

**Papers of
Wilfrid G.
Tatham**

**Reference:
ATH/WGT**

Papers of Wifrid G. Tatham

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1908-1960

Scrapbooks compiled by, and personalia relating to, the middle-distance runner and hurdler Wilfrid Tatham illustrating his athletics career primarily during the 1920s. The scrapbooks contain a significant amount of material relating to varsity and inter-collegiate athletics during the 1920s, particularly between Oxford and Cambridge Universities. There are also a number of references to Oxford and Cambridge versus Harvard and Yale meetings. As Wilfrid Tatham was an international athlete, the volumes not only document his career as 'a miler' and a hurdler in the United Kingdom, but also in America and at various Olympic Games held during the 1920s. His appearance and subsequent disappointment in the 1924 Paris Olympic Games, where he fell whilst leading in the hurdles race, is well documented.

The scrapbooks include a number of athletics programmes, relating to track and field meetings, which chart Wilfrid Tatham's career at Cambridge University Athletics Club and internationally. Many of these programmes are annotated. There are a number of menu cards, many autographed by contemporary athletes; and the scrapbooks also include personalia including photographs, correspondence and identity cards. In addition, the scrapbooks contain a number of articles relating to the athlete Bert Ives, see ATH/BI.

Personalia includes a number of photographs of Wilfrid Tatham, many of which were taken during athletics meetings; medals awarded to him at the 1924 Paris Olympic Games and 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games; and miscellaneous material relating to his time teaching in Canada including a 'liquor permit' issued to him during the prohibition of alcohol in Canada.

Administrative history: Wilfrid George Tatham, known as Gus, was born on 12 December 1898. He was the son of George Allen Ralph Tatham (1860-1933) and Mary Welbank Tatham (nee Fowle, 1862-1927) of The Towers, South Hill Park, Bromley. Siblings included Marian Sarah [Anne], Allen Ralph and Elsa Mary. He attended Summer Fields Preparatory School near Oxford between 1908 and 1912 and then Eton College, having secured a Foundation Scholarship. Whilst at Eton he won the

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Public Schools Championships in the mile and half-mile events, organised by the London Athletic Club at Stamford Bridge. He was Victor Ludorum of the year winning eight events. As well as a member of the Eton football and rowing teams, he was a member of the Eton Society, edited the Eton Magazine and, as a fine violin player, held the five-guinea prize for music. In 1917 he left Eton and gained an Exhibition to King's College, Cambridge. His studies were truncated by the First World War and he was commissioned in the Coldstream Guards, First Battalion. He served in France during the later part of the First World War, was promoted to 2nd Lieutenant, was awarded the Military Cross and commanded his Company on several occasions. He fought in the Battle of the Canal du Nord in September 1918. After returning to England from Cologne, he played for rugby for Harlequins Football Club as well as for King's College, Cambridge. During his time with the Coldstream Guards he had also played rugby for the Public School Services' XV. At Cambridge University he captained the Tennis Club and was an influential figure in the College Music Society. He achieved a 2:1 in the first part of the Historical Tripos and graduated with a BA in June 1922.

From 1919 onwards an athletics career dramatically developed. Whilst at Cambridge he was awarded a half-blue for the mile and he ran for three years against Oxford. In 1920 he ran for Oxford and Cambridge in the 'Two Miles College Championship Relay Race' held at Pennsylvania University, USA. The English team won, breaking the world record in the process. Returning to Cambridge, he ran in AAA Sports held at Stamford Bridge and was selected to represent England in the mile event at Crewe, competing against Scotland and Ireland. He was selected to represent England in the 1920 Antwerp Olympic Games although he did not compete. He also became a member of the Achilles Club which was formed in 1920 by, and for, past and present representatives of Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

In 1921 he competed for King's College, Cambridge against New College, Oxford. He won the mile, half-mile and quarter-mile races and came second in the hurdles race and in the hammer throwing. In July 1921 he again visited America with the Oxford and

