1941 there is a wealth of correspondence between Gilbert, Sr. and his three children. The letters are especially interesting because they provide insight into Gilbert's personal philosophy and aspirations for his children. He was frank and honest with his children and had a warm relationship with them. It is apparent that he considered his family very important. In his correspondence with personal friends, Bettman discussed the effects of the Depression. Another important group of letters written during these years were to Iphigene, who spent time traveling.

Following the correspondence, there are three groups of photographs. The first includes those that picture Gilbert with and without family and associates. There are a few family photographs, which he used for campaign purposes. This section also contains a series of photographs of a sailing trip, which were sent to Gilbert in 1937 by Iphigene's cousin in New York, Arthur Sulzberger. The second group of photographs are primarily of Iphigene and her associates. There are 18 folders of photographs of Iphigene and the staff of her New York radio show entitled What's On Your Mind? There is also an 1872 picture of Rebecca Bloom Bettman, a 1928 photograph of Iphigene, 2 unidentified photographs and photographs of Gilbert's headstone. The third group of photographs are those belonging to Gilbert Bettman, Jr. They date from his service in the United States Army 1942 – 1944.

The next group of materials in the collection is correspondence of Gilbert Bettman, Jr. This section includes letters written in 1933 and 1935 by Gilbert, Jr. and his brother Alfred to Iphigene and personal letters to Gilbert, Jr. The bulk of the material is dated 1942 – 1944 and consists of the correspondence between Gilbert, Jr. and Iphigene.

The final group of material in the Personal Papers is miscellaneous. This section includes three trip diaries, a diary written by Rebecca Bloom Bettman during the last illness and death of her son Milton, memorial letters written by Rebecca Bettman honoring Milton, a medical treatise written by Milton, the will of Gilbert Bettman, a sketch of his headstone and the linen tracing of its lettering. There is also a folder of biographical material regarding Gilbert, most of which was written by associates and personal friends after his death.

The Professional Papers are contained in 8 Hollinger boxes, 39 bound volumes and 25 scrapbooks, and consist of files, bound volumes and newspaper clippings.

Correspondence, speeches, and press releases are grouped together within the files section and are arranged chronologically beginning with Bettman's Harvard Law School commencement address. Material dated 1920 – 1928 contains information regarding Bettman's participation in Cincinnati civic affairs. There is information about his role in the American Legion for the period 1920 – 1923. There are also excerpts from his 1924 debates with his brother, Alfred Bettman. Bettman's first major political campaign resulted in his election as Attorney General of Ohio in 1928. Details regarding the campaign are found in this section of the Professional Papers. For the period 1929 – 1932 some matters receive special attention. In April 1930 the Ohio State Penitentiary burned, resulting in hundreds of injuries and many deaths. The Governor launched a massive investigation. Bettman was involved in determining the causes of the fire. Another well-documented development is the planning in 1931 for the construction of a new State office building in Columbus. Bettman was re-elected Attorney General in 1930. In contrast to the campaigns of 1928 and 1932, there are only a few items to document this election. Bettman's campaign for the United States Senate in 1932 is well documented. Bettman won the Republican primary against Robert A. Taft but lost the election to the Democrat, Robert Bulkley. Prohibition was a major issue in the campaign and Bettman's opposition in clear. Bettman returned to private practice in 1933 and there is less material from the years 1933 – 1939. There are records of speeches he made during these years before various Republican groups. The records of law cases he handled during these years are in the bound volumes. Once elected to the Ohio Supreme Court, Bettman left his practice. The folders for 1940 contain materials regarding this last campaign. Bettman's judicial career was cut short by his illness in March of 1942 and his death in July.

The next series of Professional Papers is a set of bound volumes which contain not only a chronological run of legal records, but also similar series' of correspondence and personal letters as well as press releases. These materials have been kept together because of their format. Most of the records of Bettman's legal cases are to be found in the first 24 bound volumes, which cover the years 1911 – 1940. There are two boxes of unbound records, which precede the bound volumes. Volumes 25 – 27 are labeled "Correspondence" and contain copies of letters written 1930 – 1933. This correspondence is perfunctory and consists largely of acknowledgements for letters of support. Volumes 28 – 34 are labeled "Personal Letters" and include material dated 1929 – 1932. The label is confusing since these letters do not relate to Bettman's personal life. They were written from the Attorney General's office and differ from the letters in the volumes labeled "Correspondence" in that they were written to those with whom Bettman was personally acquainted. Press releases, contained in volumes 35 – 39, cover the years 1929 – 1932. While releases in the professional files describe major events, these press releases deal with all events that Bettman was involved with as Ohio Attorney General.

