

A Guide to the Thomas Gathright Papers, 1923-1933 SC 0233

Thomas Gathright papers
1923-1933



Title Statement

A Guide to the Thomas Gathright Papers, 1923-1933 SC 0233

Author: Dillon Thomas

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820 Madison Drive
MSC 1706
Harrisonburg, Virginia 22807
Telephone: (540) 568-3612
library-special@jmu.edu
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Profile Description

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Descriptive Summary

Unit ID

SC 0233

Unit ID

/repositories/4/resources/388

Unit Date

1923-1933

Language

English

Abstract

The Thomas Gathright Papers, 1923-1933, consisting of 2.1 cubic feet of material, are primarily comprised of the business correspondence and property blueprints of Thomas Gathright, a land-purchasing agent for the C&O Railway.

Extent

2.1 cubic feet 4 boxes, 1 flat file

Repository

James Madison University Libraries Special Collections

Administrative Information

Access Restrictions

Collection open to research. Researchers must register and agree to copyright and privacy laws before using this collection. Please contact Research Services staff before visiting the James Madison University Special Collections Library to use this collection.

Use Restrictions

The copyright interests in this collection have been transferred to the James Madison University Special Collections Library. For more information, contact the Special Collections Library Reference Desk (library-special@jmu.edu).

Acquisition Information

Transferred to Special Collections by Clarence Geier of James Madison University's Department of Sociology and Anthropology.

Processing Information

Select groupings of correspondence, primarily dating from 1923 to 1924, were damaged by rodent or other pest and inactive mold. Severely affected materials were photocopied and originals discarded. Rusted fasteners were removed and replaced with plastic paperclips. Due to extensive tearing down its center, oversize blueprint 21, titled Property to be Acquired from Industrial Rayon Corporation Near Covington, Alleghany Co., Virginia, was mended and placed in Mylar.

Oversize blueprints were separated from their original order (interfiled with correspondence) and filed in flat storage. The blueprints and maps are listed hierarchically under the respective file of correspondence where they were originally filed. Separation sheets indicate the original location of the blue prints as well as their location in flat storage.

Preferred Citation

[Identification of item], [box #, folder #], Thomas Gathright Papers, 1923-1933, SC 0233, Special Collections, Carrier Library, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA.

Bio/Historical Note and Administrative History

Thomas Morton Gathright, known in adulthood as "T. M.," "Mort," "Tom," and "Uncle Tom," was born on March 11, 1874 in Louisa County, Virginia to Thomas "Tommie" Morton Gathright (1842-1909) and Mary Goodwin Bowles Gathright (1846-1909). He married Martha Burdette Stone (1874-1953) and they had one child, Thomas "Tom" Morton Gathright (1906-1991).

Shortly after WWI, Gathright acted as agent for the now-defunct Columbia Gas and Electric Company. In 1922 he became a land-purchasing agent on behalf of the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Railway. His duties primarily consisted of contacting landowners of potential areas for rail construction in order to negotiate the purchase of the land and rights of way. He then would relay information on interested parties to his superiors in the main offices of C&O Railway in order to facilitate a beneficial transaction. He also served as chairman of the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors.

Gathright's other ventures included acting as a broker for various other companies and also turning land purchases for personal profit. After attempting to sell a large area of timbered land in Alleghany and Bath counties to Virginia Power, the Great Depression resulted in the cancellation of the purchase. Gathright then converted the land, acquired over a thirty-year period, into the Hickory Lodge game preserve, a private hunting and fishing club which he operated between 1932 and 1947. The club disbanded in 1947 when Gathright's health began to decline. The commonwealth of Virginia upheld and maintained the land after Gathright's death in 1956. In July 1958, the Virginia Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries purchased the 18,500 -acre T. M. Gathright Wildlife Management Area from the Virginia Electric and Power Company and the heirs of Thomas Gathright. In 1974, construction began on a dam on the property, named after Gathright, resulting in the creation of Lake Moomaw.

It should be noted that Thomas Morton Gathright is the second of three generations of Thomas Gathrights. All materials in this collection concern Thomas Morton Gathright (1874-1956), son of Thomas "Tommie" Morton Gathright (1842-1909) and father of Thomas "Tom" Morton Gathright (1906-1991).

The Chesapeake and Ohio Railway (C&O) was formed in 1869 in Louisa County, Virginia after the Louisa Railroad merged with various other smaller railway companies. It continued to grow through the late nineteenth century. It reached from Newport News, Virginia into Cincinnati, Ohio with its initial span, eventually making its way into several parts of Michigan and Illinois. Its primary freight was coal from West Virginian coal fields, while it did operate some passenger services as well. Thomas Gathright began his work with C&O at its height of expansionary purchases in the 1920s as it sought increased amounts of land to extend its track. C&O continued to grow until it merged with Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad and Western Maryland Railway to form Chessie Systems in 1963. Chessie Systems then merged with Seaboard System Railroad in 1986 to form the modern CSX Transportation, which continues to operate to this day.