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Cambridge teams and competed against Harvard and Yale on 23 July; and against Cornell and Princeton on 28 July. On his return he ran for England against France in Paris in 1921, 1922 and 1926. In 1922 he was in the 'Nine-to-One' victory of Cambridge against Oxford; and also ran for Cambridge in the return 'Four Mile Relay Race' against Pennsylvania and Oxford, promoted by the Achilles Club, at Queen's, London, in which Cambridge won. In July 1922 he competed for England in the AAA Championships against Scotland and Ireland at Glasgow. As a member of the Oxford and Cambridge Athletic teams which toured central Europe, he won the 1500m and mile races at Prague; and the 1500m at Budapest, beating the Czech record holder. Between 1920 and 1926 he competed in the Open Championships in England, winning the 440 yards hurdles in 1924. In 1923 he organised a team of Old Blues and Internationals to run against Cambridge in London. He competed in the 1924 Paris Olympic Games in the 400m hurdles where he came 16th out of 24 competitors with a time of 58.5 seconds. In the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games he ran the 800m and came 20th out of 49 competitors with a time of 1 minute 58.2 seconds.

Wilfrid Tatham was a versatile athlete who, apart from 1925, was placed in the first six at the AAA Championships every year from 1920 to 1930. He was also a member of the Achilles team that won the 4x400 yards relay in 1930. In addition to competing in the 1924 and 1928 Olympic Games, he was fourth in the 440 yards hurdles at the 1930 British Empire Games. Perhaps his greatest sporting achievement had come earlier in his career when he was a member of the combined Oxbridge team that had set the world record for the 4x880 yard relay at the 1920 Pennsylvania Relays.

In his professional life, he began work as an Assistant Master at Eton College in September 1922 and later became Housemaster and Master of College. As a fine violinist he also led the Eton school orchestra. Internal evidence indicates that he became a Special Constable for Buckinghamshire, in the Eton College detachment, and was sworn into this role on 8 May 1926. During 1929 he spent time in Canada working as a teacher. On 11 August 1931 he married Rachel Ellen Julia Balfour (1907-1992) at

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St Mary the Virgin, North Aston. Rev Frederick Hugh Tatham, the bridegroom's uncle, and Rev C. P. Walde officiated. In 1940 he returned to the Coldstream Guards where he served as Major throughout the rest of the Second World War. In 1943 he was captured by the German army but escaped from the Prisoner of War camp, only to be captured again later that year in Italy. He was sent to a camp for officers, Oflag VIII-F, in Brunswick, Lower Saxony. From c1948-1954 he worked as a British Council Representative in Greece and on 10 June 1954 was awarded the OBE (Civil Division) in recognition for this work. For three years before retirement, in 1958, he was Busar for the Royal Society of Arts. During the 1970s he lived on St Helena, worked as an archivist and co-authored 'Astronomers and other Scientists on St Helena' with K. A. Harwood. Wilfrid Tatham died on St Helena on 26 July 1978, aged 79 years.

Sources: papers of Wilfrid G. Tatham; Tatham family history accessed 22 July 2014 from: <http://www.saxonlodge.net/getperson.php?personID=10056&tree=Tatham>; Summer Fields newsletter accessed 22 July 2014 from: http://www.cleverpaper.co.uk/Summer%20Fields_2013/files/assets/basic-html/page94.html; Olympic athletes reference accessed 22 July 2014 from: <http://www.sports-reference.com/olympics/athletes/ta/wilfrid-tatham-1.html>

2 standard boxes (comprising 4 volumes, 1 file and 9 items)

Access: Open

Access conditions: Access to all registered researchers.

Notes: Old reference: WGT

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Papers of Wifrid G. Tatham

Language: English, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Norwegian

Creator name: Tatham, Wilfrid George (1898-1978), athlete

Custodial history: This collection was previously in the custody of the National Centre for Athletics Literature (NCAL).

Archival notes: Papers arranged and described by Mark Eccleston, July 2014, in compliance with General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD(G), second edition, 2000; and in-house cataloguing guidelines.

Related material: Other archive collections, formerly held as part of the National Centre for Athletics Literature (NCAL), are catalogued as collections distinct from this collection. They comprise both institutional archives and collections of personal papers of athletes, athletics administrators, journalists and others associated with the athletics world.