Newspaper Clippings are the last section of Professional Papers. These are two boxes of clippings, dated 1928 – 1932, which were found throughout the collection. Most of these clippings are dated 1930 – 1932. Many of these deal with the Ohio State Penitentiary fire and the development of plans for the new State Office Building. The clippings from 1942 contain notices of Bettman's death. Most of the newspaper clippings of the collection are found in the 25 subject scrapbooks. Most of the material in the scrapbooks is not duplicated by loose clippings with the exception of that dealing with the penitentiary fire and Bettman's death. Some of the scrapbooks contained loose clippings and ephemera. In each case these materials were gathered together in a folder and inserted into the scrapbook.

Both major divisions of this collection contain materials, which will be of use to a wide variety of researchers. The Personal Papers are particularly interesting because they reveal much about the activities and concerns of a professional family in Cincinnati in the 1930's. Bettman exerted a firm but loving control over his children and the family unit was extremely close. The Professional Papers reveal much about Bettman's political thought and activities. Unfortunately, there is little material documenting Bettman's private legal career, although briefs and records of cases are present.

## Outline of Organization

### PERSONAL PAPERS

Correspondence

Photographs

Correspondence of Gilbert Bettman, Jr.

Miscellaneous

### PROFESSIONAL PAPERS

Files

Correspondence, Speeches, and Press Releases

Pamphlets

Unbound Legal Records

Bound Volumes

Records and Briefs

Correspondence

Personal Letters

Press Releases

Newspaper Clippings

Loose Clippings

Subject Scrapbooks

Container List

Container No.

1

PERSONAL PAPERS

Correspondence

1848 Jul 14 – 1898 Oct 29  
1899 Jan 8 – Dec 14  
1900 Jan 7 – Mar 28  
1900 Apr 6 – Jul 20  
1900 Sep 28 – Oct 30  
1900 Nov 4 – Dec 28  
1900 n.d.  
1901 Jan 9 – Feb 27  
1901 Mar 3 – Apr 30  
1901 May 8 – Jun 26  
1901 Aug 14 – Dec 27  
1902 Jan 1 – Feb 28  
1902 Mar 1 – Apr 29  
1902 May 1 – May 21  
1902 Sep 8 – Dec 29

2

1903 Jan 25 – Dec 29  
1904 May 6 – May 31  
1904 Jun 2 – Oct 29  
1905 Jan 9 – Oct 27  
1906 Jan 3 – Feb 24  
1906 Mar 8 – Dec 22  
1907 Jan 5 – Dec 3  
1908 Mar 16 – Dec 16  
1909 Mar 7 – Dec 13  
1910 Dec 11 – Oct 18  
1911 Mar 21 – 1912 Oct 22  
1913 Feb 5 – 1914 Oct 17  
1915 Jul 8 – 1916 Jul 10

3

1917 May 5 – Dec 29  
1918 Jan 19 – Sep 29  
1918 Oct 1 – Oct 31  
1918 Nov 1 – Nov 30  
1918 Dec 1 – Dec 5  
1919 Aug 11 – Nov 11  
1920 Aug 5 – Aug 21  
1921 Apr 4 – Sep 6 1922  
1923 Jul 31 – 1929 Dec  
1930 Jan 8 – Dec 16

Container No.

4 PERSONAL PAPERS (continued)

Correspondence (continued)

1931 Jan 23 – Sep 30

1931 Oct 2 – Dec 31

1932 Jan 2 – Apr 30

1932 May 4 – Aug 31

1932 Sep 5 – Dec 31

1933 Jan 3 – Jan 31

1933 Feb 1 – Feb 27

1933 Mar 1 – Mar 31

1933 Apr 3 – May 29

1933 Jun 2 – Aug 26

1933 Sep 3 – Oct 31

1933 Nov 2 – Dec 29

5 1934 Jan 2 – Mar 27

1934 Apr 2 – Jun 28

1934 Jul 6 – Sep 29

1934 Oct 2 – Nov 12

1934 Nov 15 – Dec 31

1935 Jan 2 – Mar 30

1935 Apr 5 – May 31

1935 Jun 2 – Jun 29

1935 Jul 1 – Jul 18

1935 Jul 20 – Aug 12

1935 Aug 16 – Sep 30

1935 Oct 1 – Oct 31

1935 Nov 1 – Nov 30

1935 Dec 2 – Dec 23

6 1936 Jan 3 – Feb 27

1936 Mar 5 – Apr 28

1936 May 1 – May 22

1936 Jun 3 – Aug 31

1936 Sep 1 – Sep 30

1936 Oct 3 – Oct 31

1936 Nov 5 – Dec 31

1937 Jan 4 – Jan 29

1937 Feb 1 – Feb 27

1937 Mar 1 – Mar 31

1937 Apr 6 – Apr 28

1937 May 1 – Jun 30

1937 Jul 8 – Aug 23

1937 Sep 1 – Oct 30

1937 Nov 2 – Dec 31

7 1938 Jan 4 – Jan 31

1938 Feb 1 – Feb 28

Container No.

