The papers of William Palmer were placed in the Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs in November of 1975 by Mr. William Palmer and were opened for research in June, 1976.

William Palmer was born in Sycamore, Illinois on January 6, 1907. His family moved to Flint, Michigan the next year. Mr. Palmer graduated from Flint Central High School and attended Flint Junior College, Trinity College in Toronto, Northwestern University, and Carnegie Institute.

Prior to entering politics Mr. Palmer held various jobs. He worked two years as a production clerk for E.I. DuPont, Inc. of Flint. He was also employed by the Felt and Taunt Company of Chicago, and worked as a theatre manager in Wilkins burgh, Pennsylvania. Mr. Palmer enjoyed a long association with the Flint Public Library and in 1932 listed his occupation as librarian.

In November, 1932, Mr. Palmer was elected State Senator, representing Michigan's Thirteenth District. He was subsequently re-elected in 1934 and 1936. Mr. Palmer served on the Conservation, Judiciary, Education, Taxation, Insurance and Transportation Committees. In 1934 he was named Secretary of the Genesee County Democratic Party. During the 1936 legislative recess he traveled to the Far East and upon his return worked at the Flint Fisher Body Plant. Mr. Palmer was elected President Pro Tem of the Senate in 1937, and resigned from the Senate on November 15, 1937.

The papers of Mr. Palmer reflect his work as a member of the State Legislature.
Important subjects covered in the collection are:

- Economic problems caused by the Depression, 1933-1937
- Education, 1933-1937
- Flint Bus Strike, 1937
- Industrial relations and labor legislation, 1933-1937
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