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Scope Note

The papers of William Robert Ming, Jr. (1911-1973), attorney and law professor, span the years 1940 to 1973, primarily covering Mr. Ming's work at the law firm, McCoy, Ming & Black, as well as the legal proceedings leading up to his incarceration in 1973.

Mr. Ming was prosecuted for tax evasion in 1970 for failing to file tax returns from 1963-1966. Although back taxes and fines were paid, he was sentenced to 16 months in prison. Mr. Ming's appeals were denied, and he began to serve his sentence in January 1973. While in prison, he suffered a stroke and was released on parole prior to the end of the sentence. He died in June 1973. There is a significant amount of correspondence in these papers from colleagues and friends writing on Ming's behalf, urging authorities to grant him parole and release from prison. There are several court cases documented in Ming's papers. One significant case is that of Heman Sweatt, an applicant to the University of Texas School of Law who met all of the qualifications for admission but was denied admission because of his race. There are also several cases with which Ming was involved in his role as attorney for the Price Administration, a federal agency.

Mr. Ming was quite active in veterans organizations, a result of his tenure in the U.S. Army. Organizations with which Ming was associated, including the American Veterans Committee and the World Veterans Organization, are well-documented in the collection. The papers were donated to MSRC in 1995 by George H. Gray, executor for the estate of Mrs. Irvana H. Ming.

Biographical Sketch

1911 May 7 Born in Chicago, Illinois to William, Sr. and Annie (Johnson) Ming

Attended Englewood High School

Attended Crane Junior College

1931 Entered the University of Chicago law school.

1933 Graduated cum laude, University of Chicago law school

1933 Admitted to the Bar of the State of Illinois

1933-37 Assistant Attorney, Illinois Commerce Committee

1933-42 Practiced law, Dickerson & King in Chicago, Illinois

1937- Member, U.S. Supreme Court Bar

1937- Member, National Legal Committee NAACP

1941 Married Irvana E. Harvey of Indianapolis, Indiana

1941 August 22 admitted to practice in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois

1941-47 served as Assistant General Counsel and Associate General Counsel for the Office of Price Administration, Washington, DC

1942-43 Professor, Howard University School of Law

1942-47 Entered U.S. Army as a private; rose to rank of captain. Commissioned in the Judge Advocate General's Department.

1943-44 Argued Smith v. Allwright before the Supreme Court. At the time, he

was a private in the U.S. Army

1945 Released from active duty in the U.S. Army

1946-47 Judge Advocate General's Office
1947- Associate Professor, University of Chicago Law School

1947- Co-counsel, Chicago Division, American Civil Liberties Union National Vice-President,
American Veterans Committee

1949-73 Special Assistant Attorney General, Illinois Commerce Commission.

1953-73 Partner with the law firm, McCoy, Ming & Black, Chicago, Illinois

1957 won \$32 million suit for the Commonwealth Edison Co. Ming was the first African American attorney to win a major suit for one of the nation's largest companies.

1957 Defended Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in a state income tax case.

1957-59 National Chairman, American Veterans Committee

1970, April 14 4-count criminal information was filed in U.S. District Court, Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division charging Mr. Ming with wilful failure to file income tax returns for 1963, 1964, 1965 & 1966 at the time required by law.

1970, November 2 found guilty by a jury on four counts.

1970, November 19 sentenced to the custody of the Attorney General for four months and fined \$1,250 on each of the four counts. Sentence to run consecutively with each other.

1972, May 26 conviction appealed to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. Rehearing was denied on June 26, 1972.

1972, October 16 applied to the Supreme Court of the U.S. for a writ of certiorari, which was denied on October 16, with rehearing being denied on December 4, 1972

1973, January 9 began serving 16 month sentence

1973, June 30 Died at Veteran's Research Hospital, Chicago, Illinois

Sources:

W. Robert Ming Papers, 196-1, Folders 1-2, Biographical Materials
Series Description

Series A Personal Papers

Box 196-1 This series includes biographical materials, case notes, army commission materials, case notes, and certificates. Correspondence and financial materials of Ming's wife, Irvena, are also included.

Series B Legal Materials Relating to Ming's career and his
Box 196-1 Incarceration
to 196-2 Materials in this series consist of briefs documenting Ming's legal case, as well his

imprisonment for tax evasion. Items include petitions; material from the federal correctional prison in Sandstone, Minnesota; and parole materials.

Series C Correspondence

Box 196-2 The correspondence in this collection consists to 196-4 of Ming's dealings with his clients, the organizations such as the American Veterans Committee and the World Veterans Federation, as well as letters from individuals writing to the parole board in support of Ming's release from prison.