Catalogues of the institutional archives available on the online archive catalogue are as follows:

Amateur Athletic Association: papers, 1880-1992.
Finding No: AAA;

Midland Counties Amateur Athletics Association:
papers, 1900-1982. Finding No: MCAAA;

Midland Counties Cross Country Association:
papers, 1898-1985. Finding No: ATH/MCCCA;

Southern Counties Amateur Athletic Association:
papers, 1958-1983. Finding No: SCAAA.

Catalogues, or collection descriptions, of personal papers available on the online archive catalogue are as follows:

Harold M. Abrahams (1899-1978), athlete and athletics administrator: papers, 1936-1976. Finding No: HA;

Joe Binks (1874-1966), athlete and athletics commentator: papers, [1920s-1950s]. Finding No: ATH/JB;

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Dennis N. J. Cullum (1913-1985), athlete and coach: papers, [1930s]-1985. Finding No: ATH/DC;

Bert Ives (1890-c 1975), athlete and athletics administrator: papers, [1920s-1970s]. Finding No: ATH/BI;

John Jewell (1912-2001), athlete and athletics commentator: papers, 1897-2002. Finding No: ATH/JJ;

Ralph Lloyd-Edgley: papers, [c 1924]-[c 1931]. Finding No: ATH/RLE;

Walter Monk (1896-after 1965), athlete: papers, 1918-1961. Finding No: ATH/WHM;

Arthur Francis Hamilton Newton (1883-1959), South African long distance runner: papers, 20th century. Finding No: AN;

Edgar Rober Leslie (Peter) Powell, (fl 1920s-70s), athlete: papers, 1813-1988. Finding No: ATH/ERLP;

Wilf Richards (fl 1920s-70s), athlete and journalist: papers, 1924-[late 20th century]. Finding No: ATH/WR.

Information about other collections of personal papers of the following will also be added in the future:

George Mair Adam (1898-1989), athletics administrator: papers. Finding No: GA;

C.C. Vargas (fl 1922-31), athlete: papers, 1922-31. Finding No: CCV;

Leonard H. Ward (fl mid 20th century), athletics coach: papers, 1950s-70s. Finding No: LHW;

Arthur Winter (d 1990), athlete: photographic collection, 20th century. Finding No: AW.

ATH/WGT/1

Scrapbooks

1919-1960

Four scrapbooks compiled by Wilfrid Tatham primarily comprising newspaper cuttings; athletics programmes; cartoons; articles; correspondence; and souvenir items. One volume is indexed. Material relates to various athletes and athletics meetings and

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there is substantial material relating to the 1924 Paris Olympic Games.

4 volumes

Access: Open

ATH/WGT/1/1 Scrapbook 1919-1921

Scrapbook of newspaper cuttings; athletics programmes; cartoons; articles; correspondence relating to Wilfrid Tatham's selection to represent his country in various athletics meetings; and souvenir items including ship passenger lists, programmes for musical events, tickets and dinner invitations. Some menu cards include the autograph signatures of contemporary athletes. There is substantial material relating to Wilfrid Tatham's travels to America where he competed in athletics events representing Cambridge University. The majority of newspaper cuttings relate to athletics but there are also references to golf and tennis.

The volume includes various references to inter- varsity sports; a fixture list of Cambridge University Athletic Club, Michaelmas Term, 1920; and images of W. G. Tatham, H. B. Stallard, W. R. Milligan, B. G. D. Rudd, E. A. Montague, Captain Rudd, Colonel A. N. S. Jackson, H. M. Abrahams, G. A. Trowbridge and E. S. Burns.