7(cont.) PERSONAL PAPERS (continued)

Correspondence (continued)

- 1938 Mar 1 – Mar 29
  - 1938 Apr 5 – May 26
  - 1938 Jun 2 – Jul 30
  - 1938 Aug 9 – Sep 30
  - 1938 Oct 1 – Oct 30
  - 1938 Nov 1 – Nov 30
  - 1938 Dec 1 – Dec 29
  - 1939 Jan 3 – Jan 30
  - 1939 Feb 2 – Feb 28
  - 1939 Mar 8 – Mar 30
  - 1939 Apr 6 – may 27
  - 1939 Jun 3 – Jun 29
  - 1939 Jul 1 – Aug 24
- 8
- 1939 Sep 1 – Sep 29
  - 1939 Oct 2 – Oct 31
  - 1939 Nov 9 – Dec 26
  - 1940 Jan 1 – Jan 31
  - 1940 Feb 1 – Feb 29
  - 1940 Mar 1 – Mar 30
  - 1940 Apr 3 – May 28
  - 1940 Jun 3 – Jun 30
  - 1940 Jul 10 – Aug 27
  - 1940 Sep 4 – Oct 28
  - 1940 Nov 2 – Nov 15
  - 1940 Nov 16 – Nov 29
  - 1940 Dec 2 – Dec 30
- 9
- 1941 Jan 2 – Feb 26
  - 1941 Mar 3 – Apr 19
  - 1941 May 7 – May 31
  - 1941 Jun 2 – Jul 30
  - 1941 Aug 2 – Aug 28
  - 1941 Sep 2 – Oct 6
  - 1941 Nov 7 – Dec 30
  - 1942 Jan 1 – Mar 30
- 10
- Photographs
- Gilbert Bettman – alone and with others  
1907 – 1941 (26 folders)
- 11
- Gilbert Bettman Family – Iphigene Molony Bettman  
1872 – 1946 (29 folders)
- 12
- Gilbert Bettman Junior – Army Photographs  
1942 – 1944 (20 folders)

Container No.

- 13      PERSONAL PAPERS (continued)
- Gilbert Bettman Junior  
            Correspondence  
                1933 Jun 5 – 1935 Aug 16  
                1942 Jul 23 – Dec 26  
                1943 Jan 4 – Jun 29  
                1943 Jul 9 – Dec 27  
                1944 Jan 23 – Aug 13  
                ca. 1943 Fort Bragg Training Manual
- 14      Ephemera  
            Biographical material  
            Milton Bettman (2 folders)  
            Rebecca Bloom Bettman's Diary  
            Certificates – graduation  
            1912 Trip Diary  
            1935 Trip Diary  
            1942 May 26 – Will  
            Sketch of grave stone ca. 1943  
            Linen tracing of grave stone lettering ca. 1943
- 15      PROFESSIONAL PAPERS
- Professional Files  
            Correspondence, Speeches, Press releases  
                1907 May – 1918 Feb 5  
                1920 Mar 22 – 1922 Dec 20  
                1923 Jan 4 – Dec 31  
                1924 Jan 17 – Nov 26  
                1925 Jan 17 – Nov 26  
                1925 Jun 18 – 1927 Nov 1  
                1928 Jan 21 – Dec 20  
                1929 Jan 10 – Dec 14
- 16                      1930 Jan 8 – Apr 11  
                            1930 Apr 25 – May 30  
                            1930 Jun 3 – Dec 30  
                            1931 Jan 8 – Mar 31  
                            1931 Apr 1 – Dec 16  
                            1932 Jan 19 – Mar 31  
                            1932 Apr 4 – Aug 25  
                            1932 Sep 8 – Sep 30  
                            1932 Oct 1 – Oct 17  
                            1932 Oct 18 – Oct 31  
                            1932 Nov 1 – Dec 30  
                            1932 No Specific Date

Container No.

16 (cont.) PROFESSIONAL PAPERS (continued)

Campaign Pamphlets

ca. 1929 – 1932

1932

17 Correspondence, Speeches and Press releases

1933 Jan 7 – Nov 23

1934 Jan 10 – 1935 Nov 2

1936 May 7 – 1937 Dec 11

1938 Jan 4 – Jun 27

1938 Jul 22 – Nov 11

1939 Feb 16 – Nov 1

18 1940 Jan 4 – Jun 24

1940 Jul 3 – Oct 29

1940 Nov 1 – Dec 28

1941 Jan 11 – Dec 31

1942 Jan 13 – May 4

n.d.

