

The Filson Historical Society

Knight, Thomas M., 1870-1956
Letters, 1888-1904

For information regarding literary and copyright interest for this collection, see the
Curator of Special Collections, James J. Holmberg.

Size of Collection:

1 volume

Locator Number:

Mss./A/K71

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Scope and Content Note

Knight, a native of Louisville, Ky., was a bookmaker working at several horse race betting operations in various locations throughout the country, including Kentucky, Chicago and New Orleans. The collection consists of letters and telegrams addressed to him by his mother, female friends, one of whom, Minnie Ehrmann, became his wife and various acquaintances and bookmaking colleagues. The correspondence covers such topics as house construction in Louisville, how his family coped during his long absences out of town, requests for money and jobs and the economic uncertainties of the gambling business.

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Biographical Note

Thomas Knight was born in February, 1870, in Louisville Ky., the third child of William and Julia Knight, who had emigrated to the U.S. in 1869 from England. By the age of 20, he had become a bookmaker, working at various horse race betting operations in Kentucky, particularly in Covington and Louisville. In 1893 he married Minnie Ehrmann in Louisville. They had two sons, Marvin and Neal, born in 1894 and 1899, respectively. While raising a family, Thomas continued his bookmaking activities, often working away from home for long periods of time in such locations as Chicago, Buffalo, N.Y. and New Orleans. By 1920, he had begun serving as a deputy tax collector and later as a public accountant. He died 5 April 1956 in Louisville and is buried with his wife in Cave Hill cemetery.

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List of Folders

- Folder 1: Correspondence, 1888 – May, 1891
- Folder 2: Correspondence, Sept. 1891 – 1893
- Folder 3: Correspondence, 1894 – 1897
- Folder 4: Correspondence, 1898 – 1902, undated documents
- Folder 5: Envelopes, postmarked 1889 – 1904

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Subject Headings

Bookmakers (Gambling) – United States
Courtship – Kentucky
Gambling – United States
Horse racing – Betting – United States
House construction – Kentucky – Louisville
Knight, Thomas M., 1870-1956
Letterheads – Kentucky – Louisville
United States – Social life and customs