



# Smithsonian

*National Museum of the American Indian*

## Ellison "Tarzan" Myers Brown Scrapbook and Clippings

Mattie Lewis

2023



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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Museum of the American Indian
<b>Title:</b>	Ellison "Tarzan" Myers Brown scrapbook and clippings
<b>Date:</b>	1936-2021 Undated
<b>Identifier:</b>	NMAI.AC.446
<b>Creator:</b>	Salimeno, Thomas, Sr., 1900-1987
<b>Extent:</b>	.25 Linear feet
<b>Language:</b>	English .
<b>Summary:</b>	This collection contains newspaper clippings on the running career of Ellison "Tarzan" Brown and his trainer Thomas "Tippy" Salimeno, Sr.

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## Administrative Information

### Acquisition Information

Gift of Anna Brown-Jackson, 2023

### Processing Information

Processed by NMAI Archives Center contract archivist Mattie Lewis, 2023.

### Preferred Citation

Identification of specific item; Date (if known); Ellison "Tarzan" Myers Brown Scrapbook and Clippings, image #, NMAI.AC.402; National Museum of the American Indian Archives Center, Smithsonian Institution.

### Restrictions

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### Conditions Governing Use

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## Ellison "Tarzan" Myers Brown

Ellison "Tarzan" Myers Brown, also called Deerfoot by the Narragansett, was born on September 22, 1913, to Otis Brown (1879-1943) and Grace Babcock (1876-1935) in Westerly, Rhode Island. He was a very athletic kid, always running and climbing. Brown first met Thomas "Tippy" Salimeno, Sr. when he was 12 years old after following another Narragansett runner on a professional training run. Salimeno was impressed with Tarzan's ability to keep up and promised to train him once he turned 16. After the pair started working together, Brown won many footraces, and he would sell the trophies or prizes in order to support his family and community. In 1936, Brown won the Boston Marathon ahead of the favored winner John Kelly after passing him on a downhill stretch, which caused the hill to become famously known as "heartbreak hill." The win also brought much needed attention to the Narragansett nation, who were fighting for recognition after Rhode Island Supreme Court claimed to detribalize them. Brown would go on to win the Boston Marathon again in 1939 and was chosen for the U.S. Olympic team in 1936 and 1940. His athletic skill led him to be inducted into the American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame in 1973. Brown was married to Ethel Wilcox (1919-2015) and they had 4 children. He passed away August 23, 1975.

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## Thomas "Tippy" Salimeno

Thomas "Tippy" Salimeno was born March 14, 1900. He owned a café in Westerly and was also an athlete trainer, promoter, and manager for boxers and runners. He was a prominent figure in local and semi-pro sports due to his vast knowledge of the subject and training success. He passed away May 30, 1987

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## Scope and Contents

This collection contains 19 newspaper and magazine clippings collected by Thomas "Tippy" Salimeno, Sr. on the career of Ellison "Tarzan" Brown, whom he trained. There are also four newspaper clippings on Salimeno as a trainer. Additionally included is a scrapbook of clippings compiled by Salimeno's friend and local sports writer George Falcone in 1987.

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## Arrangement

Content is arranged in one series. Clippings are in chronological order followed by a scrapbook that is mostly undated.

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## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

Narragansett

Cultures:

Narragansett

Names:

Brown, Ellison, 1913-1975

Places:

Boston (Mass.)  
Rhode Island

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## Container Listing

Box 1, Folder 1	"Tarzan" Clippings, I, 1939-1996
Box 1, Folder 2	"Tarzan" Clippings, II, 1999-2021
Box 1, Folder 3	"Tarzan" Clippings, III, Undated
Map-case 13, Oversize 8	"Tarzan" Clippings, 1940, 1981
Box 1, Folder 4	"Tippy" Salimeno Clippings, 1987-2013, Undated
Box 1, Folder 5	Contract and Photo, 1941, Undated
Box 1, Folder 6	Scrapbook, I, 1936-1982, Undated
Box 1, Folder 7	Scrapbook, II, 1936-1982, Undated