

C Botts, Thomas W. (1904-1999), Papers, 1912-1981  
2686 3.2 linear feet

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## INTRODUCTION

Correspondence, training information, and track meet programs, of University of Missouri track and cross-country coach Thomas W. Botts.

## DONOR INFORMATION

The Botts papers were donated to the University of Missouri on November 11, 1998 by his son, Thomas M. Botts (Accession No. 5777).

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Thomas W. Botts was born in Mexico, Missouri, on March 28, 1904, the son of Thomas and Mary Wilson Botts. He graduated in 1927 from Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, where he excelled as an all-conference hurdler. In 1931 he graduated from the University of Kansas with a Master's Degree in history and did further graduate work in physical education at the University of Iowa. Botts married Virginia Mullinax on August 30, 1929, and they later had one son, Thomas.

Coach Botts began his coaching career at Ruskin High School, Hickman Mills, Missouri, in 1927 and then coached at Fort Scott (Kansas) Junior College from 1932 to 1941. In 1941 he joined the University of Missouri coaching staff as an assistant track coach and assumed the head coaching position in 1946. During his 26-year tenure as head coach, Botts led the Tigers to four outdoor conference titles, four indoor track championships, two Big-Eight cross-country titles, and the 1965 national indoor track championship. While building a nationally recognized track and field program, Coach Botts also mentored 48 individual conference champions, 23 All-Americans, five national champions, and two Olympians. He retired in 1972 after 31 years of service to the University of Missouri and was granted the status of professor emeritus.

Along with his coaching duties Botts also served on the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Track Rules committee, was a president of the NCAA Cross Country Coaches Association and, and was an assistant coach with the 1961 U.S. track team, which completed an undefeated tour of Europe. During his career Botts garnered various awards and honors including the 1970 cross country coach of the year and inductions into the Missouri State Sports Hall of Fame, the Drake Relays Coaches Hall of Fame, Westminster College's Intercollegiate Who's Who, and the National Track and Field Hall of Fame. Coach Botts died in Columbia, Missouri, on March 1, 1999.

## SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The Botts Papers are arranged into four series: **Personal**, **Professional**, **Publications**, and **Miscellaneous**.

The **Personal** series contains correspondence and speeches arranged chronologically. Most of the correspondence pertains to Botts' professional life, though there are personal notes and letters from family and friends throughout the papers. The correspondence ends abruptly in 1976 at the end of his professional career as a coach and referee.

The **Professional** series comprises meeting minutes, class material, notes, and team rosters, arranged alphabetically by name or subject. The track and cross-country material contains results for various meets and championships. Also included are photographs of Botts and the Missouri track team, as well as the blueprints for the Memorial Stadium building project in 1956.

The **Publications** series consists of track and cross-country programs from track meets across the United States, including the NCAA and Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) championships. The programs are an excellent source of information on intercollegiate athletics and the early status of track and field in the United States. One item of historical significance is the 1932 Olympics Games official program for the games held in Los Angeles, California. University of Missouri publications and track and field training materials are also in this series.

The **Miscellaneous** series includes a scrapbook, Big Eight track meet results, and Botts' practice journals for the 1952 to 1970 seasons. The journals, which are on note cards, contain information on the weather conditions, practices, and the individuals participating.

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