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RARE BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS DIVISION  
ACCESSION SHEET

C/26-d-1/2  
C/26-elg-1/6  
C/26-h-6

Accession # 67 M 4  
\*88 M 29

Location

Title Sol Bloom. Papers

Approximate inclusive dates 1898-1949. Bulk dates: 1935-49

Date of receipt 1949; Jan. 24, 1967

Received from Vera Bloom; Milton Forrest

Volume on arrival 37 RC; 9 shipping cartons; 15 FB; 3 AB; 2 vols; 1 pkg. (56 lin. ft.)

Number of boxes (after reboxing) 61 RC; 1 AB (61.5 lin. ft.)

Condition Good (official envelopes in which correspondence is filed need to be replaced with acid-free stock)

Restrictions N/A

Description see separate sheets

Special Formats  Photographs  Maps  Audio Tapes  Films  Graphics  
 Artifacts  Machine-readable records  
 Other (list) \_\_\_\_\_

Temporary catalog card added entries

Accessioned by TOU STINSON

Date 5/11/88

ACCESSION SHEET

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Title Sol Bloom. Papers.

DESCRIPTION

-1-

Sol Bloom (1870-1949), U.S. Congressman and for ten years chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, was born in Pekin, Illinois of Polish-Jewish immigrants who arrived in America sometime before the Civil War. In 1873 the family migrated to San Francisco where Bloom held a variety of jobs during his youth among which the selling of newspapers and working in a brush factory. In his autobiography he claims to have spent only one day in school. Through a chance meeting with David Belasco who was then an unknown theatrical manager he obtained bit parts in theatrical productions. At fifteen he became treasurer of one of San Francisco's popular theaters which featured such favorites as the comedy team of Harrigan and Hart. By age nineteen he had acquired a sizable fortune from various business ventures which he conducted on the side (importing, advertising, theatrical concessions). Following a brief trip abroad in 1885 he was appointed manager of amusements at the Chicago World's Columbian Exposition. In Chicago he became a leading publisher of popular music. By 1905 he had established himself in New York where in addition to managing a network of music departments in department stores across the country he became the principal distributor of the Victor talking machine with a large store on Fifth Avenue. In 1910 he sold his businesses and engaged in real estate development. In 1922 Bloom was asked by Tammany Hall to run for Congress as the Democratic nominee in a special election that was called in the 19th Congressional District, a heretofore Republican stronghold, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Samuel Marx who had died before taking office. The 19th C.D. (in consequence of reapportionment Bloom was later to represent the 20th C.D.) encompassed roughly the area between 86th Street and 125th Street and the Hudson River and Madison Avenue. Victorious against all odds Bloom entered

ACCESSION SHEET

Accession # 67 M 4;\*88 M 29

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DESCRIPTION (cont'd.)

-2-

the 68th Congress on March 4, 1923, was reelected to the 69th and served in the twelve succeeding Congresses until his death (March 7, 1949). As chairman (from 1939) of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Bloom was at the center of the great legislative battles which preceded World War II. He fought for the provision in the Neutrality Act which had the practical effect of allowing Gt. Britain to purchase arms and munitions on a cash and carry basis. He also guided the Lend-Lease Bill through committee, a battle which he regarded as the greatest of his career. For his fight to extend the draft law which passed by a margin of one vote and to arm American merchant ships he was subjected to vicious public attacks and vilified as a "Jewish warmonger". Bloom served as director of the United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission; director general of the United States Sesquicentennial Commission; chairman of the Committee on Celebration of the One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the United States Supreme Court; and director and United States Commissioner, New York World's Fair, 1939. In 1945 he was chosen as one of the eight American delegates to the San Francisco Conference which drew up the Charter of the United Nations. In 1897 he married Evelyn Hechheimer who died in 1941. At his death he was survived by his daughter, Vera Toba Bloom who died in January of 1959. He was the author of One with God Is a Majority (1947; and The Autobiography of Sol Bloom (1949). ~~Almost the entire collection consists of Bloom's papers~~ as member of the U.S. House of Representatives. There are, in addition, a few personal miscellaneous papers. The bulk of the papers (about 90%) as member of the House of Representatives consist of case files. There are also files of special bills, armed services academies files, and general correspondence. The papers are described in order below.

ACCESSION SHEET

Accession # 67 M 4; \*88 M 29

Title Sol Bloom. Papers

DESCRIPTION (cont'd.)

-3-

Case files (Containers #1-55).

