

C Baird, Ray (1897-1982), Papers, 1897-1985
749 .6 linear feet

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INTRODUCTION

Papers of a Missouri professional youth work director, 1925-1956; businessman, 1956-1974; and amateur band leader, 1974-1982. Includes personal papers, genealogical materials on the Baird family, diaries, correspondence, poetry, award presentations, photographs, and newspaper clippings.

DONOR INFORMATION

The papers were donated to the University of Missouri by Roy G. Smith on 12 December 1983 (Accession No. 4543).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ray Baird was born on June 18, 1897, in Stotts City, Lawrence County, Missouri, to Charles and Nancy Stotts Baird. Through his parents, he developed an interest in church and community activities, becoming deeply involved in both. He proved to be just as devoted to his academic studies. Though circumstances forced him to put his studies aside for a time and take a job as a mail carrier, Baird was able to remain active in both the church and community.

After completing a short tour of duty in the Army in 1918, Baird moved to Springfield, Missouri, determined to finish his high school studies and enroll at Southwest Missouri State Teachers College. To combat the loneliness he felt over his separation from his family, Baird sought new church affiliations in Springfield. Through the friends he made, he was introduced to the secretary of the local YMCA. Impressed with Baird, he offered him a job to help pay his way through school. This was to be the start of Baird's long career with the YMCA.

Baird's duties gradually increased until he was offered the job of boys' work secretary when he took his degree. He remained with the Springfield association until 1925 when he took over the position of boys' work secretary at the YMCA in St. Joseph, Missouri. His duties there included forming a high school and grade school "Y" group and directing activities at Camp Marvin Hillyard each summer. He left St. Joseph in 1942 and moved to Beaumont, Texas, joining the staff of the YMCA as the boys' work secretary.

Baird retired in 1956, moving to Kansas City, Missouri, to work in the investment business with one of his former "boys." In 1974, he was forced to retire due to a serious heart condition. He moved into the John Knox Retirement Village at Lee's Summit where he died on March 10, 1982.

FOLDER LIST

- f. 1 Personal papers, 1897-1982. Copies of birth and death certificates, will, Army discharge paper, bachelor degree, and obituaries.
- f. 2 Genealogical materials, n.d. Baird family genealogy.
- f. 3 Diaries, 1931-1978. Four volumes describing personal attitudes and daily events.
- f. 4-5 Correspondence, 1941-1982. Letters from friends and colleagues.
- f. 6-8 Poetry, 1960-1980. Written by Baird for friends and special occasions.
- f. 9-13 Golden Deeds Award, 1954. Award presented to Baird by the Exchange Club of Beaumont, Texas, for his work with the community's youth. Letters and telegrams expressing congratulations.
- f. 14 Appreciation Award, 1956. Appreciation dinner and award given to Baird by the administration of the Beaumont, Texas YMCA upon his retirement. Letters and special autograph booklet signed by friends and colleagues.
- f. 15 Photographs, Family, 1920-1955.
- f. 16-17 Photographs, YMCA work, 1919-1980. Photographs of activities and the boys Baird worked with.
- f. 18-19 Newspaper clippings, 1922-1985. Articles on YMCA activities and Baird's career.
- f. 20 Miscellany, n.d.

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