Series D Writings

Box 196-5 Most of the writings in this series consist of to 196-15 legal briefs for the numerous cases with which Ming and his law firm were affiliated.

Series E Organizations

Box 196-15 This series includes materials related to the to 196-18 various organizations with which Ming was involved. The majority of the items are from the American Veterans Committee (AVC), the NAACP, and the World Veterans Federation. There are a few Chicago-based legal groups as well as other veterans groups.

Series F Photographs

Box 196-19 Images are mostly of W. Robert Ming at various legal functions, as well as some military photos from his service during World War II.

Series G Oversize

Box 196-20 Certificates, photograph of Ming, and a print of "Lincoln Weeping" by Bill Mauldin

Series H Restricted

Box 196-21 Some court cases within the NAACP are documented in this series, as well as some financial materials.

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- 1 The Elimination of Segregation in the Public Schools of the North and West. Reprinted from The Journal of Negro Education, Summer Issue, 1952.
 - 2 "The Present Legal and Social Status of the American Negro," (New York, NY: NAACP, 1947).
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- 3 Racial Restrictions and the Fourteenth Amendment: The Restrictive Covenant Cases. Reprinted for private circulation from the University of Chicago Law Review, Winter 1949.

Radio Discussions

- 4 Freedom in an Age of Danger. Also with Robert Horn and Louis Wirth. December 17, 1950
- 5 A Look at Civil Liberties. Also with Harry Kalven, Jr. and Malcolm Sharp. October 19, 1952
- 6 Tolerance and Cooperation in American Democracy. Also with T.V. Smith and Walter White. February 15, 1953
- 7 What do Americans Believe about their Fellow-Men? Also with Malcolm P. Sharp and Louis Wirth. February 18, 1951

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- 8-9 Hospital Bill S3230 (2 folders)
- 10 Hughes, Langston. "Meat, Mecca, and Beer," [autographed] Chicago Defender March 11-17, 1961.

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and the Board of Election Registrars of Mobile County,
Alabama
2 Order

Inez White, et al. vs. Chicago Land Clearance Commission
3 Petition for Writ of Certiorari to the Supreme Court of the State of
Illinois and Argument in Support Thereof

James P. McGranery, Attorney General of the U.S. v. Communist
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4-5 Recommended Decision of Hearing Panel (2 folders)

Joe Hale vs. Commonwealth of Kentucky
6 Petition for Writ of Certiorari to the Court of Appeals of the
Commonwealth of Kentucky and Brief in Support Thereof
7 Petitioner's Brief on Argument

John S. Mahan, Secretary, State Board of Elections, et al. V. Henry
E. Howell, Jr., et. al.; City of Virginia Beach v. Henry E.
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et. al.

8 [Summary of case]D Writings (continued)

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196-14 Briefs by others (continued)
Joseph Dorsey, Monrie Dowling and Calvin Harper, suing on behalf
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Stuyvesant Town Corporation and Metropolitan Life
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9 Brief of Plaintiffs in Support of Motion for Temporary
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Lonnie E. Smith vs. S.E. Allwright, Election Judge, and James J. Liuzza, Associate Election Judge, 48th Precinct of Harris County, Texas
10 Appeal from the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of Texas

National Federation of Railway Workers, and Unincorporated Body vs. National Mediation Board, Brotherhood Railway Carmen of America, Railway Employees' Department of the American Federation of Labor, and B.M. Jewell, President of Railway Employees' Department of the American Federation of Labor

11 Petition for Writ of Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, and Brief in
12 Support of Petition

Olive B. Barrows, Richard Pikaar and M.M. O'Gara vs. Leola Jackson

13 Brief for Respondent
14 Respondent's Brief

Puerto Rican Organization for Political Action, a not-for-profit Illinois; Jesus Gomez; Geraldo Gomez; Victor Gomez; Abdona Vargas, and all others similarly situated vs. Stanley T. Kuser, Marie H. Suthers, and Francis P. Canary, in their capacity as the Board of Election Commissioners of the City of Chicago
15 Brief and Argument for Defendants-Appellants

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196-14 Briefs by others (continued)

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16 Brief of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People as Amicus Curiae

United States of America v. Eugene Dennis, John B. Williamson, Jacob Stachel, Robert G. Thompson, Benjamin J. Davis, Jr., Henry Winston, John Gates, Irving Potash, Gilbert Green, Carl Winter and Gus Hall
17 On appeal from a judgment of conviction of the District Court for the Southern District of New York, upon an indictment for the violation of Section 3 of the "Smith Act."