The case files (ca.1925-49) consist of correspondence Representative Bloom and of his staff with constituents seeking aid in the solution of a problem requiring the intervention of a department or agency of government. The files are arranged alphabetically by name of the constituent seeking relief and consist of correspondence of the New York City and Washington, D.C. offices. Portions of the files of the two offices have been comingled and filed together alphabetically. The case file record of each office includes materials not contained in the record of the other office. The bulk of the case files fall in the period 1938-1949 with a significant amount of correspondence earlier to ca.1925. The bulk of the Washington office correspondence falls in the period 1946-49. About 70% of the cases concern immigration problems and especially those of Jewish refugees and of displaced persons in Western and Eastern Europe and elsewhere (including Canada, South America, Palestine and the Far East) seeking visas from American consulates to enter the United States before, during and after World War II. Several cases concern refugees interned in concentration camps in unoccupied France. Most of the requests for aid originate with a relative, friend, lawyer, or Jewish welfare organization in New York City who represented the alien seeking admission although there is some correspondence with the principal abroad. Many cases contain first- or second-hand accounts of the plight and suffering of the Jews during the Holocaust. Other cases handled include import/export problems, commercial matters relating to the Marshall Plan, surplus government property, recovery of properties confiscated during the war, armed services matters, employment, government positions, pensions, social security and other matters. The case files contain correspondence of Bloom and his staff with various governmental departments and agencies including the Departments of State, Justice, Commerce, Treasury, Army and War, Immigration and

ACCESSION SHEET

Accession # 67 M 4; \*88 M 29

Title Sol Bloom. Papers

DESCRIPTION (cont'd.)

-4-

Naturalization, Displaced Persons Commission, Economic Cooperation Administration, Social Security Administration, War Assets Administration, and the U.S. Civil Service Commission. Much of the official correspondence to Bloom is signed by senior officials including Dean Acheson, Cordell Hull, James Forrestal, Henry L. Stimson, and Edward R. Stettinius. The case files also include extensive inter-office correspondence between Bessie Flegelman, secretary in the New York office and staff of the Washington Office especially Boyd Crawford, clerk of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Louise Dreisonstok, and Lillian Van Steenburgh. There is also present extensive correspondence between Bloom and his staff relative to the case problems. Since several of the constituents seeking assistance were also personal friends of Sol Bloom some of the correspondence is of a personal and social nature. Also interspersed in the case files especially of the Washington Office are a few name/subject files containing correspondence often with Congressional colleagues on matters of public policy. These subject folders include: "Israel, State of"; "Palestine Question"; "Sesquicentennial Commission"; "State Dept."; "Telegrams" (sent by SB); "UnAmerican Committee" (which SB opposed); "White House" (correspondence with secretaries to the president); and "Joint Committee on Foreign Economic Cooperation". The name folders include: Melville Minton (and Marie Wilkerson, editors at G.P. Putnam's Sons and relating to the publication of his book One with God Is a Majority (1947); Nicholas Murray Butler; Drew Pearson; Claude Pepper; William O'Dwyer; Thomas B. Stanley; Harold Stassen; Mrs. Arthur Hays Sulzberger; T.O. Thackrey; Harry S. Truman; General J.M. Wainwright; Henry A. Wallace; and Walter Winchell.

Following the main body of the case files are are case files (1946-49) of the New York Office of constituents requesting aid in obtaining civil service employment. Two files are present arranged alphabetically

ACCESSION SHEET

Accession # 67 M 4; \*88 M 29

Title: Sol Bloom. Papers

DESCRIPTION (cont'd.)

-5-

in the period 1946-49, and for the year 1949. Many of the constituents were referred to SB by Democratic Party clubs. Included is one folder of files of persons seeking employment with the United Nations. Included is correspondence of B. Flegelman and SB with constituents, and correspondence between SB and Flegelman relative to the cases. There is also extensive correspondence with the Civil Service Commission and various departments of government.

Special Bills (Containers #56-58)

The bulk of the special bills represent bills introduced by SB for the relief of constituents with problems relating to immigration, deportation, personal injury compensation, pensions, restoration of rights and privileges of honorable discharges from armed services and other matters. There are also in the Washington office files a few records of bills introduced by SB relating to matters other than constituents' problems. Present are files of the New York Office (1923-49) and of the Washington Office (1945-49) both of which are arranged alphabetically. The files include correspondence of SB and his staff with constituents and with congressional committees and governmental departments and agencies including the House Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Invalid Pensions, the Department of State and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. One of the special bills was introduced on behalf of Dr. Gisela Perl, a Rumanian Jew and gynecologist whose family was exterminated by the Nazi and who was interned at the Auschwitz concentration camp where she was placed in charge of <sup>administering medically to</sup> ~~female inmates. This file~~ which is contained in both the New York and Washington offices includes extensive correspondence with Dr. Perl and two letters by Eleanor Roosevelt who intervened on her behalf. One of the bills relating to non-constituent matters contains correspondence with the American Scenic and Historic preservation Society relative to the preservation of Castle Clinton in Battery Park.

ACCESSION SHEET

Accession # 67 M 4; \*88 M 29

Title Sol Bloom. Papers

DESCRIPTION (cont'd.)