There are a small number of football rugby programmes as well as various athletics programmes. Tatham features in some inter-collegiate programmes running half mile, one mile and throwing the hammer. Programmes relate to track and field events:

Cambridge University Athletic Club 'The University Sports', 24 May [1919], annotated;

'King's versus Christ's Inter-Collegiate Competition Athletic Sports', 20-21 November 1919, annotated;

'King's College, Cambridge versus New College, Oxford', 16 February 1920, annotated;

Cambridge University Athletic Club 'University Sports', 10-12 March 1920, annotated;

'Oxford and Cambridge Athletic Sports', 27 March 1920, annotated;

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Amateur Athletic Association 'The Championships', 2-3 July 1920, annotated;

'International Amateur Athletic Contest: England, Ireland, Scotland', 10 July 1920 held in Crewe, annotated;

Achilles Club 'A British Empire Team versus an USA Team', 4 September [1920] held at Queen's Club, West Kensington, annotated;

'Trinity versus King's Inter-Collegiate Competition', 12-15 November 1920, annotated;

'Cambridge versus Oxford Relay Races', 3 December 1920 held on Fenner's Ground, Cambridge, annotated;

'Athletic Sports: Magdalen, Oxford versus Caius, Cambridge', 11 February 1921, annotated;

'Athletic Sports: New College, Oxford versus King's College, Cambridge', 26 February 1921;

Cambridge University Athletic Club 'Inter-College Relay Races', 21-22 February [1921] held in Cambridge, annotated;

Cambridge University Athletic Club 'University Sports', 3-5 March 1921, annotated;

'Oxford and Cambridge Athletic Sports', 19 March 1921 held at Queen's Club, West Kensington, annotated;

Amateur Athletic Association 'Championship Sports in London', 1-2 July 1921, annotated.

1 volume

Access: Open

Notes: Old reference: WGT/1

ATH/WGT/1/2 Scrapbook 1920-1960

Indexed scrapbook of newspaper cuttings about athletics. Includes articles relating to the Islington Team Race; the Middlesex Championships; the North of the Thames Cross-Country Championships; and Southern Counties Cross-Country Association. An article by W. G. George refers to Great Britain's

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potential representatives at the 1920 Antwerp Olympic Games, May 1920; various articles relate to Bert Ives' athletics successes and his marriage to Ida Long, 30 September 1925; and there are images of H. M. Abrahams, W. R. Seagrove and Bert Ives.

The vast majority of material relates to 1920-1925 with two later additions: an article referring to enemy aircraft being shot down in south-west England, February 1944; and notice of the death of Jack Sanders of Queen's Park Harriers, 1960. The volume also includes a programme for a swimming gala held at Watford Corporation Baths, 21 March 1936.

1 volume

Access: Open

Notes: Old reference: WGT/2

ATH/WGT/1/3 Scrapbook 1921-1927

Scrapbook of newspaper cuttings; athletics programmes; results; articles; papers relating to the 1924 Paris Olympics including Wilfrid Tatham's identity card and letters from the Amateur Athletic Association concerning his selection for the Great British team; photographs of hurdling; and souvenir items including ship passenger lists, programmes for musical events, tickets and dinner invitations. Some menu cards include the autograph signatures of contemporary athletes. The volume also includes material relating to inter-university athletics in America; a Franco-British athletic meeting, September 1921; and images of P. M. Hamilton, W. R. Milligan, H. S. Stallard, W. G. Tatham, W. R. Seagrove, E. D. Mountain and D. McPhee.

There is material relating to the Achilles Club at the Anglo-Hellenic sports meeting held in Athens, Greece in 1927; a fixture list for Cambridge University Athletic Club, lent term 1922; and a Special Constable warrant card, issued 1926.

Various programmes have been pasted into the volume and these relate to track and field events:

Cambridge University Athletic Club 'Athletic Sports: King's versus Pembroke', 10 November 1921;

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'Oxford versus Cambridge Relay Races', 2 December 1921 held at Iffley Road, Oxford. 2 December 1921;

'King's College Cambridge versus New College Oxford', 16 February 1922, annotated;

Cambridge University Athletic Club 'Inter-College Relay Races', 28 February-2 March [1922] held in Cambridge;

Cambridge University Athletic Club 'University Sports', 9-11 March 1922, annotated;

'Oxford and Cambridge Athletic Sports', 25 March 1922 held at Queen's Club, West Kensington, annotated;

Achilles Club 'Relay Races', 8 April 1922 held at Queen's Club, West Kensington;

'Molinari Sports Club Thirteenth and Final Great Athletic Meeting', 3-5 June 1922 held at Stamford Bridge, annotated;

