

**The Filson Historical Society**  
**Beauchamp, Mark, Jr., 1913-1978**  
**Papers, 1937**

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Size of Collection:  
0.33 cu. ft.

Location Number:  
Mss. A B372a

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**Scope and Content Note**

This collection contains papers related to the 1937 flood in Louisville, Kentucky compiled by Mark Beauchamp, Jr., who helped with relief efforts during the flood primarily at the Buechel Relief Station. Many of the papers are correspondence and official documents from Mayor Neville Miller's office and the Mayor's Relief Organization, which was established during the crisis to coordinate relief efforts and was headed by an executive committee chaired by Marion W. Lewis, Jr. The collection also contains traffic bulletins, quarantine passes, maps, and newspaper clippings from the time of the flood (late January to early February 1937).

Folder 1 contains executive orders relating to flood relief from the Office of the Mayor; orders 1 through 13 are included, dating from January 29 to February 4. During the flood crisis these orders were issued almost daily, sometimes twice in one day. They established procedures for ordering supplies, quarantining parts of the city, and mitigating flood damage.

Folder 2 contains documentation of relief efforts coordinated through the Mayor's Office and the Mayor's Relief Organization. Included are a press release announcing the establishment of the Relief Organization and charts laying out the Relief Organization's committees and subcommittees. Other documents list telephone numbers, addresses, and heads for all committees.

Folder 3 contains memos, reports, letters, telegrams, and other miscellaneous documents coordinating flood relief efforts within the Mayor's Office. Includes reports and correspondence from the Works Progress Administration (WPA), the National Reemployment Service, the Red Cross, and the Bureau of Missing Persons. Various documents from the Mayor's Office or committee heads give status updates on procedures, call for volunteers, respond to concerns from local businesses, and request personnel reassignments and supply orders.

Folder 4 contains bulletins and documents from the Bureau of Traffic during the flood. The bulk of the folder is devoted to traffic bulletins that were posted every few hours from 11:00 a.m. on January 26 to 6:00 p.m. on February 1. These bulletins report river levels, weather forecasts, and traffic warnings, including which roads to avoid because of cave-ins. Also included are a road map of the flooded city, lists of passable and blocked roads, and a "Warning to Motorists" issuing instructions to drive slowly and not return home to flooded areas until given permission.

Folder 5 contains quarantine passes and other civilian documents collected during the flood. Included are three blank quarantine passes, as well as quarantine passes and a gasoline permit made out for Mark Beauchamp. A letter allowing Beauchamp to help with relief efforts in flooded Bowman Field is also included. Also included is a bulletin from the Emergency Welfare Department reporting where civilians can go to get ration cards for clothes, coal, and gasoline, as

well as assistance with housing and employment. A map of flooded Louisville issued by the City Planning Commission on February 20 and a list of places where refugees were sent outside the city are also included.

Folder 6 contains scrapbook pages of newspaper clippings from the New York Herald Tribune, Courier-Journal, Cincinnati Enquirer, Louisville Times, and Louisville Times Daily Magazine. Clippings cover reports of flood damage and cleanup across the Ohio Valley, dating from January 25 to February 10, 1937.

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**Biographical Note**

James Mark Beauchamp, Jr. (1913-1978) was a lawyer and World War II Navy commander in Louisville and later San Diego, California. He was born in Louisville in 1913 to Florence Beauchamp (1888-1964) and James Mark Beauchamp, Sr. (1883-1966), who served two terms as a Jefferson County judge and 11 years as county commissioner. By 1940 Beauchamp was working as an attorney in Louisville and was married to wife Sarah (1916-1988) with a daughter, Sally. By 1944, he and his family were living in Coronado, San Diego, California, where he was stationed with the Navy as a lieutenant. He remained in the Navy after the war, serving on a tour of duty in Okinawa in 1956. He had four children, Sally, George, Mark, and William, and remained in San Diego until his death in 1978.

Beauchamp's role during the 1937 flood seems to have been primarily helping with relief efforts at the Buechel Relief Station, a temporary station in Buechel set up for flood refugees coming in via the Southern Railway. In one of his scrapbook pages in folder 5, Beauchamp writes that "We handled about 12,000 refugees coming from Louisville to Buechel by Southern Railway." In the same folder there is also a note allowing Beauchamp to act for the Louisville and Jefferson County Air Board in relief efforts at Bowman Field and a few quarantine passes reading "The bearer, who is on official relief duty." Beauchamp may therefore have acted in other official capacities during the flood crisis. Beauchamp kept meticulous records of incidents during the flood, preserving and notating many documents in scrapbook pages, and somehow collected many internal documents from the Mayor's Relief Organization.

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**Folder List**

Box 1

Folder 1: Executive orders from Office of the Mayor, Jan. 29-Feb. 4, 1937

Folder 2: Documents detailing relief efforts and establishing Mayor's Relief Organization, Jan. 23-Feb. 1, 1937

Folder 3: Memos, reports, letters, and telegrams, Jan. 28-Feb. 6, 1937

Folder 4: Bureau of Traffic bulletins, Jan. 26-Feb. 1, 1937

Folder 5: Quarantine passes, Emergency Welfare Dept. bulletins, civilian documents, Jan. 26-Feb. 4, 1937

Folder 6: Newspaper clippings, Jan. 25-Feb. 10, 1937

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**Subject Headings**

American Red Cross.  
Bowman Field (Ky.)  
Bureau of Missing Persons – Kentucky – Louisville.  
Disaster relief – Kentucky – Louisville.  
Ewald Iron Company (Louisville, Ky.)  
Flood damage – Ohio River Valley.  
Floods – Kentucky – Louisville – 20th century.  
Mayor's Relief Organization – Kentucky – Louisville.  
Miller, Neville, 1894-1977.  
National Reemployment Service (U.S.)  
Ohio River.  
Rationing – Kentucky – Louisville – 20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Refugees – Kentucky – Louisville.  
Traffic safety – Kentucky – Louisville – 20th century.  
United States. Works Progress Administration.