

∞ The Ward M. Canaday Center ∞
for Special Collections
The University of Toledo

Finding Aid

➤ Daniel French Collection of Toledo Police Records, 1920-1929◀

MSS-304

Size: 1 linear foot

Provenance: Donated by Daniel French

Access: Open

Related Collections: Toledo Chief of Police Miscellaneous Papers, MSS-162 and Toledo Police Department-Miscellaneous Records, MSS-053

Collection Summary: This collection consists of police records from the Toledo Police Department from 1920 to 1929. Most of the records concern prostitution, gambling, and bootlegging.

Subject(s): [Crime and Criminals](#)

Processing Note: This collection has been organized alphabetically and chronologically

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Completed by: Jacalyn Loretta DeSelms, December 17, 2015; revised by Tamara Jones, June 2016

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Historical Sketch

Toledo has had an official or organization responsible for law enforcement since 1837, the year the city was incorporated. That year, Calvin Comstock was appointed city marshal. The city marshal, together with the mayor's office, was responsible for dealing with lawbreakers. Toledo's first police force was formed in 1852, when the city became too large for the city marshal to do his job effectively. This volunteer force was to consist of between ten and fifty city residents, who had the same police powers as the city marshal. They were also entitled to form a company, and select a captain and lieutenant, each of whom would serve one year. The city marshal, however, received little support from this early police force.

In 1866-1867, the city legislature did away with the city marshal position and volunteer force, and replaced it with a force consisting of commissioners appointed by the governor, as well as a police captain and several patrolmen. This system was not popular, either, and in 1880 was replaced by a metropolitan police system with a board of commissioners initially chosen by the governor (later commissioners were elected by the city) and a chief of police.

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Scope and Content Note

The Daniel French collection of Toledo Police records consists largely of documents relating to vice arrests and raids for gambling and bootlegging. Many of the materials relate to Harry Jennings, who joined the police force in 1911 and served until his resignation in 1928. For the last six years of his tenure, he served as Chief of Police.

The collection is divided into five series. **Series 1: Correspondence** consists of letters to and from Chief Jennings, as well as letters from businesses, organizations, and individuals that concern a variety of subjects. **Series 2: Legal Files** consists of court documents, legislation, vendor licenses, and municipal regulations. **Series 3: Publications and Printed Material** contains newspaper clippings about Chief Jennings, a bulletin from the Toledo Better Business Bureau, and some issues of *The Toledo City Journal*. **Series 4: Reports, Statements, and Complaints** comprises the bulk of the collection and details the police department's efforts to control vice in Toledo. Arrest records, property inventories, and prostitution and raid reports can be found in this series. Several complaints are also contained in this series and are divided into incoming and outgoing communications. Outgoing complaints consists of orders issued by Chief Jennings to his officers and often involve shutting down buildings where gambling and prostitution are suspected of taking place. Incoming complaints written by officers to Chief Jennings explaining the actions they took in response to his orders. **Series 5: Miscellaneous**, contains documentation of changes within the police department as well as general information such as office telephone numbers. There are also financial documents regarding payment for services rendered to various city and state entities.

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Folder List

Box	Folder	Item
		Series 1: Correspondence
1	1	Correspondence – from Chief Jennings, 1925-1928, n.d.
1	2	Correspondence – to Chief Jennings, 1920, 1922-1924, 1926-1927, n.d.
1	3	Correspondence – to Chief Jennings w/ Jennings's responses, 1926-1927
1	4	Miscellaneous Correspondence, 1923, 1925-1927, 1929, n.d.
		Series 2: Legal Files
1	5	Court Documents, 1918, 1923, 1926, n.d.
1	6	Legislation, 1920s
1	7	Soft Drink Vendor Licenses, 1927, n.d.
1	8	Miscellaneous Regulations, 1923, 1926
		Series 3: Publications and Printed Material
1	9	Publicity and Newspaper clippings re: Chief Jennings, 1925, 1927, n.d.
1	10	Toledo Better Business Bureau, 1926
1	11	Toledo City Journal, 1925-1927
		Series 4: Reports, Statements, and Complaints
1	12	Arrest Records, 1922-1927
1	13	Articles found in Property Rooms, 1921
1	14	Complaints – Incoming, 1923-1927, 1929
1	15	Complaints – Outgoing, 1926-1927
1	16	Complaints – Outgoing w/Incoming Attached, 1923, 1926-1927
1	17	Complaints Filed by Officer, April 1924
1	18	Detective Bureau Activities, 1925-1926
1	19	List of punch boards and slot machines confiscated in Toledo, November 1926
1	20	Patrolmen on Duty at Schools, 1923
1	21	Prostitution Reports and Records, 1923, n.d.
1	22	Raid Reports, 1923, 1926-1927
1	23	Statements of Clarence and Anna Thompson, 1927
1	24	Statistics on Major U.S. city police departments, 1924
1	25	Vice Squad Reports, 1922
1	26	Miscellaneous reports, 1923, 1925-1927, n.d. (includes brief report from City of New York Police Department)

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Series 5: Miscellaneous Records		
1	27	Promotions, 1920s
1	28	Rearrangement plans for Toledo Police Department, 1923
1	29	Miscellaneous Department Documents, 1920s