'Polytechnic Harriers Marathon Race and Athletic Sports', 10 June 1922 held at Stamford Bridge;

'YMCA Cambridge Athletic Sports', 15 June 1922 held at Fenner's, Cambridge;

'Jubilaris Nemzetközi Athletikai Viadalt rendez Cambridge, Oxford, Budapest', 16-17 September 1922, annotated;

'Cambridge University Athletic Club versus W. G. Tatham's Team', 17 March 1923 held at Queen's Club, West Kensington, annotated;

Achilles Club 'Public Schools Relay Races', 7 April 1923 held at Queen's Club, West Kensington, annotated;

'5th Match Annuel D'Athlétisme Angleterre-France', 25 July 1926, annotated;

'Torshaug Idrettsforenings internationale idrettsstevne', 13 August 1926;

'3rd Internationale Idraetsstevne', 15-17 August 1926.

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1 volume

Access: Open

Notes: Old reference: WGT/3

Language:

EnglishFrenchGreekHungarianNorwegian

ATH/WGT/1/4 Scrapbook 1927-1934

Partially used scrapbook of newspaper cuttings illustrating Wilfrid Tatham's athletics career as member of the Achilles Club. The volume includes material relating to his selection for the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games including an identity card and correspondence from the Amateur Athletic Association; and images of J. A. Sanders, W. G. Tatham, D. G. A. Lowe, Lord Burghley, M. C. Nokes and S. E. Engelhart.

Various programmes have been pasted into the volume and these relate to track and field events:

'Programm zum Internationalen Clubkampf: Achilles-Club London, Berliner Sport-Club, Deutscher Sport-Club', 28 August 1927, annotated;

'USA versus British Empire', 11 August [1929] held at Stamford Bridge Grounds, annotated;

'Inter Services Athletic Championships', 18 August 1928 held at Garrison Athletic Ground, Woolwich, annotated.

1 volume

Access: Open

Notes: Old reference: WGT/4

Language: EnglishGermanGreek

ATH/WGT/2 Personalia 1908-
[1930s]

Comprises photographs and postcards; medals; material relating to Wilfrid Tatham's time teaching in Canada; and a certificate.

1 file and 9 items

Access: Open

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- ATH/WGT/2/1 Photographs and postcards 1908-
[1930s]
- Various photographs and postcards, some autographed but most undated and uncaptioned. Many depict Wilfrid Tatham at athletics meetings including an image of Tatham racing Lord Burghley; the Polytechnic Harriers one mile scratch race for the Kinnaird Trophy; and Paavo Nurmi.
- 1 file
- Access: Open
- Notes:** Old reference: NCAL XXV.A5
- ATH/WGT/2/2 Medals 1924-1928
- Comprises:
- /1: Medal awarded for participation in the 1924 Paris Olympic Games
- /2: Medal awarded for participation in the 1928 Amsterdam Olympic Games
- /3: Typescript list and manuscript notes detailing the various medals awarded to Wilfrid Tatham during the course of his athletics career
- 3 items
- Access: Open
- Notes:** Old reference: NCAL artefact 110
- ATH/WGT/2/3 Material relating to Wilfrid Tatham's time in Canada 1929
- The following material relates to Wilfrid Tatham's time in Canada when working as a school teacher. Comprises:
- /1: 'Individual Liquor Permit, 1928-1929'. Partially used. Issued to individuals living in Canada during the prohibition of alcohol.
- /2: Typescript statement from the Amateur Athletic Association stating that Wilfrid Tatham is an amateur athlete as defined by the laws of the association, 1929.
- /3-4: Tickets for athletics meetings

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/5: Autographed menu card for dinner held aboard the SS Duchess of Richmond.

5 items

Access: Open

Notes: Old reference: NCAL XXV.A5

ATH/WGT/2/4 Certificate 1927

Certificate awarded to Wilfrid Tatham as part of the winning team for the two miles relay race at the Inter-County Championship organised by the Counties Athletic Union. The Championship was held at Satmford Bridge on 13 August 1927.

1 item

Access: Open

Notes: Old reference: NCAL XXV.A5