-6-

Armed Services Academies (Container #59)

This file contains correspondence (1939-49 of the New York Office with constituents seeking admission to the United States Military Academy at West Point and to the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. Included is correspondence of SB and his staff with constituents and with the Navy and War Departments, inter-office correspondence and a few records of results of entrance examinations.

General Correspondence (Containers #60-61)

The general correspondence (ca.1930-49) is arranged in part alphabetically by name and in part by subject. Included is correspondence by SB (with a few carbon copies of replies) from persons prominent in politics, government, diplomacy and public affairs expressing appreciation and congratulations and relating also (although to a lesser extent) to public affairs and to matters pending before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs including Lend-Lease, Palestine, refugee relief, Zionism and the development of Rockefeller Center in New York City. Included is a "Book of Esteem" presented to SB in 1934 by President Roosevelt in recognition of his services as director of the United States George Washington Bicentennial Commission containing about 600 letters of appreciation to SB from prominent persons. There are also about 75 letters received acknowledging receipt of SB's book One with God Is a Majority. Correspondents include Dean Acheson, Sholem Asch, Nicholas Murray Butler, Lord Halifax, Winston Churchill, Roy W. Howard, Cordell Hull, Joseph P. Kennedy, Charles A. Lindbergh, Edwin Markham, Nelson A. Rockefeller, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Edward R. Stettinius, Henry L. Stimson, and Harry S. Truman. Included is one letter (1911) by Samuel Gompers introducing SB to labor leaders in the British West Indies.

ACCESSION SHEET

Accession # 67 M 4; \*88 M 29

Title Sol Bloom. Papers

DESCRIPTION (cont'd.)

-7-

Personal Miscellaneous Papers (Container #62)

The personal miscellaneous papers (1898-1945) include a type-script draft with revisions of The Autobiography of Sol Bloom; two scrapbooks of clippings (ca.1898-1903) relating in part to SB's career as a music publisher in Chicago; photographs of SB and other including a group of official photographs taken at "United Nations Conference"; testimonials, including the minutes of a luncheon given by the Committee on Foreign Affairs to Sb on his 75th anniversary; an official Report to the President on the Results of the San Francisco Conference, June 26, 1945 inscribed to SB by Harry S. Truman, Cordell Hull et al; membership certificates; and a few condolences to Vera Bloom on her father's death.



SOL BLOOM PAPERS

Container list

Container No.

I. Papers as Member of the U.S. House of Representatives

Case files

New York Office

1	Au-Bow
2	Gol-Gruen
3	Grues-Harr
4	Hart-Hin
5	Hir-Hy
6	I-J
7	Ka-Kel
8	Ken-Kr
9	La-Lub
10	Lud-Mars
11	Mart-Mi
12	Mo-Ni
13	Nie-Pea
14	Pec-Po
15	Pr-Richm
16	Richt-Rosk
17	Rosn-Sandl
18	Sandm-Schr
19	Schu-Shn
20	Shoe-Smi
21	Sno-Sterl
22	Stern-Sz
23	T
24	U-Wa
25	We-Wilk
26	Will-Wy
27	Y-Z; unsorted

SOL BLOOM PAPERS

Container list

Container No.

I. Papers as Member of the U.S. House of Representatives

Case files (cont'd.)

New York and Washington Offices

28	Aa-Alr			
29	Am-Az			
30	Bab-Baz			
31	Bea-Ble			
32	Boa-Bru			
33	Bry-Ca			
34	Ce-Cole			
35	Coll-David			
36	Davis-Droz			
37	Dua-Ett			
38	Ev-Fin			
39	Fip-Fre			
40	Fri-Ge			
41	Gi-Go			
42	Gr-Horr	(Washington Office only)		
43	Horo-Kef	"	"	"
44	Kei-Lari	"	"	"
45	Lanz-Lev			
46	Lew-Mari			
47	Mark-Nuz	(Washington Office only)		
48	Ob-Ron	"	"	"
49	Roo-Say	"	"	"
50	Sc-Sla	"	"	"
51	Slo-Sul	"	"	"
52	Sult-Weir	"	"	"
53	Weis-Z	"	"	"
54-55	Civil service employment			

SOL BLOOM PAPERS

Container list

Container No.

I. Papers as Member of the U.S. House of Representatives

Special Bills

- 56 New York Office  
A-Mar
- 57 May-Z
- 58 Washington Office
- 59 Armed Services Academies
- 60-61 General Correspondence

62 II. Personal Miscellaneous papers

MEMORANDUM

# The New York Public Library

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RE: Biographical sources for Sol Bloom

DATE: 5/11/88

TO: FOR THE RECORD

FROM: John Stinson

1. Biographical Directory of the American Congress,  
1774-1971 [copy in Economics & Public Affairs Div. open shelf]
2. Autobiography of Sol Bloom (N.Y., G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1949)
3. Dictionary of American Biography, Supplement 4, 1946-50, pp. 87-89