

Dayton Police Department Collection

MS – 181

Wright State University
Department of Special Collections and Archives

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Introduction

This collection was created through the efforts of several Dayton Police Department officers who rescued these documents from destruction. Because of a lack of an effective records management program in the department, most of the documents were earmarked for elimination. This collection resulted from the sorting and saving of documents over a number of years.

Brief Agency History

The Dayton Police Department traces its origin to the first constable, Cyrus Osborn, appointed after the settlement of Dayton in 1797. The Charter of 1805 which created the town of Dayton made provision for a marshal, who was required to maintain the peace within the new town. Until 1833, the marshal served as the town's only law enforcement officer. As demands for increased law protection grew, marshals were added until 1867 when the state legislature granted Dayton the privilege of organizing its own police department. This decree was repealed 11 months later, and Dayton returned to law governed by the marshal.

In 1873, Dayton again was able to organize another police department with a chief, two lieutenants, a staff of patrolmen, and several officials responsible for operation of the municipal jail. The department was originally governed by a Board of Police Commissioners, however the board was later disbanded. The department was then governed by a safety director appointed by the mayor. After 1914, the Dayton Police Department became a division of the Department of Public Safety, as it is today.

Scope and Content

These records fall into five categories. Series I is the Bertillion Card file of the Dayton Police Department, and also a file relating to Dayton criminals in the Ohio State Reformatory and Penitentiary. The Bertillion System provided the fundamental identification method of criminals and each card includes the criminal's name, mug shot, crime, and identifying characteristics.

Series II, the Arrest Files, contains a selection of routine arrest files as maintained by the Police Department. Each file varies in content, some containing mug shots, arrest reports, newspaper clippings, and other miscellany relating to the individual's criminal record.

Series III, the clipping file, is the news bank created by the police department as investigations were being conducted. Because of its nature as a clipping file, the clippings tend to be haphazard in nature and do not follow any sequence other than chronological.

Series IV, the Notorious Criminal file, contains the information which was stored at the Police Department regarding notorious criminals. This file contains the "records" of Clyde Barrow, Alfred Brady, Pretty Boy Floyd, Albert Fouts, John "Peanuts" Gormey, Bugs Moran, and Virgil Summers. As a sub-series is the police file maintained in Dayton relating to the Dayton capture and arrest of John Dillinger. The local police file contains mug shots and arrest reports, as well as informant statements and arresting officers' reports. The official correspondence file contains letters of inquiry from police departments nationwide, requesting information about Dillinger. Also in this file are the FBI letters under J. Edgar Hoover.

Container Listing

Series I: Photographic/Bertillion System Cards

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
1	1	Dayton P.D. Bertillion Cards	Pre-1910
	2	Dayton P.D. Bertillion Cards	1910
	3	Dayton P.D. Bertillion Cards	1910
	4	Dayton P.D. Bertillion Cards	1911
	5	Dayton P.D. Bertillion Cards	1912
	6	Dayton P.D. Bertillion Cards	1917-1919
	7	Ohio State Reformatory and Penitentiary Cards	
	8	Miscellaneous, undated cards	n.d.
	9	Miscellaneous photo file	

Series II: Arrest Files

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
2	1	Brown, B.	May 14, 1905
	2	Burkes, Mabel	June 24, 1905
	3	Burkes, James	June 23, 1905
	4	Coppock, Harry	Feb. 8, 1933
	5	Dudley, William	June 13, 1905
	6	Gebhart, Harry	June 10, 1905
	7	Harris, John A.	Aug. 9, 1905
	8	Hisey, Harvey	July 16, 1905
	9	Howard, George (alias: J.F. Howard)	July 8, 1905
	10	Howard, John (alias: Dowling McDonald)	Oct. 5, 1905
	11	King, Napoleon Leon	April 14, 1905
			Jan. 3, 1956
	12	Krug, Albert L.	July 13, 1905
	13	Krug, Clarence	July 13, 1905
	14	Mitchell, Frank	Mar. 8, 1905
	15	Myers, Charles Oscar	June 24, 1905
	16	Parsels, Burt	July 30, 1905
	17	Parsels, Harry	April 3, 1935
	18	Schroeder, John (alias: Harry Powers, Cornelius Pierson, "Bluebird")	May 28, 1933
	19	Spohr, Lewis	Nov. 25, 1893
	20	Tall, John	June 18, 1905
	21	Tiller, Prentice (alias: M.W. Chambers)	Dec. 18, 1905
	22	Vance, Percy (alias: Van Ness, H.R. Gray)	Aug. 17, 1905

Series III: Clipping File

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
2	23	Dayton P.D. Clippings	1927-1937

Series IV: Notorious Criminal File

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
3	1	Wanted Posters	1902-1917
	2	Clyde Barrow	
	3	Alfred Brady	
	4	Charles A. "Pretty Boy" Floyd	
	5	Albert Fouts	
	6	John E. "Peanuts" Gourmey	
	7	George C. "Bugs" Moran	
	8	Virgil Summers	

Sub-series: John Dillinger

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
3	9	Dillinger – Local Police File	
	10	Dillinger – Official Police Correspondence	
	11	Dillinger – Clippings	
	12	Dillinger – Miscellaneous	

Series V: Miscellaneous

<u>Box</u>	<u>File</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Date</u>
3	13	Univis Strike Photos	
	14	Miscellaneous	