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18 Brief of Defendants and Appellees

196-15 Hearings

1 Hearing of the Seditious Activities Commission Ordered by the Legislature to Investigate on Reports of Communist Influences at the University of Chicago and Roosevelt College, Held in the House Chambers Springfield, Illinois, Commencing April 21, 1949

E Organizations

- 196-15 2 Afro-Americans Organization
- 3 American Association for the United Nations
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- American Veterans Committee (AVC) (continued)
- 196-15 9 Chapter Handbook
- 10 Constitution
- 11 Convention materials
- 12 Co-ordinating Council for Democracy in Germany
- 13 Form letters
- 14 Handbooks
- 15 Membership
- 16 National Officers
- 17 Newsclips
- 18 Newsletters
- 19 North Shore Amendments
- 20 Notes
- 21 Officers
- 22 Proposed Convention Rules
- 23 Proposed National Affairs Platform
- 24 Proposed State and Local Affairs Platform
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- 26 Recommendations
- 27 Report on a Civil Rights Program for AVC
- 28 Resolutions Pertaining to Domestic Affairs
- 29 Results of Ballots on Domestic Affairs

- 196-16 1 Saving AVC
- 2 [Urge for AVC representatives to testify before Congress]
- Workshops for AVC
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- 4 1946
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- 6 1948
- 7 1949 - January-February
- 8 1949 - March-December
- 9 1949-51
- 10 1950 - January-June
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- E Organizations (continued)

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196-16 13 1951 - January-May

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7 n.d.

8 Chicago Bar Association

9 Chicago Caucus

10 Chicago HRC

11 Cook County Government - "The Facts"

12 Hoover Commission

13 Howard University Federal Credit Union

14 Legal Aid Society of Chicago

15 Legal Opportunities Scholarship Committee

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16 Board of Directors

17 Convention - 1977

18 Maryland State Conference

19 Newsclips

20 Press Releases

21 Southern Lawyers Committee

22 Washington Bureau

196-18 1 National Black Political Convention

2 Paramount Toastmasters Club

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3-4 Hutchins, Robert M. (Chancellor) - April 21, 1949 (2 folders)

5 Sparling, Edward J. (Dr.); Thompson, John B. (Dr.) -
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6 Supreme Court of the State of Illinois

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196-18 10 Welfare Council of Metropolitan Chicago

Worlds Veterans Federation

11 Background Leaflets

12 Constitution

13-14 General Assembly - December 1952 (2 folders)

15 Press Releases

F Photographs

196-19 1 W. Robert Ming - speaking (2 photographs)

2 W. Robert Ming - being sworn in - Chicago, IL

3 W. Robert Ming - receiving plaque from the Cook County Bar Association
- Annual Banquet - 1966

4 W. Robert Ming - group shot with Hubert Humphrey and unidentified
others

5 W. Robert Ming - World War II photo - while Ming was an Army 2nd

Lieutenant

6 W. Robert Ming - with identified others
Larry Harrison and Robert E. Merriam
Tibor Heisler, Larry Harrison, Thelma O'Kelly, and Clif Mora
Imperial Potentate and Levi H. Morris
Senator Farley, Gov. Robert Meyner, and unidentified others
Imperial Potentate, Senator Farley, Gov. Robert Meyner, and
unidentified others
Senator Farley and Gov. Robert Meyner
"The Sherman"
Gov. Robert Meyner

7 W. Robert Ming - with identified others (continued)
Mr. Hester and unidentified man
Southwest Bar Association - 1963, Tallahassee, Florida
World Veteran's Organization - Dec. [1952?]

8 W. Robert Ming - unidentified others

9 World War II
F Photographs (continued)

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196-19 9 World's Veterans Organization

10 Unidentified

G Oversize

196-20 Award presented by the 13th Labor Conference on Civil Rights, Jewish
Labor Committee, November 4, 1967

Citation for Public Service from the University of Chicago Alumni
Association

Citation from the Chicago Bar Association in appreciation for being a
member of the Board Of Managers of the Association, 1967-1969

Citation from the City of Chicago for being appointed to the office of
Member of Mayor's Commission on Human Relations, August 22, 1964

"Lincoln Weeping" by Bill Mauldin, 11/22/63 [signed print]

Unidentified newsarticle with photograph of Ming, January 1969

196-21 Certificate of Award certifying that Ming is a member of the Mahalia
Jackson One Hundred Club, n.d.

Certificate of Life Membership for Mrs. W. Robert Ming, July 1975

Citation for Outstanding Service for the Chairman of the 1970 Freedom
Fund Dinner by the Chicago NAACP - June 4, 1971

The Richard E. Westbrooks Award from the Cook County Bar
Association, May 27, 1966

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Court Cases

- 196-22 1 Cooper v. Cooper
- 2 NAACP - Holt v. McGee
- 3 NAACP - Tramble v. Toole
- 4 NAACP - Wills v. Washington

- 5 Financial Materials