Scope and Content

The Thomas Gathright Papers, 1923-1933, consist of four Hollinger boxes and 1 flat file (2.1 cubic feet). The collection consists primarily of correspondence and blueprints written by and addressed to Thomas Gathright, land-purchasing agent for the C&O Railway. The correspondence is primarily typed or printed on high-pulp paper or onion-skin carbon copy paper. The collection also includes blueprints of land purchases that relate to correspondence.

The collection contains correspondence, telegrams, deeds, indentures, and blueprints. The subject matter of the correspondence consists primarily of business dealings and land inquiries, acquisitions, rights of way, and disputes which Thomas Gathright engaged in on behalf of the C&O Railway. Correspondents include local land owners; colleagues at the C & O Railway Company including R. P. Eubank, the General Real Estate Agent at C&O and C. W. Johns, the C&O's chief engineer; and J. M. Perry, Attorney and Counselor at Law in Staunton, Virginia. Some letters are addressed to Gathright by disgruntled landowners regarding land and/or payment disputes. One such letter is from Mary E. Allen of White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia. In an October 1, 1931 letter to Gathright, she writes:

"There is a mistake here about my place. I want you yourself to come here and straighten it up. There is a dispute over how much land you got and if you don't come and fix it up there is going to be someone buried [sic] here....These servayors [sic] don't do a thing but steal. You haven't paid me all of my money anyway."

In general, the land purchases discussed in the correspondence involve communities in Alleghany County, Virginia, including Covington, and Summers County and Greenbrier County, West Virginia, including White Sulphur Springs, Fort Springs, and Ronceverte. Other companies mentioned in the correspondence include Kanawha -Dunlap Land Company and Low Moor Iron Company.

Keywords

Railroads -- Virginia -- History
Real estate agents -- Virginia -- 20th century
Real property -- Virginia -- 20th century
Letters (correspondence)
Deeds
Indentures
Blueprints (reprographic copies)
Telegrams
Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company -- History

Bibliography

"Chesapeake and Ohio Railway." Wikipedia. March 15, 2017. Accessed March 15, 2017.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chesapeake_and_Ohio_Railway.
Rutherford, James T. "Hickory Lodge." *Virginia Wildlife* 22, no. 12 (December 1961): 16-19.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged chronologically.

Description of Subordinate Components

Correspondence (Folder 1 of 4)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2369

Unit Date 1923

Mixed Materials [1000886255] 1 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Blueprint, Proposed Elimination of Grade Crossings Between Clifton Forge & Low Moor, Alleghany County, VA

Unit ID Map 1

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27388

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Additional Right of Way Required from S. A. Brown, Moss Run, Alleghany Dist.

Unit ID Map 2

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27391

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 2 of 4)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2370

Unit Date 1923

Mixed Materials [1000886255] 1 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Blueprint, Right of Way Required from Frank Rinehart, Covington, Alleghany County, VA

Unit ID Map 3

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27392

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Proposed Change of County Road 1 ½ Mile East of, Covington, Alleghany County, VA

Unit ID Map 4

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27393

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Right of Way Required from Heirs of Nancy Campbell, Fort Springs, Greenbrier Co., W. VA.

Unit ID Map 5

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27394

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 3 of 4)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2371

Unit Date 1923

Mixed Materials [1000886255] 1 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Correspondence (Folder 4 of 4)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2372

Unit Date 1923

Mixed Materials [1000886255] 1 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Blueprint, Right of Way Required from West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company Near Covington, Alleghany County, VA

Unit ID Map 6

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27395

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 1 of 2)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2373

Unit Date 1924

Mixed Materials [1000886255] 1 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Correspondence (Folder 1 of 2)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2374

Unit Date 1924

Mixed Materials [1000886255] 1 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Blueprint, Property Required from Louis Owens, Jerry's Run, Alleghany County, Virginia

Unit ID Map 7

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27396

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2375

Unit Date 1925

Mixed Materials [1000886256] 2 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2376

Unit Date 1926

Mixed Materials [1000886256] 2 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2377

Unit Date 1927

Mixed Materials [1000886256] 2 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from J. W. Gillespie, Hilldale, Summers County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 8

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27397

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from J. W. Gillespie, Hilldale, Summers County, West Virginia (copy)

Unit ID Map 9

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27398

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2378

Unit Date 1928

Mixed Materials [1000886256] 2 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Correspondence (Folder 1 of 3)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2379

Unit Date 1929

Mixed Materials [1000886256] 2 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Blueprint, Encroachments on Right of Way by Frank Reinhart, Covington, Alleghany County, Virginia

Unit ID Map 10

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27399

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 2 of 3)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2380

Unit Date 1929

Mixed Materials [1000886256] 2 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Correspondence (Folder 3 of 3)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2381

