

Guide to the A. C. Gilbert Papers

MS 1618



compiled by Carol King

August 1994

Yale University Library
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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Manuscripts and Archives
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CALL NUMBER: MS 1618

CREATOR: Gilbert, A. C. (Alfred Carlton), 1884-1961

TITLE: A. C. Gilbert papers

DATES: 1901-1978

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 6.25 linear feet (4 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The papers consist of letters, newspaper clippings, printed material, and photographs, originally mounted in three volumes, which document the personal and professional life of A. C. Gilbert. Volume one documents Gilbert's athletic career, both in Oregon and then at Yale, and his interest in magic arts. Volume two relates to Gilbert's career as a manufacturer, producing magic toys, Erector sets, model trains, and other toys. The last volume concerns the A. C. Gilbert Company, Yale athletics, and hunting expeditions. An addition to the collection includes personal correspondence.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1618>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1618>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html. The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Jeffrey Gilbert Marsted, 1991, in loving memory of his mother, Lucretia Gilbert Rowbottom. A daughter of A. C. Gilbert and Mary Thompson Gilbert, she devoted many years to their collection and preparation.

Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

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Preferred Citation

A. C. Gilbert Papers (MS 1618). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

Processing Information

The scrapbooks were dismantled. Pages were removed from their binders and placed in folders, maintaining the original order of contents.

Biographical / Historical

Alfred Carlton Gilbert was born on February 15, 1884, in Salem, Oregon. He attended Pacific University and graduated from the Yale Medical School in 1909. The same year Gilbert founded the Mysto Manufacturing Company, producer of magic sets. In 1916, he changed the name to A. C. Gilbert Company and expanded his line, the best known toys being the Erector and chemistry sets, and American Flyer trains. In addition to his business accomplishments, Gilbert was known as a great athlete. He was world's champion and Olympic first-place pole vaulter in 1908, the first man ever to top thirteen feet. He died on January 24, 1961, in Boston.

Scope and Contents

The papers consist of letters, newspaper clippings, printed material, and photographs, originally mounted in three volumes, which document the personal and professional life of A. C. Gilbert. Volume one documents Gilbert's athletic career, both in Oregon and then at Yale, and his interest in magic arts. Volume two relates to Gilbert's career as a manufacturer, producing magic toys, Erector sets, model trains, and other toys. The last volume concerns the A. C. Gilbert Company, Yale athletics, and hunting expeditions. An addition to the collection includes personal correspondence.

Collection Contents

Original accession

Scrapbooks

- | | |
|-----|---|
| b.1 | Volume I: clippings, letters, and endorsements tracing Gilbert's athletic career, culminating in his participation in the 1908 Olympic Games as a pole vaulter winning the Gold Medal with Ernie Cook; accounts of his interest in magic arts and his performances as an amateur magician. |
| b.2 | Volume II: clippings, letters, and photographs which chronicle Gilbert's career as a manufacturer, first as President of the Mysto Manufacturing Company of New Haven and later as founder and President of the A. C. Gilbert Company, producer of Erector sets and American Flyer scale-model electric trains; additional topics are the development of Yale athletics and Gilbert's interest in the professional breeding of shepherd dogs. |
| b.3 | Volume III: clippings, letters, and photographs relating to the A. C. Gilbert Company, Yale athletics, Gilbert's hunting expeditions and leisure activities; the levelling of Erector Tower, a local New Haven landmark; obituaries of Gilbert and his son. |

Accession 1992-M-045: Additional Material, 1907-1914

b.1 Correspondence from A. C. Gilbert to Mary Thompson

1907 Dec, 1908
May-Aug, 1914
July

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Businessmen
Magic
Toymakers
Toys
Vaulting

Geographic Names

New Haven (Conn.)

Occupations

Inventors

Names

Gilbert, A. C. (Alfred Carlton), 1884-1961

Corporate Bodies

A.C. Gilbert Company
Olympic Games (4th) (1908 London, England)
Yale University -- Sports