

Collection #
M 1087

JOSEPH BERTRAM
JOURNALS, 1904–1932

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Processed by

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Manuscript and Visual Collections Department
William Henry Smith Memorial Library
Indiana Historical Society
450 West Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

www.indianahistory.org

COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF
COLLECTION: 2 manuscript boxes

COLLECTION
DATES: 1904–1932

PROVENANCE: Marjorie Bott, Columbus, IN

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE
FORMATS:

RELATED
HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION
NUMBER: 2005.0253

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Joseph Bertram was born 26 March 1879 in Jennings County, Indiana, where he resided his entire life. On his farm in Spencer, Indiana, he raised both corn and livestock. In 1902 he married Bess Stewert, and together they had five children. Joseph was very involved with the local community, attending Four Corners Catholic Church, showing at the county fair, and participating in local Democratic political activities. He occasionally participated in activities at Zion Baptist Church, which Bess attended. Joseph Bertram died 14 July 1970 in North Vernon, Indiana.

Sources:

Collection materials, Indiana birth and death records (ancestry.com)

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

This collection includes twenty-four of Joseph Bertram's journals, a small account book for Zion Baptist Church, and a short typed document by Lois Bertram discussing the journals and laying out Joseph Bertram's genealogy. Each journal contains entries for a single year, beginning to end, and there is a volume for each year between 1904 and 1932 except 1907-09, 1911, and 1916. It is unclear whether he did not keep journals for those years or whether they are simply missing. However, the existing volumes have regular daily entries throughout.

Bertram's entries are short and matter-of-fact, each one describing what he did that day, without the addition of opinions. In this sense, they give a very good idea of what the day-to-day life of an Indiana farmer was like in the early decades of the twentieth century. Most of the entries list the day's weather and the kind of work he did, such as harvesting corn or selling hogs, but he also briefly notes events such as the advent of delivered mail, the death of a neighbor from the 1918 Spanish influenza pandemic, and the town's celebration of the end of the First World War. Bertram's writings also reveal how frequently the farmers and other residents in his community assisted each other with work and supported each other in times of sickness or need.

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog:
<http://opac.indianahistory.org/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 1087).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.