Unit Date 1929

Mixed Materials [1000886256] 2 (box)

Container 7 (folder)

Blueprint, Map Showing Property to be Acquired from John Meyers Heirs , Alleghany, Alleghany County, Virginia

Unit ID Map 11

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27400

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from Malinda Hooker, Covington, Alleghany County, Virginia

Unit ID Map 12

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27401

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 1 of 5)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2382

Unit Date 1930

Mixed Materials [1000886256] 2 (box)

Container 8 (folder)

Blueprint, Map Showing Property to be Acquired from Cole Brothers, Tuckahoe, Greenbrier Co., West Virginia

Unit ID Map 13

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27402

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from W. E. McReary, Tuckahoe, Greenbrier County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 14

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27403

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from J. E. Huston, Talcott, Summers County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 15

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27404

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Map Showing Property to be Acquired from John Meyers Heirs, Alleghany, Alleghany Count, Virginia

Unit ID Map 16

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27405

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 2 of 5)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2383

Unit Date 1930

Mixed Materials [1000886257] 3 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Blueprint, C&O Right of Way Claimed by Falling Springs Lime Co., Inc., Barber, Alleghany Co., Virginia

Unit ID Map 17

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27406

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Map Showing Property to be Acquired from John Meyers Heirs, Alleghany, Alleghany Co., Virginia

Unit ID Map 18

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27407

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from J. E. Huston, Hilldale, Summers County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 19

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27408

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 3 of 5)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2384

Unit Date 1930

Mixed Materials [1000886257] 3 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from C. S. Wyant, Hildale, Summers County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 20

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27409

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from Industrial Rayon Corporation Near Covington, Alleghany Co., Virginia

Unit ID Map 21

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27410

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from W. R. Boyd, Talcott, Summers County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 22

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27411

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 4 of 5)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2385

Unit Date 1930

Mixed Materials [1000886257] 3 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from Mrs. Lottie Rollysom, Hildale, Summers County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 23

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27412

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from W. J. Meadows, Talcott, Summers County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 24

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27413

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from W. R. Boyd, Hildale, Summers County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 25

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27414

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 5 of 5)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2386

Unit Date 1930

Mixed Materials [1000886257] 3 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from Mrs. J.W. Carey, White Sulphur, Greenbrier County, West Virginia (Oct 25, 1930)

Unit ID Map 26

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27415

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 1 of 4)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2387

Unit Date 1931

Mixed Materials [1000886257] 3 (box)

Container 5 (folder)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from G.C. Allen, Talcott, Summers County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 27

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27416

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from Hellen Kean, Backbone, Alleghany Co., VA

Unit ID Map 28

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27417

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 2 of 4)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2388

Unit Date 1931

Mixed Materials [1000886257] 3 (box)

Container 6 (folder)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from W. M. McCutcheon Frazier, Greenbrier County, West Virginia

Unit ID Map 29

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27418

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Proposed Elimination of Grade Xings at Main St. & Short St. by U. G. Xing at Bridge St., Covington, Virginia

Unit ID Map 30

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27419

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Proposed Elimination of Grade Xings at Main St. & Short St. by U. G. Xing at Bridge St., Covington, Virginia (copy)

Unit ID Map 31

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27420

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Sketch Showing Proposed Location of O.H. Crossing Near M.P. 293, and Underpass Near Callaghan, Virginia

Unit ID Map 32

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27421

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from S.T. Hedrick, Rockland, Greenbrier Co., West Virginia

Unit ID Map 33

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27422

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 3 of 4)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2389

Unit Date 1931

Mixed Materials [1000886258] 4 (box)

Container 1 (folder)

Blueprint, Property to be Acquired from W.B. Hines, Et. Al., Jerry's Run, Alleghany County, Virginia

Unit ID Map 34

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27423

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Correspondence (Folder 4 of 4)

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2390

Unit Date 1931

Mixed Materials [1000886258] 4 (box)

Container 2 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2391

Unit Date 1932-1933

Mixed Materials [1000886258] 4 (box)

Container 3 (folder)

Correspondence

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/2392

Unit Date undated

Mixed Materials [1000886258] 4 (box)

Container 4 (folder)

Blueprint, Right of Way and Track Map - Covington, VA

Unit ID Map 35

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27424

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Property Map including Peter B. Wyant, Robert Boyd, Nathaniel Allen proeptries

Unit ID Map 36

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27425

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Blueprint, Map No. XI of Alleghany Co., VA - Includes Transcription of deed from 1859

Unit ID Map 37

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27426

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Map, Property to be bought by County for Road, railroad, and right of way to be transferred

Unit ID Map 38

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27427

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)

Map, Property to be Acquired From Mrs. M. F Watkins & Malinda Hooker

Unit ID Map 39

Unit ID /repositories/4/archival_objects/27428

Mixed Materials [1000897719] 1 (Flat File)