19 Unbound Legal Briefs

1920 Feb – Mar Doepke et al vs. Alms et al.

pp. 1 – 157 testimony of Robert H. Doepke

pp. 158 – 294 testimony of William Doepke

pp. 295 – 415 testimony of George Winter and

Edward Haefner

pp. 416 – 449 Exhibits

20 1936 – Central Trust Co. vs. The Sickles Holding Co.

Opening Statement

Defense Brief

History of the litigation

pp. 4 – 216 testimony of H. George Sickles (4 folders)

pp. 217 – 235 testimony of Gustave Mosler

pp. 236 – 309 testimony of Sidney Weil (2 folders)

pp. 310 – 326 testimony of Joseph Glatthaar

pp. 327 – 401 testimony of Joseph Helmers (2 folders)

pp. 402 – 486) testimony of Humbert Baer (2 folders)

n.d.

Bound Volumes

Records and Briefs

vol.1 1911

vol.2 1912

vol.3 1913

vols.4–5 1914

vol.6 1916

vols.7–9 1917

Container No.

20(cont.) Bound Volumes (Continued)

Records and Briefs (Continued)

vol.10 1922, 9123, 1924  
vol.11 1923  
vol.12 1925  
vols.13-21 1928 - 1933  
vols.22-24 1933 - 1940

Correspondence

vol.25 1930-1931  
vol.26 1932 Jan 1 - Jul 1  
vol.27 1932 Jul 1 - 1933 Jan 9

Personal Letters

vol.28 1929  
vol.29 1930 Jan 1 - Jul 1  
vol.30 1930 Jul 1 - 1931 Jan 12  
vol.31 1931 Jan 13 - Jul 1  
vol.32 1931 Jul 1 - 1932 Jan 1  
vol.33 1932 Jan 1 - Jul 1  
vol.34 1932 Jul 1 - 1933 Jan 9

Press Releases

vol.35 1929 Jan 14 - 1930 Jan 1  
vol.36 1930 Jan 1 - 1931 Jan 12  
vol.37 1931 Jan 12 - 1932 Jan 1  
vol.38 1931 Jan 12 - 1932 Jan 1  
vol.39 1932 Jan 1 - 1933 Jan 9

21 Newspaper Clippings

1928 Aug 9 - Nov 16  
1929 Mar 30 - Dec 18  
1930 Jan 5 - Feb 27  
1930 Apr 3 - Apr 27  
1930 May 3 - Jun 30  
1930 Jul 1 - Aug 22  
1930 Sep 7 - Oct 31  
1930 Nov 1 - Dec 22

22

1931 Jan 1 - Jan 30  
1931 Feb 1 - Feb 28  
1931 Mar 7 - Apr 28  
1931 May 1 - Jun 26  
1931 Jul 2 - Jul 21  
1932 Mar 8 - Jul 16  
1932 Sep 10 - Sep 30  
1932 Oct 1 - Nov 2  
1934 May 16 - Sep 11

Container No.

22(cont.)Newspaper Clippings

1937 Feb 18 – 1939 Mar 21  
1940 Sep 5 – 1941 Feb 17  
1941 Jul 7 – Sep 23

Scrapbooks

no.1 1919 – 1922 Sep American Legion  
no.2 1922 Oct – 1923 Jun American Legion  
no.3 1923 Jul – 1927 American Legion  
no.4 1920 – 1922 Local Legal Issues  
no.5 1921 Vice-mayoralty campaign  
no.6 1924 – 1928 Ohio politics  
no.7 1928 – 1929 Local politics  
no.8 1919 – 1929 Real estate sales  
no.9 1924 – 1928 local affairs not relating to Ohio politics  
no.10 1928 Mar – Oct primary campaign and election  
no.11 1928 primary campaign and election  
no.12 1928 Oct – 1935 Oct Cleveland Vote Fraud case and local  
affairs  
no.13 1929 – 1930 Ohio State Penitentiary Fire  
no.14 1929 – 1930 Attorney General Affairs  
no.15 1930 – 1931 misc. clippings  
no.16 1931 misc. clippings  
no.17 1932 Senatorial campaign  
no.18 1932 Senatorial campaign  
no.19 1932  
no.20 1933 New Banking Laws  
no.21 1938 Dayton Building and Loan  
no.22 1935 – 1940 Local politics  
no.23 1935 – 1941 Federal and local politics  
no.24 1939 – 1940 Judicial campaign  
no.25 1930's Gilbert Bettman Jr.  
no.26 1942 Memorial Clippings  
no.27 ca. 1945 – 1946 Iphigene Molony Bettman